

## News and Notes

A Monthly Paper printed for the private use of the  
Members of the Missionaries to Muslims League.

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Series XV

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6th January = 1st Rajab (7th mo.), 1345, A.H.

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### On Making Jesus Known

BRUCE Barton's new book, *The Man Nobody Knows*, (published by Constable, London) has an introduction by the Hon. and Rev. James Adderley which should be read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested by every missionary to Muslims. Our present concern is not with the book itself, which is a natural sequel to the author's earlier work, *A Young Man's Jesus*, but with some very striking things said in the Introduction.

Rev. Adderley writes: 'It is because I believe that the Incarnation was God's way of showing us Himself that I am sure that . . . *Jesus must be allowed to walk this earth again without anyone necessarily knowing His divinity at first.*'\*

'If this was not the method of Jesus, why did He not publish the Nicene Creed and compel men by force to accept it? Why did He choose a totally different method and come as a little child and live a man's life and trust that His disciples would follow Him and find their Father?

'For thirty-three years He went about doing good, not promulgating creeds about Himself. Would that for 1900 years the Church had done the same!

\* \* \* \* \*

'Many of us who have been brought up from childhood to accept the Creeds have never had a chance of coming freshly to Christ through the knowledge of His perfect manhood, looked at apart from dogma. *We have been introduced to Him first of all as 'God,' and our very idea of God Himself has been formed in our minds from the Old Testament.*

'*The last thing we are on the look-out for is a human friend. Anything like the gradual growth of the faith of the first disciples, anything like the spontaneous joy of the people who heard Him gladly,*

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\* The italics throughout are ours. Ed. N. & N.

or the wonder that no man had ever spoken like this Man, or the mystical recognition of His authority as more convincing than that of the scribes—all this has been denied us. I would almost say that we have been cheated of it by our conventional Christian education.

'Many of the painters and sculptors and manufacturers of stained glass have followed in the wake of the Catechism-mongers and have made things worse. They have familiarized us with a Christ quite unlike any fellowman.

\* \* \* \*

'All honour, then, to those who try to bring home to us the true Jesus, the strong, healthy, happy, friendly, royal-hearted Jesus . . . . . It is largely because I have come to see what Jesus was as man that I firmly believe that the Crucified is alive for ever more, and can seize me now as He seized St. Paul.'

\* \* \* \*

To all of which we are prepared to say an emphatic 'Amen,' and would add it as our conviction that such a presentation of Jesus has been long overdue in much of our work for Muslims. Years ago this was pointed out as one of the defects of our preaching. We were told that Muslims turn from our picture of Christ to find in Muhammad a strength and vigour of character we have somehow failed to show. We need to proclaim Christ to them as *Ecce Vir!* (see Canon Gairdner's article in *The Vital Forces of Christianity and Islam*).

Again, among the many important findings of the Jerusalem Conference, 1924, the following occupies a prominent place: 'We are impressed with a sense of the great need there exists for creating in the Moslem mind a new and a true conception of Jesus Christ, believing that when the Moslems see Jesus they will be drawn to Him.'

What is it that prevents the Muslim from gaining a true idea of Jesus? You say, "Incurable prejudice!" True, but does that alone explain his difficulty? Has not the manner of the missionary presentation of Christ often served to deepen that prejudice? Have we not sometimes appeared to be far more concerned to expound and defend Christ's divinity and His title *Son of God*, than to use all our available resources to get the Muslim to see Jesus in the sense for which Mr. Adderley so ably pleads?

*We know*, none better, that the title *Son of God* is still to many a Muslim like a red rag to a bull and yet we go on using it! Judged in the light of the facts of psychology that is a first-class blunder. For what, after all, is our chief aim? To defend Christ, or to commend Him? Where, then, is the gain if, while using the most cogent arguments in defence of our contention, we yet realize that our man has gone away obstinate and embittered? Have we thereby, think you, done a service to the cause of our Master?

Let us commence at the other end. Let us strive to make known to our Muslim friends *the Jesus they do not know*—'the strong, healthy, happy, friendly, royal-hearted Jesus.' Let us have faith like unto His

faith, to believe that if we present Him to them as the men of His day saw Him, He will draw even these unto Himself, not by our stressing His claims to divinity nor by our maintaining His right to be called *Son of God*, but just by the extraordinary charm of His perfect character as portrayed in His daily life no less than in His poignant death.

After all, *we cannot make* a Muslim see that Jesus is divine, that will only come 'by revelation.' No man, not even a Muslim, can call Jesus 'Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit. But we who know Him to be the perfect revelation of God to men, and the only Redeemer from the guilt and grip of sin, know also that this same amazing discovery awaits every earnest seeker after God among Muslims.

