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## 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 XVI

No. 8

August, 1928.

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1st August = 15th Safar (2nd mo.), 1347, A.H.

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### A Word of Greeting

THE July issue of *News and Notes* brought with it something of a shock, in spite of the fact that I was not in total ignorance of what changes were to take place. Since the Jerusalem Conference in 1924, I have always associated Mr. and Mrs. Bevan Jones with the missionary effort among the Muslims of India. This little paper seemed more or less their personal possession, and was an invaluable contribution to those of us less experienced than they.

I am sure that you all share with me a sense of loss at the retirement of Mr. Jones from our secretaryship and the editorship of *News and Notes*. The service which he has rendered through this medium is incalculable; it has meant years of faithful service and an unflagging devotion to the cause he has so constantly championed. No words of appreciation we may write could adequately express what gratitude dictates.

The only thing which reconciles us to a change at all is that Mr. Jones' efforts on behalf of the Muslims of Bengal are greedy of his time and strength, making some relief imperative. He hasn't discarded his typewriter, nor has his urge to share his rich experiences evaporated with his forsaking his office; we may expect to hear from him through these pages still.

My own acceptance of your secretaryship was reluctant; already an over-stuffed schedule demands a twenty-four hour day. My experience is greatly limited, and my work is not now such as to increase materially my Muslim contacts—even my Arabic is getting rather slippery. But there was an attraction in the thing—the attraction of opportunity to make the contacts I have been craving, to DO something, however inadequately, in this field of missionary endeavor

that is my first love. To the limit of my time and endurance, I shall do my feeble best to serve you and my Master through the League.

A word of appreciation to the Orissa Mission Press and its Superintendent. Without their acceptance of the burden of the business connected with *News and Notes*, it would have been utterly impossible for me to undertake the responsibilities of the editorship. And in expressing this word of gratitude to the Press, we should thank Mrs. Jones for the part she has played behind the scenes at Dacca.

Finally, may I solicit your co-operation in a task for which I feel hopelessly inadequate? Co-operation in the matter of news and notes but primarily the co-operation of your prayers, that together we may not lose ground already gained, but may press forward to even greater achievement in our peculiar task.

Yours sincerely,  
M. S. PRIT.

## The Moplahs of Malabar

“The most deplorably neglected Muslim group in India”

**Y**OUR editor recalls very vividly the first meeting he had with the Moplahs. It was on a moonlit night, on a funny little coasting steamer Mangalore-bound from Bombay. Stopping to unload the tiresome cargo into smaller craft from the village on shore, a confused babel of temperamental voices startled from a sound sleep, and one was in the midst of a forest of wildly-waving masts; perilously dipping and bending their 100-foot length to the very tips of the waves, and populated at five-foot intervals with monkey-like figures. From then on, down the coast, through Calicut and among the backwaters, the swagger, the abandon, the *sans-souci* of this fierce, intrepid, but not unfriendly people continued to fascinate.

The May issue of *The Indian Standard* contains a very enlightening article by Dr. Zwemer on this interesting people, quoted in part below:—

“There is disagreement regarding the name of the people and their origin, but all are agreed that the Moplahs are among the most virile and also the most troublesome of the Muslims of India. Malabar is the zone of fanaticism in the south even as the Afghan frontier is that of the north.

“The name Moplah has been variously interpreted to mean ‘mother’s son’ or ‘bridegroom,’ in allusion to the supposed union between the early Arab traders with women of the country; but it is perhaps merely a title which was given to foreigners. There was considerable trade between Arabia and Malabar in the eighth and ninth centuries, and no doubt many of the traders gradually settled in the country. As traders they would come without their women, and

as Mohammedans would not fail to proselytise; and the result was a hybrid community composed of the offspring of mixed unions and of converts from the lower classes of the Hindus. The Zamorin of Calicut, who was one of the chief patrons of Arab trade, definitely encouraged conversion in order to man the Arab ships on which he depended for his aggrandisement; and he is said to have directed that in every family of fishermen in his dominion, one or more of the male members should be brought up as Mohammedans.

"The mixed nature of the race may be traced to-day in its varied physiognomy; those of high family and social position are often extremely fair with fine features, sometimes of a distinctly semitic type; while those at the other end of the scale are indistinguishable from the low castes from which they are constantly reinforced.

"The Moplahs are as a rule frugal, industrious and enterprising. They conduct the bulk of the trade of all descriptions, and many of them have amassed considerable wealth; all who can afford it invest money in land, and most of the new garden cultivation on the margin of the jungle in the interior is opened by them. The lower classes are fishermen, laborers of every description, and petty cultivators; their physique is on the whole remarkable good.....The typical Moplah street is picturesque, but dirty.

