

News and Notes

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A Bird's-eye View of the Moslem World

VI. ABYSSINIA.

ABYSSINIA has been one of the hardest mission fields. It is only in the last few years that the doors to the inner parts of the country have been opened.

There was practically no effort toward mission work in Abyssinia, before the Swedish mission began its work. The first missionaries came to **Massaua** in 1866 with the purpose of going to **Galla**. They were sent by The Evangelical National Society of Sweden. When they found, that it was impossible to go through Abyssinia to **Galla**, they began to work among a heathen people, **Cunama** North of Abyssinia. There two of the missionaries were killed and five died from fever and sickness. The blood of Swedish martyrs was shed in East-Africa, and that is one of the reasons, why the friends of the Swedish Mission could never abandon the mission work in these countries.—Only a few, yet living, fled to **Massaua**, at the sea coast. The missionaries now began to work in **Massaua** and other places in its neighbourhood. General Gordon of Khartoum in 1877 gave them the ground for a station, **Moncullo**, near **Massaua**. In **Massaua** and **Moncullo** they began mission work, medical work, school work, training of native teachers and literature work in several languages.

Several expeditions attempted to go to **Galla**. In 1887 the Swedes tried to go to **Galla** by way of **Suakin**, **Khartoum** and **Famaka**, but they were compelled to return. In 1885 they were ready to try another way. Then they went by way of **Tadjutra**, and **Shoa**. But **Menclik** did not fulfil his promise to let them go to **Galla**, they were obliged to return. In 1893 a new expedition went through **Aden** and **Lamu** to **Kismayu** in **Jubaland** to try to reach

Galla that way. When that seemed impossible they started a new mission there. Several other attempts beside those have been made by other missionaries, but with no results. When the Italians conquered the northern part of Abyssinia and founded the Colony Eritrea, the Swedish Mission could extend its work. Stations were opened in **Bellesa** (1890), **Asmara** (1890), **Zazega** (1891), **Addi Ugri** (1907) all in the province **Hamasen**; and in **Gheleb** (1890), **Agordat** (1898), and **Cheren** (1913), in the province **Mathet**.

In Cunama mission work began again in **Culluco** (1898) and in **Ausa-Conoma** (1905).

In 1904 The Swedish Mission opened a mission station in **Addis-Abeba**, the capital of Abyssinia, and in 1923 in **Nagamte** among the Galla-tribes.

In **Somaliland** the Swedish Mission has four stations—**Kismayo**, **Yonti**, **Moti**, and **Alexandra**.

We can see from the above that the Swedish missions in East Africa are widely scattered; the reason is, that the Swedes tried to go in to Galla from all sides and when it was not possible they began mission work among the people surrounding Abyssinia, watching the moment when the doors to the inner part of Abyssinia should be opened. So began the mission among the Cunama, the **Tigre** and **Tigrinja**-speaking people in the north and among the **Somali** in the South.

And what about the results of the mission work among the Moslems?

When the Swedish mission, about 30 years ago, began to work among the Moslem Tigrétribes they could hardly get any children in the schools. The Moslem parents ordered their children to look to the right side and not to the left, where we had our mission station when they passed on the road. "The place is very dangerous," they said. And it seems to have been so for Islam. Now the Moslem parents *themselves are coming with the children to the school*. And when the children wish to become Christians the parents sometimes go forward to their children in the church after they have been baptized and give them their blessing. They have seen in these 30 years, that Christ makes them better than Mohammed. The old folks don't wish to change their religion, but they allow the children to do it. The number of Moslem converts among the Tigré tribes now living is more than 200.

In Somaliland, a very hard field, there are now about 250 Moslem converts.

In Abyssinia, where there are 2 or 3 million Moslems we have to remember the important mass movement towards Christianity among the Moslems. About 7000 of them have been baptized. (See "The Moslem World" July, 1924.)

NILS RODIN,
Upsala, Sweden.

