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## News and Notes

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### Preaching to Muslims Vindicated

#### II

Or is it possible to say to the missionary, "Preach about your own religion if you like, but be silent about that of others." Can a man be ignorant about the religion of the man to whom he wishes to preach? How can he make him listen to his preaching? In this case the Moslem would certainly despise his words and consider him a fool. How can thoughts be exchanged, except after the study of the original books of the two religions? Or if anyone answers "No, a man should know nothing but his own religion; that is enough": I reply, Possibly that might have been so in times past; But in our days it is not; for the different elements of the human race have become very closely connected in all departments of life, spiritually and materially; and even if a Moslem never meets a missionary to discuss his religion with him he will certainly find many things to compel him to revise his beliefs—modern science and inventions, or war, or political or economic considerations.

If the Moslem investigates the Christian's religion carefully and fairly and then finds that Islam is better, has he not benefitted from the teaching? Grant, for argument's sake, that he embraces Christianity and leaves the religion in which he has been nurtured, why should he be despised if that is the result of conviction of heart, not of any special aim? If he really understood his former religion then he is responsible for himself. Religion is a matter to be settled with God, in which there is no compulsion. Nothing ought to prevent a man from following his conscience, for it is not good for a man to resist conscience (as one of the saints says) at the parting of life's ways. And if a man was ignorant of his former religion and did not know what it enjoins, what loss is it if he leaves it and walks in the ways of the Christian books? For the missionary's object is to make him behave

as a Christian, not merely to call himself a Christian or embrace the intellectual beliefs of Christianity. The Christian often prefers a Moslem remaining a good Moslem to his becoming a bad and useless Christian. The fair-minded Moslem necessarily agrees with all this and does not consider a Moslem to be justified whatever he is, nor a Christian to be perishing whatever his condition. Someone will object at this point, never mind those who either remain in their own faith or leave it to become Christians; they are few in any case. Consider those who are misled by investigation, and end by believing no religion at all, and become only doubters and agnostics and atheists. Is not that a bad thing? Certainly the missionary is very much troubled if a man deserts his religion. This is the opposite of his aim, but often the results of his labour are undone by matters which he cannot prevent. But the missionary's critics will remember that the circumstances of our times often tend to corrupt religious thoughts (as we have said before in speaking of science and materialism). These new ideas are widely spread by newspapers and periodicals and books in both Orient and Occident, and the faith of many is weakened by secret doubts. Then when people hear preaching about another religion they say, "Religions are so many that we do not know which one to turn to. We will leave them all." Remark that the reason of their atheism is not preaching but the opportunity of discovering their own thoughts. They are like flowers whose roots have been eaten by worms; one day their leaves will all fall off when the lightest wind blows. That is the work not of the breeze but of the unseen worm. If a religion is rooted in a man's mind how can it be shaken by the breeze of preaching, especially if, as Moslems claim, Islam is the reasonable natural religion, and the beliefs of the Christian Church are contrary to reason and nature. The fair-minded Moslem will not deny this but he will say that the missionary aims specially at the common people and children who do not understand their beliefs, to corrupt their ideas. I answer that I do not know any missionary who would refuse to preach to the learned and enlightened. On the contrary he wishes to meet them, but most of them hate and despise him and are unwilling to discuss with him or study his books. The missionary is not surprised at this, for the preaching of Christ was rejected in his own days by the learned and the leaders of the people and approved by the common and simple folk. The preaching of Paul also and other apostles was generally despised by the notable men and philosophers of his time. If Christ and his apostles received the simple, may the missionary of these days despise or reject them? He will not neglect opportunities to preach to them, for he does not forget how his Master welcomed little children and blessed them, when his disciples threatened those who brought them. But all this is to say only that the missionary does not refuse to preach to such; yet he does not direct all his teaching toward ignorant children. His work is not secret; on the contrary he proclaims his message openly and if the

Moslem does not want to send his children to the Mission school or his sick to the Mission Hospital where Christ is preached, why, no one compels him to do so. Granted that some common people are impressed by that preaching and cannot answer the preacher because of their ignorance, does that not give the Ulema a good opportunity to enlighten the people, so that a desirable result follows? Often in non-protestant Christian countries this has been the case. Protestant preachers have stirred up leaders and priests to teach the people what they had been neglecting to preach. The story is told of a certain American teacher who formerly lived in Syria that while he was on his way to some village he was asked why he was going there. He said he was going to open two schools. When the questioner expressed astonishment he added, "I shall open one school, and immediately my opponents in such and such a sect will open another."

