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News and Notes

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A New Year Greeting to the M. M. League

Have faith in the Soil!

A HAPPY New Year to those who carry the seed-basket and sow beside all waters in the world of Islam! A year of abundant harvest to those who have gone forth weeping; may they come again rejoicing, bringing sheaves!

It has been laid on my heart while travelling in India that we must cease plowing—controversy *has* broken up the fallow ground—and everywhere we must sow more bountifully. Soon we shall put in the sickle.

We need faith not only in the seed and in the Lord of the harvest, but in the soil. Study the unique parable in Mark 4: 26-29. We may have faith in the soil because God created it and by marvellous method of patient attrition in geologic time! Moreover the soil is not dead, only dry. One cubic centimeter of soil contains millions of bacteria fitted to produce germination of the seed. "He fashioneth their hearts alike." Deep down in the Moslem heart feelings lie buried that grace can restore. God's providence extends not only to the seed and the sower, but to the soil. We may expect showers of blessing. The soil, moreover, acts on the seed as surely as the seed on the soil. We know not how. So is every Moslem, born again of God. The process takes place within; hidden from man's curious eyes; who can explain it. The sower scatters seed. Nature does the rest.

What greater folly than to dig up the seed once sown—to be impatient is to lose the harvest. Let it lie. "The soil brings forth *automatically*" (Greek text). The word is only used in one other place in the New Testament where the big outer gate opened for Peter

of its own accord. So the earth brings forth its prisoners-of-hope. The psychology of the soul is as mysterious as the chemistry of the soil. Conversion is a process. How many factors enter in and how long the patience of the husbandman is tried. The harvest is *not* the end of the annual report, but the "end of the world." "The reapers are the angels," not the missionaries. We are not responsible for success, but for faithfulness.

"Sow in the morn thy seed
At eve hold not thy hand
To doubt and fear give thou no heed
Broadcast it o'er the land."

Moreover, there are signs of abundance of rain, in many Moslem lands, but especially in India. Have faith in the soil— fill your basket with seed and *sow, sow, sow.*

S. M. ZWEMER.

A Retrospect

SIXTY-TWO years ago I first arrived in India to take charge of the only mission school for Muslims then in South India. The C.M.S., had established it some ten years before. I remained in charge of it for seventeen years. In those days the Muhammadan Community took little interest in higher education; indeed, the influence of the 'Ulama' was against English education. There were no schools for girls and no Zanana work. All this is now changed. The old prejudices have died away and educational facilities for boys and girls are sought after. Much useful Zanana work also has been and is being done.

In those early days the great Missionary Societies, except the C.M.S., which had the school referred to, took no part in South India, so far as I can remember, in work amongst Muslims. Even now far too little is done.

Happily this aloofness is passing away and here as elsewhere an increasing and intelligent interest is being taken in missions to Muhammadans. Owing to increase in education, both for males and females, there is a wider outlook amongst the rising generation. Probably the field was never more suited for the presentation of Christian truth than it is now.

I cannot speak of N. India, but the late Bishop Lefroy once told me that the Church had never seriously taken up the problem of mission work amongst Indian Muslims. To some extent that may be true still. The great value of *News and Notes* is that it keeps the subject alive. It cannot be any longer ignored, or passed lightly by.

The work is of a very special character and much, I think, remains to be done in the way of preparing workers for it. Fifty years

ago I suggested to a large Conference held in London on this subject the desirability of intending missionaries being first trained in Cairo and Persia and then sent to India. Two years thus spent would be invaluable and Urdu would then soon be learnt. I still maintain that this is the proper course to be pursued. A knowledge of Arabic, sufficient to understand the Qur'an and its commentaries, and a knowledge of Persian, a language easy to learn, are, in my opinion, essential to leaders in this special mission. Then all workers should really understand the religion of Islām and be diligent students of it. I may be wrong, but my general impression is that not enough has been, or is being done, in this respect.

The increasing interest now shown in this special mission work is cheering; there are more open doors and all who are seeking to enter them may take courage and carry on their work full of hope.

Madras, December 6.

EDW. SELL.

Dr. Zwemer's Conferences

AFTER a rest in Dacca over the Christmas week, followed by a brief visit to Allahabad where he will meet the members of the N.C.C. Committee on Literature for Muslims, Dr. Zwemer will move down south to take up the remaining portion of his arduous task. We append a copy of his schedule for the months of January and February.