Let us, then, make this our supreme business in the New Year upon which, through the mercies of God, we have entered—to make Jesus known to Muslims in all the attractiveness of His perfect manhood.

Yours, in the Same Great Service,  
L. BEVAN JONES.

## Should Converts Change Their Names ?

Rev. Canon Goldsmith, our President, writes:—

DEAR EDITOR,

**I**N a recent *News and Notes* you invited opinions about the naming of converts. Excuse my delay in replying, but we are interested in the matter and have had varied experience.

Our last case was when we baptized a Syed Abdur Rahim as "Daud Rahim," at his own request. He was enlisting in the Sappers and Miners, in which corps there are many Christians, chiefly Roman Catholics. But he found his name "Rahim" was not recognized as a *Christian* name, so the Christians did not properly receive him; while Muhammadans, for the same reason, claimed him as a Muhammadan (or rather as a pervert, when they discovered he was a convert to Christ); so he found it uncomfortable all round.

Others to whom we have given *one* "Christian" name in addition to their previous Muhammadan name, have sometimes (when they found an opportunity) dropped it.

Others who were in Government service, where they were only known by their original Muhammadan name, have reverted to their original name in order to avoid confusion in Government records.

Weak ones, and those who have to live amongst their people, find it better to adopt a Christian name and tacitly to pretend that they were born Christians—and thus avoid the reproach of being "apostates."

Some add 'Masihi' at baptism to their previous name.

Hitherto we have preferred to keep most (at least) of the old name and add a distinctively Christian name. But *what are Christian*

*names?* Many Indian Christians take names like "Meshach," which are really heathenish—though not Hindu or Muhammadan—and are (of course) *scriptural!*

I hope other Christian leaders will give us their experience. Excuse these disjointed comments.

19th October, 1926.

Yours in the Master's Service,

MALCOLM G. GOLDSMITH.

## Among the Muslims of South India

**H**AVE been asked for a little account of my work. For the past 13 years I have been working amongst Mohammedans in the Coimbatore District (Madras Presidency), in Andiyur, Gobichettipalyam and Satyamangalam.

1. In *Andiyur* the Mohammedans are poor and very ignorant, and without a Bible-woman I found it very difficult for us to understand one another. I had a convert girl with me for a few months, this was a very great help and the women welcomed her and listened well—then of course this set up opposition which ended in my being assaulted one day. However, even this turned out for good, as one of the chief Mohammedans of the place was so indignant, and to show his disapproval came and asked me to go to his house. However, it closed my Sunday School as the children were frightened with stories.

2. In *Gobichettipalyam*, where I have been longest, the Mohammedans are most friendly. One elderly Mohammedan woman came almost to the point of decision, but her daughters broke in and told her not to believe and not to listen, and she yielded to them though God's Spirit was certainly striving with her and, though friendly, she has never come through. One boy in my S. S. decided for Christ before the other boys and has gone on.

3. In *Satyamangalam* I have only been working for the last nine months. There are 300 Mohammedan houses, but I find that, except for a few who are connected with Gobichettipalyam, they are most bigoted and I can make but little headway.

However, I have a good Sunday School of about 20 children, but I find that as soon as they become interested it is found necessary to send them to Gobichettipalyam to school!

Still, I don't at all feel like giving up and I am hoping to get my convert girl, who is now a widow, back again—she has helped me early in the year and was a great blessing.

I believe there is a good work to be done amongst Mohammedans and so few have done it in the past that is why there are so few results.

(Mrs.) G. C. MERRIWEATHER.

## Book Review

*Islam and the Divine Comedy*, by Miguel Asin, translated by Harold Sunderland; John Murray, London; pp. 295; 12/-

The Spanish original of which the present is an abridged translation appeared six years ago under the title "Moslem Eschatology and the Divine Comedy." The author is a Roman Catholic and Professor of Arabic at the University of Madrid. He is well-known to Orientalists through his earlier studies, especially on the relations of Islamic theology to the theologians of the Middle Ages. The book before us has awakened keen controversy. Professor Nallino of Rome says that this study is the most important work on the religion of Islam that has appeared of late.

The book consists of four parts. Part I compares the legend of the nocturnal journey and ascension of Mohammed with the *Divine Comedy*. Part II is a comparison of the *Divine Comedy* with other Moslem legends on the after life. Part III deals with Moslem features in those Christian legends which were the precursors of the *Divine Comedy*. Part IV, which, in our opinion, should have been Part I, discusses the probability of the transmission of Islamic models to Europe and particularly to Dante.