The easiest way to get rid of missionaries is to silence them forcibly by government orders and to prevent them preaching by means of spies; but it is not the noblest way. Thoughtful people consider it a confession of weakness and fear. A better way than that, nobler and nearer to the spirit of the Koran, is that expert teachers should meet preaching with better teaching and take the opportunity of warning and instructing their own people. For truth will prevail, and nothing will prevail against it. There is an admirable saying of a learned and aged Moslem who knew the Christian books well—"I am glad that the missionaries should spread the knowledge of the Bible among Moslems, for I believe that the Moslem who studies this book, will become more firmly attached to Islam."

But if the missionary acts wisely and lovingly the principle of respect for freedom of conscience will spread, and there will be no fear of any damage to the public security as a result of preaching. In Hyde Park, in London, every Sunday men of every religion and sect differing totally from one another deliver addresses, but no disturbances arise. Every wise man, Christian or Moslem, ought to work for this religious freedom and for its general acceptance. This will not be by preserving the apparent truce between the various sects which obtains at the present day, for it is only superficial. It awaits only the favourable opportunity to burst forth like a volcano, for there is no real love in men's hearts, only hatred and scorn. True peace and tolerance can only be obtained through enlightenment and honest mutual understanding, which can only be when we know and treat one another as brethren in humanity, leaving judgment to God to whom we must all return and who will judge between us in those things where we differ. Why, for example, is it impossible to issue a review containing articles by thinking men of the two religions, not controversial, but positive, and displaying the best treasure of each religion?

No real patriot can condemn preaching as a means of division between his countrymen, but must approve it as a means of approach,

for true patriotism cannot grow while in the hearts of men of different beliefs there is religious intolerance. If it is impossible to unite all religions in a country, then either all religion must be banished so that men may unite in atheism (which God forbid!) or men of different religions must approach one another by mutual knowledge and respect. This is one of the uses of preaching that men should know the best of one another's beliefs. It is grievous to remark the large number of Moslems even among the "Ulemas" who know nothing of the Bible, and the large number of thoughtful Christians who are ignorant of the Koran and Moslem ideas. Some of them know a little from the study of books of criticism but it is not right that a man should profess to know Christianity after reading Moslem books about it, without reading its own book. Nor ought we to pass judgment on a religion from the characters of its followers, especially if we consider only the worst of them.

Yet we often hear Christians condemning Islam because of the Turks' treatment of the Armenians, or the other blots or disgraces. They think these are essential parts of the religion, without knowing its real nature. How do they know that the religion itself is not guiltless? If a man wants to judge a religion by the behaviour of its followers, let him at least consider the best of them.

It is sometimes said that the small number of Christians in relation to the rest of the world is a proof of its inability to meet the needs of men. I say in answer to this objection that the number of adherents is of no importance either to prove or disprove the truth of a religion. The Christian should not boast of the 500 million or more Christians, that is about one-third of the inhabitants of the world, nor despair because two-thirds are still outside his church; for his Master Christ attached no importance to numbers but on the contrary said, "How narrow is the way," etc. So why should the missionary be affected by numbers, large or small, except as a stimulus to his zeal in spreading his religion?

Whether the religion be true or false is not our subject now, as we are discussing only the motives and aims of the missionary. We say that he cannot neglect preaching, whatever his circumstances, favourable or unfavourable, for his Master enjoined this duty on his disciples, and also for a personal reason he cannot forbear to preach since he has found in his religion an aim and joy unequalled in the world and he wants to display it to others.

Yet, while he holds to his own religion and preaches it, the missionary does not refuse to review his own beliefs and compare them and test them by all the other religions or scientific statements which he meets; nor does he treat lightly objections and doubts, but up till now he has found nothing to destroy his faith that Christ is the author of his hope and salvation and that nothing can take the place of Christ. So he continues to preach believing that this is a service of peace and benevolence, taking as his motto the words which he would like everyone to adopt as theirs, "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good."