"The Moplahs belong to the Shafi rite of the Sunni sect of Mohammedans; that is, they acknowledge besides the Koran, the authority of the Sunna, or customary law of Arab theology, as interpreted by Shafi. In South Malabar they are divided into two divisions, preferring allegiance either to the Valia Jaratingal Tangal of Ponnani or the Kundotti Tangal. The followers of the latter are said by those of the former to be Shiahs, but they themselves claim to be Sunnis. The differences between the two parties sometimes become acute and lead to disturbances, but intermarriage between them is not prohibited and persons often forsake one sect for the other to suit their convenience.

"The division between the two is due to party spirit rather than based on any essential doctrinal difference. The Tangals (Sheikhs of the Derwish orders) are their religious leaders; they are regarded with a high degree of reverence, but are not as a class distinguished by learning. The principal authority on religious subjects is the Makhdum Tangal of Ponnani. He is the head of the Ponnani religious college and confers the title of Muzaliyar (Moulvi, or elder) on Mullas who have qualified themselves to interpret the Koran and the commentaries.....At present Malabar seems to have religious contact chiefly with the Arabs of the Persian Gulf who carry on a considerable trade with Calicut in sailing vessels.

"The Moplah is very superstitious, and witchcraft is not by any means unknown. His religion betrays not a few traces of primitive animism and ancestor worship.....Men of holy and austere life are freely canonized, and their tombs become holy shrines and popular places of pilgrimage.

"The Moplahs are notorious for their fanaticism. From time to time they have been guilty of *jihad* or holy war against their Hindu neighbors, with such dreadful cruelty as reminds one of the Turkish atrocities."

The history of the various Moplah outbreaks is long, and one of which "to-day the Moplahs are themselves somewhat ashamed;" but there is afoot "an educational programme prepared to uplift the ignorant villagers."

As for the missionary outlook, after enumerating the many neglected Muslim areas of India, Dr. Zwemer says, "But most deplorably neglected of all are the Muslims of Malabar," and his article concludes with requests for prayer and the outline of a minimum programme of literature.

### **The Bangalore United Hindustani Mission**

**F**ROM Mysore come the happy tidings of beginnings already made for united effort for Muslim work, with Bangalore as a centre. An extract from the Mission Constitution follows:

"OBJECTS.—The two-fold object of the Mission shall be:—

- (1) To carry on work among the Moslems of Bangalore and Mysore State (especially men and students) by methods enumerated below, on the strict principle of co-operating as much as possible with existing missionary organizations.
- (2) To promote among local Christian bodies and others elsewhere more prayer and practical interest in the evangelization of the Moslems of South India in general and the Mysore State in particular.

**METHODS OF WORK.**—Object (1) shall be carried out by the employment of one or more colporteurs, evangelists, or other Christian workers; the maintenance of a Reading Hall; the sale and distribution of Christian literature; the conducting of preaching and discussion meetings; shop and house visitation; and any other suitable methods of appeal appropriate to the peculiar needs and difficulties of Moslems.

The methods of carrying out Object (2) shall in general consist of the issuing of a Quarterly Letter containing Notes regarding the work and its development, items for Praise and Prayer, etc.; and the issuing of other relevant matter from time to time likely to stimulate interest.

The production, translation and publication of suitable literature for Moslems shall be a prominent feature of the work. An effort shall also be made to keep in touch with the Moslem press of South India, especially in Urdu and Tamil-Arabic.

**FINANCE.**—The work of the Mission shall be supported by the voluntary offerings of all Christians and Christian bodies who are interested."

Items of interest appear in the first of the News and Prayer Letters:

There has been opened a Reading Hall, where Muslims may come to read the various periodicals and newspapers that have been supplied, or to listen to discussions and lectures. A man of good qualifications has been obtained as evangelist—he is trained in Arabic, Persian, Urdu and English and will for the present concentrate his efforts in a more or less informal way on the opportunities of the Reading-Room.

There has already been much done by way of tract distribution, and volunteers for this work are not wanting from among the Christian community.

The gratitude of the Mission is expressed to Mr. M. Mohideen Kaviraya for undertaking to translate and report on some of the Arabic-Tamil articles appearing in the Moslem papers and magazines, thus keeping in touch with Mohammedan thought on current religious topics. It is to be hoped that other areas make as definite arrangement as this for keeping abreast of contemporary Muslim thought!

Among the notes in the *Quarterly Letter*, appears the following:—

Any Christian friend desirous of getting better acquainted with the objects and *modus operandi* of the Mission may obtain a copy of the Constitution and other literature from the Hon. Secretary free of cost.