The conclusion of Miguel Asin is that Dante is indebted to Ibn Arabi, the Spanish Moslem mystic who died twenty-five years before Dante was born, for his conception of the *Divine Comedy*. He says, "Thus the two works agree in subject-matter, action and allegorical purpose; in their principal and secondary persons; in the architecture of the astronomical heavens; and in the didactic trend of ideas and the use of literary devices to produce in abstract a national cyclopaedia. To these features of resemblance must be added the similarity in style; both works are so abstruse and involved at times as to suggest to the reader the mysteriousness of an oracle. In the face of all these reasons it is not too much to say that Ibn Arabi's work is of all Moslem types the most akin to the *Paradiso* in particular and the whole *Divine Comedy* in general, in so far at least as the latter may be regarded as a moral and didactic allegory." Once again, in speaking of the *Inferno*, he says; "The general architecture of the *Inferno* is but a faithful copy of the Moslem hell. Both are in the shape of a vast funnel or inverted cone and consist of a series of storeys, each the abode of one class of sinner. In each, moreover, there are various subdivisions corresponding to as many subcategories of sinners. The greater the depth, the greater is the degree of sin and the pain inflicted. The ethical system in the two hells is also much alike, the atonement is either analogous to, or the reverse of, the sin committed. Finally, both hells are situate beneath the city of Jerusalem."

As the author points out in the concluding portion of this most interesting and scholarly work, to prove literary imitation it is necessary to show not only agreement between the model and the copy and to prove that the model existed prior to the copy, but that the original was known to the copyist. In our opinion, the last step in the argument should have been given fuller and prior consideration. Otherwise, we deal simply with coincidences.

As a good Catholic, Miguel Asin is jealous for Christ and His Church. His conclusion, therefore, is characteristic, both as a defence of Dante and an indictment of Islam. "In the end we find that it is that perennial source of poetry and spirituality, the Divine religion of Christ, that furnishes the real key to the genesis of Dante's poem and its precursors, both Christian and Moslem. For Islam, be it once more said, is

but the bastard offspring of the Gospel and the Mosaic Law, part of whose doctrines on the after-life it adopted. Lacking the restraining influence of an infallible authority whereby the fancy of its believers might have been checked, it assimilated elements from other Eastern sources and thus came to deck and overlay with all the trappings of Oriental fancy the sober picture of the life beyond the grave that is outlined in the Gospel. Dante could, without altering the essence of Christian teaching on that life, draw for the purposes of his poem on the artistic features furnished by the Moslem legends. In so doing he was but reclaiming for Christianity property that was by rights its own, heirlooms that had lain hidden in the religious lore of the East until restored to the stock of Western culture greatly enhanced by the imaginative genius of Islam."

S. M. ZWEMER.

## Affairs in the Hedjaz

### Conflicting Views among Indian Muslims.

A CORRESPONDENT reports that a meeting of the Muslim public was held on November 2, in the Sadar Bazar, Delhi, under the presidentship of Moulvi Abdulla Sahib Nasar, at which the actions of the Ali Brothers regarding the Hedjaz were reviewed. It was shown that the duty of "Haj" has been performed without interruption for the past 14 centuries. Resolutions were passed unanimously:—(1) Congratulating Sultan Ibn Saud on the most comfortable arrangements made during the time of "Haj," whereby he proved his capability for keeping peace and rule in the Hedjaz; (2) condemning those who are trying to deter the people from going to perform the duty of "Haj" and further appealing to all well-to-do Muslims to perform their duty of "Haj" at any cost; (3) repudiating all the proceedings of the Lucknow Conference in this connection and declaring that the All-India Motamar Lucknow Conference or rather those who followed its proceedings were not the true representatives of all the Mussalmans in India; (4) condemning the attitude of the Ali Brothers about the Hedjaz, passing a vote of censure on them and stating that the propaganda which is being spread by the Ali Brothers is very dangerous for Muslims at large; (5) requesting the Khilafat Committee to be very cautious in the present movements and further asking the Khilafat Committee to reject the report of the Khilafat deputation, otherwise the little present influence of the Khilafat Committee would be removed from the heart of the public. Lastly, the meeting invited the attention of Masih-ul Mulk Ajmal Khan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Moulana Siabir Ahmad Usmani to the critical moment before them and hoped that they would adopt the best and most reasonable course to lead the Muslim public in co-operation and peace.—*Muslim Outlook* (Lahore).

## The Muslim Year

### Rajab.

THIS, as the Arabic word implies, is the 'honoured' month, it having been so called in the Times of Ignorance because war was not permitted to be waged in it.

The Prophet is related to have said that this month was like a snowy white fountain flowing from heaven itself, and that he who fasts in this month will drink of the waters of life.