Mohammedan Converts in Egypt

From a Survey of the Missionary Occupation of Egypt.

BY H. E. PHILLIPS, PH.D.

IT has been the professed policy of all the missions to work either directly or indirectly for the Mohammedan masses. Although there are 438 missionaries in Egypt, and although some of the mission bodies are working almost exclusively for Moslems, and although there are about 19,000 Evangelical Christians in Egypt with good church organizations and a well educated ministry, and although there are in the various mission schools approximately 2,500 Moslem students continuously receiving instruction in Bible study the visible result of the missionary work for Moslems is not very great. At the present time we probably could not point to more than 150 converts from Islam in Egypt. If the Moslem converts were distributed among the missionary workers there would be about one convert for every three missionaries. If the comparison is made with the Evangelical Church, there would be about one for every congregation in Egypt. Every missionary method known to man has been tried and is being tried but until the present neither the missions nor the Evangelical Church have whereof to boast in the face of this great and baffling problem. The hugeness of the task is made apparent by the disparity between the hosts of darkness and the small company of enlightened believers. The proportion is 13.5 Moslems to each Copt and 18 Copts to one Protestant and 244.9 Moslems to every one in the whole Protestant Community.

It is not the function of this survey to draw conclusions but to state the facts and to describe the real conditions in which the missionary work is conducted. Viewing these conditions and considering the large number of missionaries and Egyptian workers in Egypt the fact must be apparent to all that the great element lacking is Spiritual Dynamic. Nothing but a mighty spiritual awakening on the part of the Evangelical Church and on the part of the missionaries in the various missions can move this great mountain of Mohammedanism. The most potent instrument for the evangelization of this land is the Evangelical Church, built up through 69 years of patient effort, but until the Church led by the missionaries conquers its timidity and is possessed of a holy boldness made possible only through the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the religious condition of Egypt will not be greatly changed. Given that spiritual quickening and there is every reason to believe that there are in Egypt now sufficient forces to make the Gospel of Christ known to every inhabitant of the land in a reasonably short time. Not by better mission organization nor better schools, nor by improved methods, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

A Challenge to the Arya Samaj

The following challenge in Gujerati was posted by Moslems in the Surat District recently :—

“Either we will make Mohammadens of you or you make Hindoos of us.”

THE undersigned challenge the great Sadhu of the Arya Samaj called Shree Sharadhanand to show us the following 8 miracles and we will become Hindoos; or if we show you them then you should become a Mussalman. If your religion is true you will accept this challenge.

This does not mean that you become a Mussalman for just two or three days and then go back into Hindooism but that you give in a writing before some Jewish, European, Christian, Hindoo or Mohammaden gentlemen that you become Mussalman forever. If we do not show you one of these miracles we become Hindoos. The peacock, cobra and cow must not be trained ones.

1. Put your hand in the mouth of a real poisonous Cobra.
2. Drink the poison from a Cobra, have you courage to do it?
3. In 7 hours cure a sick man of any kind of sickness.
4. Make a man that had died, laugh for one minute.
5. Place a Koran and your religious book side by side with a wreath of flowers and then place a peacock in the midst and he will take the wreath of flowers and put it on the Koran. Can you make him put it on your book?
6. Take an untrained village cow and stand her in the borders of the village and have her run to the Musjid and bow her head in front of it.
7. Take a green tree and make it dry for five minutes and afterwards make it green.
8. Make hair two inches long grow on the head of a bald-headed man in 17 minutes.

We do not make any claim to divinity but our Moslem religion is true and straight religion. Therefore we are ready to show the above miracles.

Distribution of Literature

N.B.—Part of a paper prepared for the Conference of Missions, Egypt, 1924.

HOW TO DISTRIBUTE

If the accumulated war stocks of the various fronts needed a “Disposal Board” do not the accumulated stocks of Christian Literature also need a “Disposal Board?” Let such an agency start work not upon production but upon *distribution*. Speaking from my own experience gained in publishing over 450 books and tracts I urge that a distribution

scheme take precedence of production programme. There are several methods which could be used. Some of these are actually in operation at the present time, others could be started with a little extra co-operation and not much additional expense.