This tour must involve a heavy strain on our friends, Dr. and Mrs. Zwemer. They are giving us of their best and we all deeply appreciate their ungrudging service. Every one will welcome the timely reminder that comes from the Doctor in his New Year's message on our front page. Let us continue to seek for Mrs. Zwemer and himself God's richest blessing.

Schedule for January and February.

Hyderabad	...	...	January 6-12.	c/o F. S. Coan, V.M.C.A., Secunderabad.
Bangalore	...	...	January 14-21.	c/o C.E.Z. Mission.
Madras	...	...	January 22-27.	c/o Rev. J. J. Kingham, Haddow's Road, Nungumbaukam, Madras.
Vellore	...	...	January 28th.	
Madura	...	...	January 29—February 4th.	
Kottayam	...	...	February 6-11.	
Colombo	...	...	February 19-25.	c/o Thos. Cook & Son.
Sail for Port Saïd (S.S. d'Artagnan)			February 28th.	

The Earthquake in Palestine

and N. M. P. Colportage

OUR friends have no doubt been bearing up the poor colporteurs during this time of stress. *Before* the Earthquake took place Palestine was said to be suffering from poor trade, heavy taxation and high cost of living. But *since* the terrible happenings, rents have shot up much higher still, for so many old buildings have been condemned.

On feeling the shock in Cairo, and reading the earliest telegrams, Mr. Upson at once tried to get into touch with the workers. Our friends the Shelleys, had marvellous escapes and praise God for spared lives, but they have lost their home, for the building was seriously damaged.

All the colporteurs are safe, but very scared, and work has been harder since, for local people say (in Arabic), "It's the preaching of the missionaries that has made God angry and brought all this upon us." As in the days of old, it is always—"The Christians to the lions, for these calamities on our country!"

The Nazareth colporteur and his donkey ("Galilee") are unharmed, as the shock was felt less on the north of the plain of Megiddo. The Nablus colporteur is safe, but afraid to return to sleep in his little cottage, so is still in the fields. The Jerusalem shopkeeper is safe and full of praise to God. The young apprentice-colporteur (an Egyptian, by the way) has just married. The Transjordan colporteur and wife are safe, but afraid to sleep in the house, as Amman suffered badly. FROM 'BLESSED BE EGYPT.'

A Moslem Mosque in Chicago

Rev. John Van Ess, D.D.

THROUGH a graduate student at the University of Chicago I learned of the existence of the mosque and went to investigate. I found it at the corner of 45th Street and Wabash Avenue. It is housed in an ordinary two-storey flat building, with nothing in outward appearance except that at the front edge of the room is a small green-painted dome, flanked by two slender and not very tall spires which typify minarets but could not function as such. In the front window hangs a sign: THE AHMADIA MOVEMENT. SUNDAY WORSHIP 12 NOON, and in Arabic characters "Dar ul Islam," ALL WELCOME.

As I entered the hall and turned to the right I entered an ordinary city apartment. It was furnished in a more or less homelike style, and on the walls hung pictures of India, some American advertising calendars, and among others a framed portrait of the present day leader of the sect in India. Camp chairs had been arranged in rows with seating capacity for about thirty people. In the front room were already seated three people: a man and wife with two children, a boy of nine and a girl of perhaps six, and a third woman, all negroes. In the middle room sat about half a dozen men, also negroes. Presently a young man from India came up and greeted me courteously. We at once had a common interest for it transpired that I had visited his birthplace in India, and further that during the war his father had seen military service in Mesopotamia. I asked him how much Arabic he knew and he replied that he could read some and understand and speak very little. During the next hour several more negroes came in till the audience at the close of the service numbered eighteen men,

eight women, and three children. The service began with my Indian friend standing before a little table and in fairly good English but with a pronounced accent addressing the audience. He recited passages from the Koran, mostly in adoration of God and thereupon translating these into English. Then he followed with a eulogy of Mohammed and a corresponding detraction of Christ. Hereupon he asked who of the brethren had learned the Surat ul Fatiha, the equivalent in Moslem ritual of our Lord's prayer. Only one responded, a well-dressed negro, who recited the verses in Arabic which, despite the faulty accent, I could readily understand. Next the leader called upon a Swahili who apparently had lived for some time in Abyssinia. His English was so broken that I could not get the drift of his remarks, however. He was followed by another Indian who spoke for fully half an hour. His remarks covered the following ground:

A general outline of the life of Mohammed, with particular emphasis on the fact that from idolatrous shepherd folk the Arabs had through Islam been made into a world-conquering nation; the code of Islam, entailing the belief in one God, the simple ritual of prayer with its beneficial gymnastic accompaniment, fasting with its mortification of the body and consequent sympathy for the poor, almsgiving and pilgrimage, under the latter stressing the value of sacrifice and the need of unity in religion. Thereupon he launched into a denunciation of the Christ of the Gospels, alleging that the Christ therein portrayed was not the historical Christ, the record having been altered and corrupted. His chief criticisms of Christ were these:

1—His harsh and bitter denunciation of those who opposed Him, chiefly the Pharisees.

2—His cowardice in Gethsemane.

3—His lack of faith expressed when He said: My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?

4—His disrespect for His mother implied in the phrase, "Who is my mother?"

5—He made wine which this government has now prohibited.

6—His promise to Peter: "Whomsoever thou shalt curse shall be cursed," (sic). Since Peter later did curse Christ, Christ was accursed by His own confession.

7—His petulant cursing of the barren fig-tree.

8—The Christian assertion of His Deity proves too much for them Melchizedek, without father and without mother, as also Adam, were also sons of God.

9—If Christ performed miracles while alive how much greater was Elisha by whose dead bones a corpse was raised to life?

10—A long tirade against the miracles of Christ which help no one to-day and which in any case could be matched by those mentioned by Mohammed in the Traditions.

11—Mohammed's love for little children. N. B.

All of the above is of course familiar ground to a missionary to Moslems and had I been given the opportunity to speak I would have had no difficulty in turning the tables on the speakers from the Koran itself. The speeches were in fact quite crude and entirely lacked the subtleties which characterize controversy of even an average mullah in Arabia.

Testimonies were then invited and three Chicago negroes came forward. They touched here and there on the foregoing points but always came back to the racial grievance and the claim that Christianity is only a white man's religion. One was really clever and sententious, his remarks indeed eliciting frequent applause, his final appeal being to bend every

effort toward recovering a name and a place in Africa. All of the speakers, and in fact all of those present, were well dressed and their talks, though not in all instances grammatically correct, yet were forcibly and appealingly expressed.

At the close of the testimonies the leader announced that the Swahili brother had on his arrival been robbed of \$400 in Christian Chicago and appealed to the congregation to help him. The usual collection was then taken and totalled, so far as I could estimate, about \$1.50. The leader then announced that prayers would be said, to be followed by ice-cream (shades of the prophet!). The company adjourned to the upstairs prayer-room whither I followed. The Indian leader wearing a turban led the prayers, all facing east. Twelve negro men in two rows with uncovered heads, together with two small boys, went through the genuflections, repeating after the leader, in Arabic, the first word appropriate to each genuflection. The women stood or sat in the back but took no further part. Thus far the services had lasted some minutes less than two hours.

Going down again I looked through the two book-cases and found books like Paine's "The Age of Reason," Renan's "Life of Jesus," and on the table a copy of the "Freethought Weekly." The mission was organized in 1921 by the same Indian who erected the mosque in Detroit, but when Islam in Detroit became defunct he shifted his activities to Chicago as containing more negroes, so the leader informed me. I went away with some vivid impressions:

- 1—The appeal to race prejudice is a real appeal.
- 2—The pastor of a negro Baptist church half a block away scarcely knew of the existence of the mosque and knew nothing of its activities.
- 3—Each convert is addressed by an Arabic and Moslem name.

The Islamic World Since the Peace Settlement

This is the title of Vol. I of the 1925 Survey of International affairs issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International affairs, and is the work of Arnold J. Toynbee, (Oxford University Press). We venture to reproduce a portion of a review of the same from the Times Literary Supplement. 'Islam has been the only great religion, unless we are to regard Bolshevism as one, that has been born armed in its cradle with a sword. The Caliphate periodically passed in practice to the Mahomedan ruler who was best able to wield the sword of Islam; and it was because the Ottoman Sultan was virtually the last Mahomedan potentate possessed of the temporal power needed to wield it effectively that his title to the Caliphate was so widely acknowledged, beyond as well as within his own Empire. In the same way Mustapha Kemal's prestige spread all over the Mahomedan world, and notably among Indian Mahomedans, because he smote the Greek infidels and indirectly the Western Powers, with the sharp edge of the Turkish sword, which was exalted as the sword of Islam. But when he abolished the Caliphate—though he might probably have had it himself for the asking—the power of religious militancy which had been throughout the ages its sustaining power departed out of Islam.

