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News and Notes

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Report of the League, 1926

IT is with feelings of deep gratitude to God that we review matters of interest to this League connected with the year that has just closed. We have again sought to make this bond an instrument to effect His Purpose of Love toward Muslims, and in the steadily maintained interest of well over 500 members in almost every part of the Muslim world we are conscious that He has been with us in blessing. During the period under review the bond has reached out for the first time to lonely workers in Nigeria, Baluchistan, and Turkestan. In all 45 new members have joined the League.

As we look around we see signs of momentous changes. Here in India, for instance, as all the world knows, Muslims have acquired an unevitable notoriety inasmuch as they have repeatedly come into open and deadly conflict with their Hindu neighbours. The early promise of a *rapprochement* between the members of these great communities has not been realized. The position at present is that they have withdrawn from each other with feelings of bitterness and even hatred into separate and hostile camps. A feature of growing significance is the way in which both sides have set up organizations (a) for the consolidation of the social, political and religious life of the members of their respective communities, and (b) for carrying the standard of reclamation and proselytization into the opposite camp.

In the circumstances, as will be understood by our comrades elsewhere, our work among Muslims has become in certain respects more difficult. On the one hand, India is being stirred from end to end by new forms of so-called religious propaganda and in consequence the atmosphere is charged with suspicion and resentment. We come in for our share of this. On the other hand, the task of maintaining a strictly impartial frame of mind towards Hindu and Muslim alike at a time when each is loudly accusing the other of treachery is by no means easy.

Over against all this, however, we maintain the steady conviction that the only solution for these acute misunderstandings is to be found in the Christ whom we seek to serve on behalf of these very people.

We gratefully share in the joy and hope and prayers of our comrades in other fields, such as Turkey and Egypt, as they witness Muslim peoples demanding measures of progress and reform in matters touching their every-day life. We believe great good will come from these endeavours. We believe that God is working His purpose out in the Muslim world as year succeeds to year. It is our inestimable privilege as members of this League to be co-workers with Him.

The Secretary.

The Cost of Muslim Evangelization

*Notes of an address by the Rev. H. J. Lane Smith on 5th July 1926,
before the Bombay Missionary Conference.*

I. The Cost in the Past.

(a) *In lives laid down.* From the age of Raymund Lull, martyred in 1315, to modern days, with the death by violence of Dr. Vernon Starr at Peshawar, besides many lives laid down through sickness and weakness incurred in the stress of this work.

(b) *In work carried on for a time and then dropped.* We cannot call such work 'wasted,' yet certainly it was not used to the best advantage, because not followed up. For example, Muslim work in Lucknow, Calcutta, and other places, in most cases being staffed with one man only. This has been the case in Bombay where work was begun in 1859, carried on feebly, and even now is not really 'occupied.' Badly supported work is always expensive. A very large price has been paid in this way.

(c) *In broken hearts.* Think for instance of lonely workers in the Arabian Mission, and of Central Asia with one woman only. In Bombay from 1859 to 1894 the Rev. J. G. Deimler was alone, and his work closed down every furlough except one. This means expenditure is exorbitant in proportion to results aimed at and attainable.

II. The Cost in the Future.

Foreign workers are badly needed, and must be trained for this special work. *BUT* another kind of cost is required chiefly on the part of the Indian Christian Church.

(a) *Doctrine.* The Church in India must study how to preach Christ so as to win the Muslims. Truth, whilst firmly held, may need to be stated in a different way; for example the Holy Trinity, the Deity of our Lord, etc. More study and thought are required, with clear understanding of the Muslim standpoint.

(b) *Prayer.* A devout Muslim prays five times daily. How many Christians pray thrice daily, or even twice, or even once? How can we expect a Muslim to forsake Islam, and enter a (seemingly)

prayerless community? And then, what about public prayer? See *masjids* full of worshippers. And see Churches (except Roman Catholic) half empty.

(c) *Form and Attitude of Worship.* A devotional attitude needs to be made the absolute rule in all Churches. How often the opposite is to be seen! Lounging and sitting at prayer, restlessness and listlessness throughout the whole service. Again, Churches must be free from pictures and from statuary. These things mean much to the Muslim, and we must respect, if we wish to win, them.

