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News and Notes

A Monthly Paper printed for the private use of the
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Series XII

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1st March = 24th Rajab (7th mo.) March 8th = 1st Sha'ban, 1342, A.H.

A Message for Moslems.

“**T**HE Word (of God) was made flesh and dwelt among us.” Jesus is the Word of God. In Him we find the best revelation of God known to man. Jesus is God’s best expression of Himself in His endeavour to communicate His love for man, and His will for man’s life to us His children. It is not what Jesus taught, but the fact that he lived what he taught that is of the highest importance. Because He dwelt among us as God’s Word and expression of Himself we see how God loves, how God forgives, how God works, how God suffers, how God rejoices, how God cares for His children. Jesus knows no outcastes; He pleads forgiveness for those who crucified Him; He works because His Father works, always for others, never for himself; His tender heart yearns for a better world, he worked, wept, endured the agony of the cross, and the scorn of men that the Kingdom of righteousness might come—He suffered, and died from the suffering of a broken body, the suffering of a broken heart. He rejoices when even one sinner turns from his evil way and is born again. He is with His people caring for them and strengthening them with the Holy Spirit even to the end of the World.

Our God is not an abstract, far-removed Governor of the Universe to whom men must submit, concerning whom and His eternal decrees all we know is to be found within the limit of a Book. Our God is not alone the Lord of the Worlds. He is our Loving Father, whom we can know and understand better as we know Jesus better, whom to know is to love, and Love is the fulfilling of the Law of Christ. “This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

Encouraging News from Egypt.

MISS Jameson, one of our members in Egypt, sends us the following intensely interesting and encouraging report of events in that country which will be appreciated by all members of the League. The writer is connected with the Egypt General Mission.

"Political events in Egypt have continued very interesting. There is at once a going back to the outward observance of Islam, and a casting of it off. The Constitution has been passed. Men are realizing that independence works for individual freedom, and claiming it. Saad Pasha Zaghlul arrived about a month ago, and set to work to undo what had been accomplished since his deportation. It surprised everyone how a man in such bad health could go through the fatigue that he did. But this stage was short, and he is very unwell and very quiet these days, some even hinting that he will never be strong again.

"In spite of everything, the missionary opportunity is splendid. There is a great openness and desire to read and know, and many interesting conversations are held. But the price of becoming a Christian is no less than it used to be, and many who reach the point of conviction go no further, so we evidently need more power to convince the people and to make them see what Christ really is, or else some day there will be a big movement, and many unsuspected individuals will confess Christ. Perhaps some of you read a striking article in the "Moslem World" for April about secret disciples. We have come on no trace of such an organisation here, but it may be existent all the same.

"We have just opened a new station at a town called Atf in a very bigoted and neglected district. Two ladies are there. They have only so far done a very little dispensary work, and given away a tract that raised a storm of fear, since which the town crier has been sent round warning the women of the dire consequences of going to the missionaries, and daily processions meet and shout round the house, 'Long Live Islam! Let the preachers be silent!' Just now is a fanatical time, being the celebration of Mohammed's birthday, which goes on a fortnight or so, and they promise these processions nightly for a month! R., the lad written of in the latest News, is with them as servant, faithful and helpful, but we long for him not to put off baptism.

"A great encouragement since the summer has been the change in Abdallah, the husband of the dear old Sudanese 'Mukhtara,' who was baptised in Zeitoun last year, in answer to the prayers and efforts of her son Samuel who was so brightly converted and working now at Koweit. (His story is given in full in the 'International Review' for Jan. in Canon Gairdner's article.) The parents are living in Ismailia now, Abdallah was a drunkard and a very ill-tempered old man. He went to the service one Sunday. The preacher was