It is usual for devout Muslims to spend the first Friday night of the month (that will be, this year, Thursday night, January 6th) in prayer, (*Lailatu-l-Raghaib*—the "night of supererogatory devotion.") The Sunnis generally, however, do not observe this custom.

There seems to be a difference of opinion among Muslims as to whether the night of the Ascent (*Miraj*) took place on the 27th of this month or in *Rabi-u'l Awwal* (see Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*). Will members who are interested endeavour to find out if Muslims in their area make a special observance of the 27th?

Special care is taken to mark the first appearance of the moon of *Shaban* on the 29th, so that no confusion may arise as to the moon of the more important month, *Ramadhan*.

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### Note

**Arabic Reference Quran** (See Oct. N. & N. Pp. 80, 81).

Those interested in this new publication are hereby notified that the Agents for the work are as follows:

1. *In England*.—R. Q. C/o. 85 Highbury New Park, London, N. 5, (Price 7s. post free).
2. *In Egypt*.—Nile Mission Press, 37 Sharia Al Manakh, Cairo (Pt. 20).
3. *In Syria*.—C/o The American Press, Beirut.
4. *In India*.—Panjab Religious Book Soc. Anarkali, Lahore (who can supply the 1st Part stitched, unbound, at Rs. 2-0-0).

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### More Urdu Tracts for Muslims

(See N. & N. June, 1926, and October, 1926.)

*The Cairo 'Khutbas' Nos. 1—9.*—8 Pp. each. 4as. per 100. Rs. 2/- per 1000. *Prophecy and the Beni Israel. The Mother of Jesus. Ibrahim the Hanif. The Sinless Intercessor. The Fall. The Birth, Death and Resurrection of Christ. Neglect of the Scriptures. A Spirit from God. Raising the Dead.*

*Translated from 'What God Hath Used' (N. M. P. Cairo).*—*The Two Ways in the Quran*, (8 Pp. 4as. per 100. Rs. 2-0-0 per 1000). *Aunt Aisha's Jessamine, FOR WOMEN.* (2 Pp. 1an. per 100; 8as. per 1000). *The Fish that went too far*, (2 Pp. 1 anna Pp. 100; 8as. per 1000). *A Historical Fact (The fact of Christ) and its moral effect*, (32 Pp. half an anna). *The Names of Christ*, (16 Pp. one pice). *The Sinless Prophet*, (16 Pp. one pice). *The Deity of Christ*, (14 Pp. one pice).

*Ithna 'Ashariya.*—(The Twelve Shi'ah Imams). Sell. (72 Pp. Two annas).

## The Nile Mission Press, Cairo

We have received copies of the most recent Catalogue issued by the N. M. P. and their 21st Report. It is good to learn that their output is steadily increasing: as the Report says 'almost too rapidly; a year ago we had 530 separate Arabic publications, but now the number is over 570. All these are in Arabic, with the exception of a few English translations from the Arabic; and all are Religious, not merely Educational.'

But the earnest Director (Arthur T. Upson) and his Committee are, quite rightly, *not* satisfied with mere production. They want to get their goods into circulation. Can you help them?

They give "Bookshop Terms": 20% discount on all their own publications and 10% on "outside" books. *Missionary Terms*: Same discount but on books to the value of 20 Pt. or one dollar. *Free Distribution Terms*: Those undertaking not to sell, but to give freely can have special grants at 50% reduction. These terms apply to small booklets only. Write to 37 Sharia Al Manakh for their Catalogue and fuller particulars.

## For Praise and Prayer

A member writes: 'May I ask the prayers of the members of the League at this time for Sind. In face of increasingly large opportunity there are many adversaries. Muslims constitute fully 80% of the 3½ million population. There are many indications of open-mindedness, as well as dissatisfaction with things as they are. Let us

**PRAY** God for a number who have in recent years confessed Christ and are holding true, and also for the number of Christians who are moving to Sind and making their homes there.

**PRAY** for those who are now seekers after Christ and that we who represent the Church of Christ may know how to receive them and build them up in the true faith.

## NEW MEMBERS

34.	Miss M. E. Shannon,	I. T. Coll.	Lucknow, U. P.
388.	Rev. R. Maxwell,	A. U. P. Miss.	Sangla, Panjab.
150.	Rev. H. F. Myres,	A. B. F. M. S.	Rangoon.
524.	Mr. W. H. Warren	C. L. S.	Madras.

## Notice

It is expected that we shall send out the February issue in the Indian Postal Area, by V. P. P., to collect Subscriptions due.

*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,  
Baptist Mission,  
Dacca, Bengal, India.

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