(d) *Habits of Life*, such as eating and drinking. The use of intoxicants, Islam specifically prohibits. While Christianity does not specifically prohibit, yet we have in Christianity a very much higher and better motive for abstention, viz., the Example of Jesus Christ and His Apostles in abstention for the sake of others, and in the curtailment of one's own liberty in many matters for the sake of others. Many Muslims drink now-a-days. Many Muslims have always given way to this temptation. This all goes to show that express prohibitions have not the power to restrain. But 'the Love of Christ constraineth us.' We can abstain on these high grounds: 'Even Christ did not please Himself.'

(e) *Welcome.* Do all Christians show a welcome to converts from Islam? Do they receive them with brotherly love? Brotherhood should be much stronger in Christianity than in Islam. Is it actually so?

III. Are Missions and Churches willing to Pay the Price?

Muslim Evangelization must not be taken up as a 'pastime' or a 'hobby,' just because some man happens to have an interest in this particular subject. It must be regarded as a serious business. The issue is no less than taking up the Challenge which Islam flings out to the Church of Christ. The cost will be great, but the profit will be great. Muslim converts often make some of the best of our Church workers, specially in North India where a fairly good proportion of the ordained workers are of Muslim extraction, if not actual converts. Cannot leaders get together and devise some plans for working, either separately or co-operatively, in this great enterprise? The problem is, in the last resort, one for the Indian Church.

Let us pray that the Indian Church may be so filled with God's Spirit, and so fired with Love to her Master, that she may rise to the grandeur of the task confronting her, and willingly pay whatever cost may be involved in carrying the Gospel to the Muslims.

H. J. LANE SMITH.

The Southfields Mosque, London

READERS of *News and Notes* will have seen the reports of the opening of this mosque on the 3rd October. It may interest them to have a few notes of a visit paid after the "tumult and the shouting dies" on Friday last, the 26th November.

The vicar of the parish went with me and we presented ourselves at the house adjoining the mosque at about a quarter to two, the time of Friday Prayers being announced as two o'clock. The young woman who opened the door seemed rather taken aback, but she ushered us into a small room where another woman was sitting on a couch. I asked her if she too had come to attend the service. She smiled vacantly and gave no answer, but went out when the *imam* and another Indian visitor (formerly editor of *Al Hakm*, the Qadian paper) came in. I expressed our wish to see the service but they took us upstairs to a larger sitting room which had a tiny book-case with some volumes of an English encyclopedia, the only books we saw in the house. Again we suggested that the time announced for the service had come, but the reply was that they held the *Zuhr ki Namaz* earlier in the winter because otherwise it came too close to the 'Asr, which would be due at three. Eventually we asked to see the mosque and were taken over it, after it had been opened with some trouble.

The house, a largish one with some dozen rooms, has an unkempt garden behind it and further on stands the mosque which fronts on another road at right angles to that from which the house is entered. Between the two is a corner house and garden the tenants of which say that there is little coming and going in the mosque compound. In front of the mosque there is a little fountain basin, intended, we were assured, for the performance of *wuzu*, but obviously it was not in use now. Clearly no one had purified there that day. The mosque is a rectangular building surmounted by a modest dome. Allowing room for prostrations it might hold 200 worshippers. The only ornamentation is a strip over the one door with the Kalima in Arabic and below it a Persian quotation from the Mirza's writings on the peace of God in the assembly of His people. The interior is absolutely plain; including the rather low mihrab. There is no pulpit; the only fittings are a handsome blue carpet, three radiators on either side by the wall, a large lamp and two benches against the wall on either side of the door, intended, we were told, for the worshippers to take off their shoes. Time passed and there were no signs of preparation for 'Asr *ki Namaz* so we took our departure after declining an invitation to tea, convinced that no Friday Prayers had been held at this British centre of Islam. I gathered that the Sunday afternoon lectures set forth on a bill, are poorly attended, chiefly by women, for whom, in the summer there may be games. The place is half a mile from the nearest stations or bus-halts and not easy to find at that. The vicar thinks that the mission is making no appreciable impression on his parish. He would like to get the white women who are in the house into touch with lady visitors but this is not easy. Nor must we assume that present slackness means no fresh propagandist efforts in the future.

85, Highbury New Park, N. 5.
London, 29-11-26.

H. U. WEITBRECHT STANTON.

C. L. S. Books on Islam

III

WE continue our Review with notes on two more sections of the books published by the C.L.S. It is to be remembered that the figure appearing within brackets after the specification of each book, shows the approximate stock at Headquarters, Madras, (Post Box 501, Park Town). An asterisk (*) indicates that the book is being offered at half the price quoted here.