inclined to turn him out, thinking he would only cause a disturbance. He was greatly impressed, and called on the Lord aloud while the service was going on to save him from his sins, and directly after came forward and asked for baptism. He was told this could not be at once, so then he asked if he should die before the opportunity came would the Lord accept him. On being assured that the Lord looked on the heart he was content to wait. The transformation in his life is remarked by all, not the least token of it being the readiness with which he cooks for and waits on his wife, very crippled with rheumatism. Another thing that makes me very glad is that Gamallat, the little daughter of Zaki Abdel Fadi, the convert in many ways so unsatisfactory, and sister of the Samuel who was baptised at Ismailia in 1920, whose mother never would let her keep on at school because she wanted her to carry her baby, but who was so intelligent and interested, has succeeded in getting into Christian surroundings. She and her brother are both employed at Old Cairo. It is sheer push on the part of the girl, determination and character, plus prayer on the part of all of us who knew her. It is quite wonderful how seeds of prayer that seem to be absolutely dead and buried spring up into life: There is an enquirer from last year's boat campaign too, wanting to come down to Cairo and support himself by his trade, bringing his sister, who he says is also a Christian. A young Arab convert has been sent here from another mission for education and training, in the hope that like pains and love to that expended years ago on Marcus, in his case may result in like spiritual progress and efficiency. Mubarik Ibrahim is his Christian name. Please help to make his training a success by your prayers.

"Simultaneous conferences for men and women converts were held in June. The men met, ate and slept in this compound. We greatly wished that the building, the missionary societies and the Y.M.C.A. in Egypt hope to erect had been available as the men had to sleep in the meeting hut. The building is to be called the Radstock Hall, because of all that the present Lord Radstock did for Egyptian Christians all over the land. Over half the necessary money has been granted or raised by the societies most concerned, so we mean to start the building (D.V.) at the New Year, and trust that the remaining money will come in. The Hall will be used for devotional conferences for the deepening of the spiritual life, and possibly other missionary purposes. Fifty to sixty men attended the converts' conference—such interesting men, and enquirers too. Some who are well-established after much tribulation, and some going through a very trying experience of loss of all for Christ with the question of how to support families. One, with whom I had made friends the year before, told me of a little band of convert women in his village, 5 or 6, gathered out by their own efforts. His wife can read, so I sent her a copy of 'The Victorious Life,' which has been translated into Arabic, in the hope that it may help to lead them into a strong Christian life. The Converts'

Committee is working well, and is a great help in getting at the true reasons for want of work and appeals of distress. It is not so bent on working independently of missionaries as once—which was folly—and now has a representative of each of the bigger societies on it, Mr. Swan for ours. The Nubian guard is a thorny member of it. You remember the account of his refunding quite a large sum to the Railway Co., quite of himself for conscience sake? He badly needs to be less socialistic, or he will be in danger of coming to grief with his employers. He is a very fine man, and one longs for him to add 'more grace.'

"The women's conference was a great joy. Out of 27 present, 23 were enquirers or baptised converts, most of them very young. The rule of excluding babies accounted for this. The wife of Sheikh Abdel Masih came gladly, but there was no spiritual response to be got from her, no sense of their having done wrong or of need of progress, so it was disappointing, and all her talk was of the hardships they suffer from their relations because of being Christians. Her husband did not come to the men's conference. She said he did not get his invitation. They are thought to be in Alexandria now, but what doing I know not, and there is as yet no outward sign of prayer being answered for them. The testimonies on the last day were touching. The two conferences closed with a united Communion Service such a thing I suppose has never taken place before. Sitt Mukhtara's younger son, Ramadan, looked very bright, but when I asked him had he accepted Christ, he answered with a straight "No"! Now he is under instruction at Old Cairo, and hoping shortly to be baptised. The only remaining Moslem of the family will then be the daughter. She is away from home and unfriendly to her mother, but they expect her to come in all right before long."

Some Interesting Modern Positions in Islam

M. T. T.

1. *In Theology.*

THE doctrine of the Atonement is explained by the use of the familiar formula: "at-one-ment" which is more of a play on words than a serious statement of a doctrine; for the ideal of Islam is "Union is strength," which is deduced from the first article of the Moslem Faith—the Unity of God. Therefore, the "Islamic doctrine of the Atonement (at-one-ment) is to be at one with God, by Union and co-operation with God's creatures, so far as your and their constitutions and environments allow."

Another characteristic position of many liberal Moslems is found in the following paragraph: "Muslims picture the Supreme Truth as a beautiful citadel, built on the top of a steep mountain. Different religions are but so many paths leading to it from different directions.

In their estimation, Islam is the best and the easiest path of all. This fanciful idea implies that some of the paths might cross each other at different parts of their course, and others might run parallel to one another, or even run together for considerable distance.....All religions are, and purport to be, paths leading to one and the same citadel of Truth. None the less, each of them has an individuality of its own, and a claim that it is better and easier than all others."