1. MAIL ORDERS.—I still strongly believe in bookshops, but bookshops run by enthusiastic Arabic-reading missionaries, *i. e.*, fanatics. Since most bookshops are failures, let us turn to mail orders. Most of the Nile Mission Press books are sold to thirty Muslim lands and the mail order system has been found very successful. We have reduced prices and in addition gone back to the 20 percent discount which we used to give before the War. At present there is the difficulty of high freight and mail rates. Still, speaking generally, this is the arm we chiefly rely upon for distribution in thirty lands of the Muslim World. Had there been time, I could have told most interesting stories of what happens in China, India, Iraq, Palestine and other lands where our books are distributed.

2. FREE GRANTS.—It may not be generally known that it is a very expensive thing to give away free. "Dumping down" is out of the question of course and to give away to individuals needs special qualifications. To obtain such qualifications a good deal of expense is incurred. This method could be further developed to a certain extent.

3. COLPORTEURS.—This is by far the best (*i. e.*, most continuous) means of reaching people with the printed message. We have ten book colporteurs in Egypt making nearly 2,000 visits to villages in a year, also six in Palestine. We cannot greatly develop without tapping some new financial resources. With such resources there are several things we could do. The first thing would be for our religious book colporteurs to be increased from ten to fifteen then—later—to 20, and so on. We (N. M. P.) have increased this year from six to ten. Even the reduced staff of last year put on a spurt, and sold as many books in nine months as previously in twelve.

4. CENTRAL DISTRIBUTION FUND.—There are various ways in which such a fund could work. One method would be to allow a credit of £X per worker per mensem to every station. Possibly it may be thought by some that this is a matter for the Boards rather than for a Central Agency. Some two or three years ago we did suggest it to the Societies and if we did not get many promises, at any rate we heard *no objection* to the proposal. As in all other cases, it is still awaiting power to put it into operation, *i. e.*, some strong man.

On the other hand the Central Agency might prefer to buy a quantity of the existing stocks at special discounts. But whatever method is proposed the main thing is to leave off talking and start doing.

The experience of the first five years of pushing distribution should then lead to reconsideration of existing plans for the distribution of literature. The main thing is to *act*. The Edinburgh Conference 1910 said in its Report of Commission 11, page 274. "The greatest method is that of a well-organised and centralised (but not over centralised) system of distribution.....such organisation in efficient hands would prevent good books from being lost and buried as so often happens at present amongst a mass of dead and unsaleable stock." Quite so: and the thing that strikes one about that excellent magazine "Outward Bound" is its title! Of course, that magazine is as much Outward-bound as its readers are, *i. e.*, it is for "sending out," not for filing, "bound for its readers abroad" not shelf-bound, like too many mission books. Let us ask God to keep us from being

house or church-bound and to send us "Outward Bound," out among the people.

5. *WHO SHOULD DISTRIBUTE?* The answer is missionaries willing to be missionaries or all pastors that are more than pastors;—I mean those who are big enough to be nonparochial. An illustration of what I mean. We recently printed at the Nile Mission Press no less than 1,200,000 Portionettes but try as hard as we could, we could not, at the time, get our Egyptian workers to distribute more than 250,000. So many of them wrote applications saying "The number of members in my church is 67, therefore, please send me 67 leaflets." Others wrote "I have 98 members, but if you like to give two copies extra you may send 100." But these dear brethren did not understand in the least what the Portionettes were for. They were not intended to be given to Christians in the churches who can read the N.T. and have copies of the Gospel, but they were intended to reach the people who never come to the church, *i.e.*, non-Christians. Of course, it takes a big man to see beyond the horizon of his little church or his own circle. Oh, when will God pour out his Holy Spirit upon us that we may rise above the level of our daily routine and circulate the message like primitive Christians.