A. Religious Orders and Sects.

Muhammad said: 'My followers will be divided into seventy-three sects all but one of whom will enter the fire.' Mishkat I. 6, Pt. II.

1. Sufiism. Sell (Out of print.)
 2. Al Ghazali. W. R. W. Gardner. 116 pp. 10 as. (635)

We regret to see that Canon Sell's study on *Sufiism* is no longer in print. The value of Mr. Gardner's *Al Ghazali* can hardly be over-estimated. Here was an orthodox Muslim and a devout mystic at the same time. A man who had a deep sense of sin, and who sought some way of escape from its subtle snare. He insisted upon a definite experience of intimacy with God. To find these he travelled much, became a recluse, and turned to Sufiism as a means of relief. At length he returned home as a "reviver of the science of religion." It is the view of Professor D. B. Macdonald, and with this our author agrees, that only through a study of Al-Ghazali is there any hope that Islamic theology will yet break the iron bands by which it is now held.

3. The Hanifs. Sell 20 pp. 2 as. (460)
 4. The Druses. Sell 65 pp. 4 as. (340)

The term *Hanif* is important in connection with a critical examination of the Quranic passages in which Muhammad claims merely to revive the faith of Abraham, 'the Hanif.' The commonly accepted opinion that a group of Meccan monotheists of Muhammad's early days were known, at that time, as Hanifs is shown to be open to considerable doubt.

The recent rising of the *Druses* in the Lebanon has created a demand for information about this somewhat obscure sect. Sell's booklet combines an historical sketch of their origin in Egypt and an account of their peculiar tenets. Often thought to be Muslims, the author shows that in reality they combat the doctrines of Islam and teach that Islam has had its day.

As recent events have shown they tend to become a dangerous element in politics.

5. The Religious Orders of Islam. Sell pp. 134. (2nd ed. 1908)
 *12 annas. (330)
 6. The Cult of Ali. Sell (out of print)
 7. Bahatism. Sell (out of print)

Sell's work on '*The Religious Orders*' is a concise and most illuminating treatise on a subject about which the average person knows very little. He shows that the main centres for these orders are to be found in Egypt and North Africa, including Eastern and Western Sudan, but that, in one form or another, they are represented in the furthest confines of the Islamic world. Of close on one hundred existing varieties the author gives details of the founders and rules of thirty-one. He indicates how elements of mysticism and antinomianism obtain in many of them and points to the grave danger to civilization arising from their opposition to progress, their hostility towards non-Muslim peoples, and from the complete subordination of the will of the individual to the Shaikh, or head of the order. A quarter of the book is devoted to the amazing strength and sinister import of the Sanusiyya order which is showing a tendency to assimilate most of the other Muslim orders. A possible Pan-Islamic movement is, therefore, not so remote after all.

We regret to observe that, as in the case of the other two books noted above, the stock of this valuable handbook is nearing exhaustion. All three are worth reprinting. We strongly urge those interested in the subject to procure a copy of "*Religious Orders*" at half price while they may.

B. Outlines of Islam.

(Orthodox) "Islam may be said to lay down these two propositions: (i) the idea of progress is impious; (ii) the knowledge of God is a fixed quantity revealed in a book." Osborn.

1. Arabia and its prophet. Compiled by late Dr. Murdoch from various writers. 50 pp. 8as. $9\frac{1}{2}'' \times 7\frac{1}{4}''$ Illustrated with wood blocks. 5th ed. 1922 (1280).

Covers much more ground than is indicated by the title. The country, the people and their customs—the beginnings of Islam and its subsequent developments—its doctrines, sects, fasts, feasts etc. Obviously intended for the general public—but suffers from the very fact that it is a "compilation." Nevertheless it has been well received as is indicated by the fact that it has reached the fifth edition. It is all the more surprising, therefore, that the last section on 'Duties of Indian Musalmans' is utterly out of date. This portion requires to be entirely revised or preferably omitted altogether from another edition.

2. Islam: its Rise and Progress. Sell. pp. 100. *9 as. (33)

3. Outlines of Islam. Sell. pp. 90. 4 as. (1275)

The first of these two books was published twenty years ago and rapidly ran into a second edition. It is a kind of groundwork out of which has sprung Canon Sell's numerous later booklets. The first portion is a sketch of the rise of Islam and the career of the Prophet. Then follow sections on the faith, the sources, the Khalifas, the sects and orders of Islam.