(Concluded.)

## C. H. S. Books on Islam

### II

We would urge all those interested in this subject to avail themselves of the opportunity here afforded to acquire a small library at very little cost.

All the books reviewed below are issued in paper covers, unless expressly stated otherwise. The number appearing within brackets, after the specification of each book, shows the approximate stock at C. L. S. headquarters, Madras. (Address: Post Box, 501. Park Town, Madras.)

An asterisk (\*) indicates that the book is being offered at half the price quoted here.

#### A. The Quran and Traditions.

The Quran—'a book which is a poem, a code of laws, a Book of Common Prayer, and a Bible in one.' BOSWORTH SMITH.

1. *Selections from the Quran.* Ed. by Sell. pp. 330 (2nd Ed.) cloth, \* Rupee one. (420).

A most useful introduction to the Quran for the general reader. Contains a prefatory sketch on the structure, character and composition of the Quran, together with a statement of Muslim views as to its inspiration. This is followed by 225 pages of quotations covering the entire Quran and interspersed with explanatory notes. The concluding section is a detailed criticism of the Quran extending to 80 pages, in which both its excellences and its defects are passed in review.

2. *Al Quran.* Sell, pp. 46. 4as. (50).

3. *The Origins of the Quran.* Goldsack (out of print).

Sell's booklet originally appeared as an article in 'The Indian Interpreter' (Oct. 1909), in reply to a one-sided treatment of the subject by a Muslim contributor, consequently the treatment is restricted.

The unique claims maintained by orthodox Muslims on behalf of their book are scrutinized in the light of the facts of history and the internal evidence of the Quran itself, and shown to be untenable.

Goldsack's work is a concise and thorough treatment of the subject which we should like to see reprinted.

4. *The Quran in Islam.* Goldsack. pp. 43. 2as. (1200)

5. *Recensions of the Quran.* Sell. pp. 30. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " \* 8as. (419)

Goldsack sets out to prove "from reliable Muslim authorities that the present Quran is far from being a complete and accurate copy of that Quran which Muhammad taught his followers." A great deal of evidence is collected from Muslim authors and the Traditions (not all 'reliable,' however,) to show that omissions and variant readings played a considerable part in the very early history of the Quran. The author, at times, displays too great eagerness to establish his thesis.

Sell's *Recensions* gathers up practically all there is to be said on this subject. He deals minutely with the early recensions of Abu Bakr and Uthman and shows that the Quran is thus open to criticism and that the orthodox view as to its inspiration needs to be greatly modified. He discusses also the Shiah claim that passages relative to Ali have been suppressed, and inclines to the view that the charge is unfounded. With other eminent scholars he holds that the present version of the Quran is, generally speaking, an authentic record.

6. *'Ilmu't—Tajwid* (or The Art of Reading the Quran) Sell. Pp. 44. 6as. (260).

A valuable manual for those who desire to know how the *Hafiz* reads his Quran; it deals with 'responses,' correct pronunciation, pause signs, and rules for copying the Quran.

7. *Qadiani Commentary on the Quran*. Sell. pp. 8. \* $\frac{1}{2}$  an. (1800).
8. *Criticism of a Qadiani Commentary*. By 'Mufattish.' pp. 40 \* 8 as. (480).

These treat of different commentaries. The leaflet is a *vigorous* exposure of the first part of a work which was announced some ten years ago, with much boasting, by the *Anjuman-Tarraqi-i-Islam*, of Qadian, Panjab, though we have waited in vain for the remaining parts. Its manifest purpose was to support the novel claim to the Messiahship put forward by the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Under the *nom de plume* of *Mufattish*, our author, in the second tract, criticises what has come to be spoken of as the Woking Quran, prepared by Moulvie Muhammad Ali, a leader of the more progressive school of the Ahmadiyas. Printed and published in England this ornate volume, priced at one guinea, has obviously been produced for propaganda purposes among English-knowing peoples, and is of a nature likely to entrap the unwary. *Mufattish* has done great service in exposing the specious character of this commentary.