A. T. UPSON,
Cairo, Egypt.

Notes

The Heavy Hand in Turkey. Rev. Paul E. Nilson writes from Tarsus that religious pictures are forbidden in the school-rooms. "So now we have no religious pictures, no daily Bible lessons, as before, no required chapel with singing and prayers. But nothing can hinder us from living the Christian life! And is there any better preaching than the lives of those who live as the Master taught?"

The Ahmadiya Mission to Europe. The middle of July the head of the Ahmadiya Community of Qadian, Panjab, with a large personal staff left India "to travel over the continent of Europe to see the advisability of opening centers for the propagation of Islam, and to regulate the proselytising work on a grand and permanent scale."

An Urdu Bible-woman's Training School. For those who live in the West and South of India we are pleased to announce that there is an Urdu training school for zenana workers at Sholapur, in charge of the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission. Here is just the place to get women workers for Moslems prepared for their special work. Students must be VI Standard Urdu passed. Fees, Rs. 6/- per month for Board. Write to the Lady Superintendent.

Moslems in Poona. Dr. Zwemer sends us the following: "I found two Moslem Missionary Societies, and important English and Urdu books against Christianity printed here. One of these Societies the Jamiat-i-Dawat-o-Tabligh-i-Islam spends Rs. 33,000 a year and has six centers with Poona as headquarters. Also the Agha Khan publishes an illustrated annual of the Ismailiya sect, 150 pp. and up-to-date."

The Nizam and Dr. Zwemer. At one of his public meetings in Hyderabad, Deccan, H. E. H. the Nizam honoured Dr. Zwemer with his presence, and later sent him a personal note of appreciation of his address together with an invitation to attend a public function that he might have

"more opportunity of making acquaintance with a man who is a thorough scholar of Arabic as well as a good lecturer."

New Literature for Chinese Moslems. We rejoice to report that one of our League members, Mr. Isaac Mason of Shanghai, is busy preparing suitable literature for Moslems. A bulletin just to hand shows some interesting titles of books which should do much good if widely distributed. They include *The Life of Mohammed*, *Christ in Islam*, *Forgiveness of Sin*, and *Sweet First Fruits*.

A Mission Hospital for Jeddah? A proposal to this effect has been supported by the recent Mission Conference at Helwan, Egypt, and a Dutch Missionary Society hearing of this fact sends word that "The thought has occurred to us that one of our missionary physicians could be spared from Java to accompany the pilgrims annually and co-operate in this plan." Let us pray for the immediate fulfilment of this divinely conceived proposal.

The Apostate from Islam. This is the title of another book from the pen of our wellknown "philosopher and friend" Dr. S. M. Zwemer. It was due to appear in August from Marshall Bros. Press, London. In this volume the author seeks to show the utter untruthfulness of the statement made by some modern propagandists of Islam in Europe that there is no penalty for apostasy in Islam; and that Islam is a religion of tolerance. He raises the question, "Why so few Moslem Converts?" and then in a powerfully convincing and scholarly chapter on the "Law of Apostasy" he goes to the very root of the whole matter. By numerous examples from history and present day experience he shows most vividly how swiftly and surely the "Law" works as a powerful deterrent; but that in spite of all this, there are increasing numbers of hidden disciples, and possible signs of the "dawn of a new era."

There is a very complete Bibliography, and a useful Index.

FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

- Pray for an educated Moslem Convert in Murshidabad, Bengal, who with his wife and two daughters, has had to suffer much persecution in his village where he is now preaching Christ.
- Pray for a most earnest, and well-educated man from Nagpur who was recently baptised in Mhow, C. I. He is a descendant of the Pathan kings of Delhi and has had to suffer untold persecution from his relatives, but is determined to bear all for Christ's sake.
- Pray for a "young lad of 22 who is immensely keen on soulwinning" that a suitable place may be found for him, and for the many others like him that are found here and there all over India.

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