"Our author strongly emphasizes the fact that he would have us understand Islam as it is taught by the Koran itself, 'and not Muhammadanism as professed by some so-called followers of the Prophet,' 'You have to interpret the Quran quite naturally, as any other book or historic document, but not in the way in which some Mohammedans do it, with the aid of marvellous fictions and miraculous traditions.' Here we have a strong indication of the presence of a worthy desire to have Islam studied from the historical and scientific point of view, which we hope some day will be fully and fearlessly adopted by competent scholars within the world of Islam.

The writer closes with a final statement on the mutual relationships of Christianity and Islam in the world to-day, in which he again reasserts his belief that 'there is no inherent antagonism between Christianity and Islam, if and when the sayings and doings of the founders of each are rightly viewed and understood in a simple and natural manner.' The rule, 'Love, thy neighbor as thyself,' he holds to be quite consistent with human nature, "and is the most comprehensive rule of conduct which has ever been laid down for the guidance of mankind. To my mind there is no better proof of the identity of spirit of Christianity and Islam than the confirmation of Christ's command by Muhammad himself."

"No one will be a faithful Muslim until he loves his neighbor "as he loves himself.'" For this reason I believe that there is no difference between the two religions, if the metaphysical doctrines engrafted on both be eliminated. True Islam is but true Christianity writ short. Both recognize that the source of virtue is love.

"For love is Heaven and Heaven is love."

(To be Continued.)

The Khalifat Problem

(Extracts from an article in the *Muslim Outlook*, Lahore, by Muhammad Habib, Professor of History, Muslim University, Aligarh.)

TO most non-Muslims the Islamic theory of the Khalifat is fearfully perplexing and yet the origin of the perplexity is simple enough. It arises out of our futile attempt to express our oriental ideas in Western terminology. It is said the Khalifa is our "religious head." But what does that really mean? The Khalifa is not a Pope and cannot issue "bulls." He is not even a "Priest." He cannot enforce his own interpretation of the sacred texts or meddle with the conscience of his co-religion-

ists. He cannot, like the Popes of the Middle Age, suspend a Divine law, as for instance, by permitting persons to marry within the prohibited relations. The Roman Catholic idea of a "religious head" is unknown to our law and sentiment. We know nothing of the distinction of "Church" and "State" or of "temporal" and "spiritual" power. These distinctions are founded on the difference between "lay men" and "priests." But we have no "priesthood" properly so-called, for the simple reason that our law, contemplating no caste distinctions and propounding no theory of "consecration," considers every Mussalman a priest. The privileges, which Hinduism confines to Brahmans and Catholicism to clergymen, our law throws open to every member of the faith. Nor have we ever lived under that quaint form of Government known as "theocracy"—"a Government of priests for priests and by priests." The so-called Muslim theocracies, the Government of the second Caliph for instance, have been democracies of a very advanced type. You cannot separate the "temporal" and "spiritual" powers of the Khilafat; the one cannot exist without the other. A Khalifa deprived of what is called "temporal power" would not be a Khalifa at all but only the memory of a Khilafat that was, or perhaps the possibility of a Khilafat that is to come.

WHAT IS KHILAFAT ?

What then is the Khilafat ? To understand an institution we must know two things—the ideals it stands for and the method by which it tries to realise them. The Khilafat is an institution for the protection and preservation of the ideals of a common brotherhood found in the whole Muslim world. "And this is my last advice unto you," the Prophet said in his last speech at Holy Mecca, "ye are of one brotherhood." And in spite of a thousand conflicts and a thousand wars the feeling dwells in the hearts of all Mussalmans to-day, not merely as a pleasant memory but as a living and present reality. A common brotherhood means legal and social equality and the elimination of all galling distinctions. This is what gives our Holy Places their peculiar significance. The ancient Hindus established their places of pilgrimage in various parts of India in order to create and preserve a feeling of common national consciousness among the people south of the Himalayas. The Muslim pilgrimage has a similar object. Every Mussalman is commanded to go to the Holy Place once in his life. But the virtue lies in the journey, not in the prayer. God is everywhere; it is our fellow men we have to go out of our homes to meet. With us it is the highest form of worship to go abroad to the first temple of the One God built by Abraham long ago, in company with our co-religionists from every clime—Turks, Arabs, Chinese, Berbers, Indians, and what not, all in an association really and truly democratic. The same ideal lies behind our institution of congregational prayers. Differences of opportunities and of material circumstances have persisted in spite of all our efforts to end them. But in the House of God at least there is no distinction and the rich and poor stand side by side. We have no ordained official priests to lead our prayers; every Mussalman is entitled to do that. The individual is insignificant; it is the congregation that matters. The Almighty does not need our prayers but our fellowmen may need our assistance; and if by praying with them five times a day, love and charity come to dwell in our hearts, we will be prepared for the noblest of all our prayers—the service of our fellowmen.