9. *The Traditions in Islam*. Goldsack. pp. 113. 8 as. (450).
10. *Selections from Muhammadan Traditions*. Goldsack. pp. 325. Cloth, Five Rupees. (200).

Mr. Goldsack has placed the results of his painstaking study of the Traditions within reach of all who are interested in the subject by publishing these two valuable works. The first is the most compact introduction to the Traditions available. The author deals with their origin, authenticity, and systematisation, and shows how the Traditions have a vogue with the rank and file of Muslims almost equal to that of the Quran itself.

The *Selections* is a careful compilation of the Traditions themselves from the popular Muslim collection known as the *Mishkat-ul-Masabih*. Its value will be apparent from the fact that the only other English version was one prepared and published by Capt. Matthews of the Bengal Artillery, in two volumes, over 100 years ago, and now practically unobtainable.

## B. The Teaching of the Quran.

"Islam is not a theological system, but a certain attitude of the soul of God."  
W. R. W. GARDNER.

1. *The Muslim Idea of God*. W. H. T. GAIRDNER. pp. 50. 4 as. (2nd. ed.) (100).

Canon Gairdner's booklet is in the form of a dialogue between some Egyptians who represent the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian faiths. Though not claiming to be an exhaustive treatment, the salient features of the Muslim view are clearly brought out, and we have, stated over against them, the reasonableness and adequacy of the Christian belief. A book that one may readily place in the hands of educated Muslims.

2. *The Quranic Doctrine of God*. W. R. W. Gardner. pp. 100. \* 5as. (115).
3. *The Quranic Doctrine of Man*. Gardner. pp. 50. \* 4as. (470).
4.    *do do Sin*.       do.       pp. 46. \* 4as. (450).
5.    *do do Salvation*.   do.       pp. 60. \* 4as. (450).

Mr. Gardner's four essays are the outcome of *an independent study* of the Arabic Quran, and as such are worthy of close scrutiny by all who desire to know what the Quran does, and does not, teach on these great themes. The author demonstrates that not only European writers but orthodox Muslim theologians themselves have frequently entirely misunderstood the statements of the Quran. Repeatedly one is startled to find the length to which Muhammad advances in the line of sound doctrine, while the author himself successfully meets the inevitable charge that he is reading too much into the Quranic passages.

Nevertheless, he does not hesitate to make clear the limitations of Muhammad's teaching in each section. *God* is far from being the Holy, Loving Father of men. *Man* is born with a nature weak, but *not* corrupted. *Sin* spells opposition and rebellion to a mighty will, and not injury done to the love of God. *Salvation* is not redemptive but legalistic; it is not a becoming, but a receiving.

We imagine that many a Muslim of an enquiring turn of mind will be glad to be introduced to these studies. For the missionary seeking to persuade the Muslim of the superiority of the Christian revelation they are a necessity.

6. *The Holy Spirit in Quran and Bible*. Mylrea and Masih. pp. 58. 4 as. (70).

Written for the thoughtful Muslim, but nevertheless a valuable study for Christian workers. The twenty references to the Spirit in the Quran are dealt with in turn, and it is conclusively shown that the idea, and at times the phraseology, have been taken over from Christian sources with no clear notion of their significance. The laborious and sometimes ludicrous efforts at explanation on the part of Muslim commentators are quoted with great effect. The reader in a final section is led from the 'unknown' to the known Holy Spirit of God in the faith of the Christian.

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## Correspondence

*Persia's turn this time!* That ubiquitous torch-bearer, Dr. Zwemer having concluded his tour in Persia has found time, during a brief rest in Paris, to send us a few lines. He was accompanied on that tour by Mrs. Zwemer and for both it must have been a strenuous time. The trip from Cairo to Baghdad and back was accomplished over the desert route, while in Persia itself they covered 4184 miles by motor car! Between May 12th and July 27th, they held conferences at each of the following places: Baghdad, Kermanshah, Hamadan, Tabriz, Urumia, Resht, Teheran, Isfahan, Yezd, and Kerman. In addition to these conferences they gave over 80 addresses at public meetings throughout the country at which Muslims, Parsees, and Christians were present. The thoroughness of their itinerary is indicated by the fact that the only mission stations in Persia which they were unable to visit were Meshed, Shiraz and Seistan.