For there is no leader left in Islam or at present anywhere in sight, who can successfully restore it. Even if a laicized Turkish Republic were anxious to go on acting as the spearhead of Asian insurgence against Europe;

the movement, shorn of Islamic militancy, would wear an entirely different aspect in the eyes of the Mahomedan peoples. This was very clearly shown in India where the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate at once drove the fever of revolt out of the vast majority of sympathizers with Turkey, and the Indian Mahomedans, who had been swept so completely off their feet by Gandhi's readiness to spread his mantle over the Caliphate movement that they were prepared for a time to fraternize with Hindu idolators, speedily reverted to the one form of Islamic militancy which had survived the downfall of Mahomedan domination in India, and found for it once more and with increased ardour a congenial vent in communal riots of which the Hindus have usually borne the brunt, until the British authorities could hurry to their rescue. Had Professor Toynbee had better opportunities of studying the Caliphate agitation in India, and of following the activities of such leaders as Mahomed and Shaukat Ali, instead of taking them, as the Government of India at one time did and he is still inclined to do, at their own valuation, he would have been doubtless able to write with the same weight on the peculiar aspects of Mahomedan unrest in India as in the other Mahomedan lands with which he is chiefly concerned. This is a deficiency we regret the more in his extremely instructive volume, as India, where we have often boasted, rather foolishly, of ruling over the greatest Mahomedan Empire in the world, deserves as much attention, even in relation to International affairs, as Egypt and Iraq, with which our author deals with far more knowledge.

We believe with him that racial rather than religious lines of cleavage may henceforth divide mankind into two opposing camps. But whether we are witnessing, as he seems to believe, a vital transformation of Islam and its rebirth into some new spiritual form more compatible with modern conditions, or, as we are disposed to think, its disruption as a world force now that, with the collapse of the Ottoman Caliphate, it has lost its one great fulcrum since the leadership passed away from the Arab race, future developments among the large Mahomedan communities which still make up something like a sixth of the human race will continue to be a matter of the deepest interest for the Western nations, and especially for a far-flung Empire such as ours, that has been brought into close and daily increasing contact with them in so many parts of the earth. If we cannot subscribe to all his conclusions we are none the less grateful to Professor Toynbee for a very valuable survey of the historical events of a troublous period pregnant with even greater changes yet to come than those recorded in this closely packed and well documented volume.

Notes

The Barred Provinces in Nigeria. From that far off outpost a member writes: 'I asked the prayers of members of the League for the Barred Provinces in Nigeria. It is now, I think, time to say, "Let us give thanks for improvement in the situation of such a character as to be an earnest of complete freedom for the Gospel in some years to come." We are asked to continue our prayers that the restriction may be removed. Our friend goes on to say—"I am studying the problem presented by the Muhammadans in Lagos. There are some 50,000 of them and though there are three large denominations in Lagos with numerous churches there is as yet no direct work among these people. I seek the solution of this problem.'

A Quarterly News Letter is now published by missionaries who have

banded themselves into a 'Society of Friends for the Moslems of China.' We have seen two issues, and are interested to see that the Editor is no other than the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Zwemer, Mrs. C. L. Pickens. Already the Society has forty or more members. 'The Society is a new venture which we hope will grow into a real force in winning the Moslems of China. We hope that our new Society can have fellowship with the Missionaries to Muslims League.' "Sure!", and we extend a very cordial greeting to the sister league.

The Moslem World, January 1928

Editorial, "Foreword to Eighteenth Volume" ...	W. H. T. Gairdner
Continuous Re-creation and Atomic Time in Moslem Scholastic Theology ...	Duncan B. Macdonald
Christ, The Jew and the Moslem ...	Sir Leon Levison
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NOTE.

Intimation of change of address or of desire to discontinue membership should be sent during January to the Hon'y. Secretary:—

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