Notes

New Tracts.—God is wonderfully using one of our Indian Moslem converts who lives in Poona. For some years he has been writing tracts for Moslems, and for want of means of publication he has been making duplicate copies on his mimeograph, and distributing them. About a year ago a friend put him in touch with the Committee on Christian Literature for Moslems, and two of his tracts, "Salvation"; and the "Unchanging Word of God" were approved by the Committee and published. Copies of these may be obtained from the Methodist Publishing House, Lucknow, free of charge. We are glad to announce that two more of his tracts have just been approved by the Committee, and these also will soon be available for free distribution at the same place. These last two are entitled, "Where is the Original Gospel"; and "The Revelation of God's Love." Our able and zealous writer is Moulvi K. Feroze Khan. Are there not other capable writers of tracts who can be put in touch with the Committee?

New Books for the I. S. A. Library.—Our Library is growing. The following new books have been added recently:—

"Selections from Muhammedan Traditions," Wm. Goldsack.

"Robert Clark of the Punjab," Martyn Clark,

"D. M. Thornton of Cairo," W. H. T. Gairdner.

The last two have been donated.

The Coming of Dr. Zwemer.—Plans for the itinerary of Dr. Zwemer are nearing completion, thanks to the efforts of Rev. W. Paton who is making the preliminary arrangements. If all goes well Dr. Zwemer accompanied by Mrs. Zwemer will arrive about the end of May and will stay in India till the end of July. They will hold special evangelistic meetings, and conferences with missionaries and workers among Moslems in the chief centers. Dr. Zwemer desires that these meetings should not be publicly advertised, but rather that they should be quiet gatherings of people of the inner circle. Fuller announcement of the itinerary will be made in our next issue.

M. M. LEAGUE

Financial Statement, 1923.

RECEIPTS	Rs. A. P.	EXPENDITURE	
Balance from 1922	441 0 3		
Members' subscriptions;		Printer's Bills	616 13 0
Arrears	68 14 0	Postages	37 15 0
1923 subs.	431 6 0	Office Sundries	32 4 0
Advance subs.	74 6 0		687 0 0
	574 10 0	Balance forward	328 10 3
	<u>Rs. 1,015 10 3</u>		<u>Rs. 1,015 10 3</u>

Audited and found correct;—

Signed, William Carey, 9-1-24.

A Call to Special Prayer.

(Dr. Zwemer sends us the following communication which with certain modifications we pass on to the League.)

Dr. John R. Mott, Chairman of the International Missionary Council, who is to be the chairman of the various Conferences on Near East Problems that are being held this Spring, writes.

"It is supremely important that we call forth in quiet effective ways the intercession of men and women who have learned in the pathway of experience the reality and power of prayer. Well may we shrink from the undertaking to which we are setting our hands, apart from the unerring and constant guidance and energising of the Spirit of God.

"With His assured presence and working, may we not confidently expect that real creative and highly multiplying work will be accomplished, a work which will far transcend our highest expectation."

PRaise for the conditions and arrangements that now make possible the holding of these conferences originally planned for the year 1914.

PRAY:—1. That all dangers contingent on the holding of such conferences may be avoided.

2. For those who prepare papers for the conferences and the delegates who represent their fellow workers in attendance at the conferences and in participation in discussions.

3. For those representatives of the home boards of our societies who share in the conference that they may carry back to the home church the call of Christ for the Moslem World.

4. For all the conferences to be held during the Spring of 1924 in Egypt, North Africa, Syria, Turkey and possibly Mesopotamia, with a final Conference to be held in Jerusalem, April 3rd.

LET US ALSO PRAY for those who are making arrangements for Dr. Zwemer's visit to India this Summer; and that the conferences held here may prove a great help and inspiration to all.

NEW MEMBERS.

188	Rev. Mark Stephens,	C. M. S.	Narowal, Punjab.
232	Miss C. M. Beach,	Un. Miss.	Cawnpore.

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.