The tour concluded with a final "All-Persia Conference" at Teheran (August 1st-8th) at which 56 representatives gathered together from all parts of the country. We are requested to inform members of the League that a full report of that final Conference has been printed and can be obtained at the cost of about two shillings from Mr. J. D. Payne, at the American Mission, Teheran. The report contains papers of exceptional

interest on Shiah Islam. No surprise will be felt at the announcement that the January, 1927, number of the Moslem World quarterly is to be a Persia number, containing articles which deal fully with Shiah Islam.

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*Work for Muslims in Paris.* Dr. Zwemer says that the new mosque in Paris, built by the aid of the French Government, is a very beautiful structure. In January we reproduced notes of the effort that is being made by Mr. Warren and his wife, of the North Africa Mission, to get into sympathetic touch with Paris Muslims, said to number 2,000, most of them Kabyle workmen in factories. Mr. and Mrs. Warren's work is difficult and Dr. Zwemer solicits the prayers of League members on their behalf.

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*Rev. Frederick G. Coan, now in retirement,* writes: 'I enjoy very greatly "News and Notes" which you so kindly send me, and having spent over fifty years in Persia among the Mohammedans I am much interested in all that I can learn of them.

'You have possibly heard of the wonderful way in which God is working among the Mohammedans in Persia, and how everywhere there is an open door to carry the Gospel to them. Conversions and open confessions took place in every station of the Presbyterian Board last year and there was much encouragement in the work of the C.M.S. in southern Persia.

'Our schools for Moslem boys and girls have been crowded, with many kept out for lack of room and means. Many towns are asking us to enter and welcoming us, but there is such a lack of laborers and means.

'Our great need now, and one that the whole Christian world should pray for, is *Religious Liberty*. Our new king is liberal and hates the ecclesiastics who have been opposed to him as they are to all innovations. Will you not ask all who are interested in the evangelization of Islam to unite with us in prayer for this much needed object?

'God answers prayer and what a Great God we have!'

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*An open door, but no volunteers!* In response to our plea two months ago for subjects for prayer, one of our members has represented to us the difficulty his mission is experiencing in maintaining work successfully started within the borders of an independent Native Sate in India. Lady missionaries originally opened up this particular work in the zananas of the city which has a population of about 45,000 the majority of whom are Muslims, but have since retired from the field.

Owing to a reduced staff the friends now on the field have no one available whom they can send, and there is unfortunately no prospect of securing new recruits for this work from home. There are about 90 Christians in the city, most of whom are employed by the State. Contact is being maintained with these by periodic visits, but it is somewhat doubtful if these can be continued indefinitely. The Society concerned has only been able to maintain its somewhat precarious position there with difficulty, and if they should be obliged, for reasons noted above, to withdraw it is doubtful if the concession would be renewed to another mission. The problem would be largely solved if the Friends' Mission were to secure new workers, and we are asked to make this a matter of special prayer.



## The Muslim Year

### Jumada'l-Ula

The fifth and sixth months of the Muslim Year (*Jumada'l-Ula* and *Jumadal-Akhir*, corresponding, this year, with November and December) do not call for any special note.

Scholars have from time to time, discussed the probable origin of the name. Mr. Lane, in his Dictionary, says the two months to which the name *Jumada* (freezing) is applied, are said to be so called because when they were so named, they fell in the season of freezing water. On the other hand, M. Caussin de Perceval held that they were thus called because they fell in a period when the earth had become dry and hard, by reason of paucity of rain, *jama'd* being an epithet applied to land upon which rain has not fallen.

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### FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER

- PRAISE** for the splendid opportunities granted to Dr. and Mrs. Zwemer in their recent tour in Persia, and prayer that God will pour forth rich blessing upon all with whom they came into contact.
- PRAISE** for the manifest signs of God's working in the hearts of Persian Muslims, and prayer for the establishment of religious liberty in that land.
- PRAYER** for the work of Mr. and Mrs. Warren among the Kabyle Muslims in the city of Paris.
- PRAY** that if it be God's will, workers may be forthcoming to meet the need now felt by the Friends' Mission in India.

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