The author's *Outlines* is, in our opinion, the most informing and concise introduction to Islam at present available, and as such should be in the hands of all who are now seeking to get into sympathetic touch with Muslims. As he says in his Preface, it 'will afford a foundation on which an extensive knowledge of the whole system of Islam can be built up.'

He has increased the value of the book to the would-be student by adding at the close a bibliography which thoroughly covers the ground touched in the preceding pages.

4. The Muslim East. Anwar-ul-Haqq, pp. 20 *1 $\frac{1}{2}$ as. (600).

A very slight treatment, intended by the author 'for the perusal and earnest consideration of Muslims.' By original quotations he seeks to show that Muhammad in this matter chiefly stressed externals. Al Ghazali, on the other hand, leads the more devout into its inner meaning and thus prepares the way for understanding Christ's insistence on the importance of the state of man's heart before God.

L. B. J.

The Moslem World for January, 1927

The Leading Magazine in English on the Mohammedan World.

THIS number again proves what Dr. Julius Richter, Professor of the Science of Missions, University of Berlin, says—"The MOSLEM WORLD is indispensable for all friends of foreign missions who wish to remain in touch with the rapid and kaleidoscopic changes among the two hundred and thirty-four millions of Moslems."

The editor of the Quarterly visited Persia last summer. The current issue, therefore, introduces the reader to that country and to Shiah Islam. Beginning with a frontispiece—a reproduction of a Persian artist's conception of Mohammed—the reader realizes the difference of the Shiahs from orthodox Islam, which has never dared to portray the Prophet.

The idea of "Universality in Early Islam" is the subject of a forceful study by Rev. E. E. Elder, of Cairo. Dr. Saeed Khan, a converted Kurd, tells of the obscure sect called "Ahl-i-Haqq" which has many points of contact with Christianity. Three missionaries from Teheran, Isfahan and Meshed contribute a symposium on "The Right Approach to the Shiah Mind."

Mrs. Arthur C. Boyce in her paper reveals at once the meagre quantity of Christian literature in Persian and the need for better quality if we are to meet the new day. That Persia is wide awake and facing the future is shown in a remarkable list of Persian newspapers and some notes on the new calendar. The story of a convert in Persia and what he suffered is told by E. M. Wright under the title "The Fall of the House of Mohammed."

The Current Topics and Book Reviews deal especially with Persia. Miss Hollis W. Hering, of the Missionary Research Library, contributes her usual "Survey of Periodicals" constituting a permanent, classified index to Islam in the press.

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The Muslim Year

Sha'ban.

THIS month, Sha'ban, is so called because the ancient Arabians used to separate, or disperse themselves, in this month in search of water, and formerly the month always corresponded with our June—July; others explain that they dispersed on predatory expeditions.

The month among Muslims is known as the 'Prophet's month,' for he said 'the month of Sha'ban belongs especially to me.' Fasting in this month, particularly on the 15th, has peculiar value.

On the night of the 15th, said Muhammad, God registers annually all the actions of mankind which they are to perform during the year; and all the children of men, who are to be born or die in the year, are recorded. Muhammad is said to have enjoined his followers to *keep awake the whole night*, to repeat one hundred *rak'ah* prayers, and to fast the next day. Certain religious ceremonies are performed, a concluding one being to visit cemeteries, place flowers on graves and pray for the dead. As a matter of fact instead of fasting it is usually a time of great rejoicings and vast sums of money are spent on fireworks.

In Arabic the night is known as *Lailatu'n-nisf min Sha'ban* the night of the middle of Sha'ban, and in India and elsewhere by the Persian title *Shab-i-barât* (night of record). This year the date will coincide with Thursday the 17th of February.

School for the Study of Islam

(In Bengal)

WITH a view to granting facilities to Indian workers and others in Bengal for making a study of Islam, the Christian Council of Bengal and Assam have requested that steps be taken to organize a 'school' for this purpose at some place like Dacca. Lectures are to be given in Bengali.

Already the promise of the services of Messrs. D. K. Badshah (Karimganj), D. A. Chowdhury (Budge Budge) and L. Bevan Jones (Dacca) has been secured.