Address the Secretary and Treasurer respectively as follows:—

Miss E. M. POTTER,  
C. E. Z. Mission House,  
Cubbon Road,  
Bangalore.

REV. N. F. SILSBEE,  
Hon. Treasurer,  
"Glen Bethel," Richards Town,  
Bangalore.

## Selected Passages from the Koran

IT is no doubt essential that every missionary to Moslems have a knowledge of the Koran and its teaching. But the book is disconnected, difficult and wearisome in its repetitions. It also contains very much that is of no practical value to the average missionary in his task of preaching the Gospel to the Moslem mind. What he needs is a gist of important passages in as small a compass as possible. David chose only five pebbles from the stone-strewn wady-bed and needed but one.

The attempt is made here to select twenty-four brief passages. These can, if desired, be printed in vowelled Arabic with Palmer's English translation in the margin and then learned by heart.

(1) Three beautiful rhetorical passages, namely, the prayer for guidance, the verse of the Throne and the verse of Light. Surahs I; XXIV: 35; and II: 255-257. These are among the most eloquent passages.

(2) Three passages that testify to the Old and New Testament as trustworthy revelation. Surahs V: 50-52; I; X: 94.

(3) Six important passages on Jesus Christ. Surahs III: 40-43; XIX: 22-24; V: 109-110; IV: 157; III: 48-50; V: 76-79.

(4) Three passages on Allah and his attributes. Surahs CXIII: VI: 59-64; LXVII: 1-4.

(5) Three passages on the Character of Mohammed and his need of forgiveness. Surahs XCIV: 1-4; XLVIII: 1-2 LXXX: 1-2.

(6) Three passages on human responsibility and God's judgment of sin. Surahs LXXV: 1-5; II: 284-285; XVI: 61.

(7) Three passages on Christians as the friends of Moslems. Surahs V: 85; II: 59; XXII: 18.

These passages are none of them specially difficult or obscure and if the student will learn one by heart every week, a half year would suffice to master this gist of the Koran. One passage a day, and a month would suffice.

Cairo.

S. M. ZWEMER.

## The Society of the Friends of Muslims in China

The Quarterly "News Letter" of this organization contains the following anniversary note:—

**T**HIS issue of the "News Letter" marks the first year's mile-stone in its history. We have much for which to be thankful. Last year we knew not what would be the outcome of our first general meeting of the Society of Friends of the Moslems. Yet at that time the fire of enthusiasm was kindled which has ever since glowed and waxed brighter. During this past year many friends have responded with suggestions and articles for the "News Letter" and we are indebted to you all, but especially must we thank Mr. Isaac Mason for his articles, advice, and aid.

Another cause for rejoicing is the splendid reply to our appeal for financial aid which the American Christian Literature Society for Moslems has sent us in the form of a substantial grant of five hundred dollars gold for the production of needed literature. With it the Committee is publishing, "The Revised Chinese-Moslem terms," a Chinese-Arabic poster prepared by the Kansu Moslem Committee, and "Hints for Friends of Moslems," and is reprinting the "Sermon on the Mount" in Arabic and Chinese. Other work is to be planned in May.

This year many friends have shown their interest in the evangelization of the Moslems in China by their membership in this Society, by their distribution of literature, and by prayer.

It has been decided that the Annual Meeting will be held in Shanghai on May first. It is hoped that all will co-operate with their prayers and interest, and that those who can be present at the meeting will keep that day in mind.

**A.C.L.S.M. Grants for Literature (India)**

News has come to hand that the following grants have been sanctioned and that those concerned may proceed without delay to the printing of this literature.

**Bengali :**

1.	"The Straight Path," Takle	...	Rs. 244
2.	"The Inward Way," Takle	...	214
3.	"Why Maulvi S. M. Paul became a Christian"		200
4.	"Stories of the Prophets," Part I.	Miss McLean	143
5.	"	Part II.	...
6.	"Glad Tidings,"	Miss C. Williams	...
			297

**Tamil :**

1.	"What do Christians Teach,"	E. Stanley Jones	...	44
2.	"Christianity the Final Religion,"	Zwemer	...	121
3.	"The Best Friend,"	Bevan Jones	...	145
4.	"The Forgiveness of Sins,"	Findlay	...	121
5.	"God as Triune,"	Gairdner	...	196

**Oriya :**

1.	"The Best Friend,"	Bevan Jones	...	292
2.	"The True Burden Bearer,"	Hridananda Sahu	...	56
3.	"The Death and Resurrection of Jesus."		...	56

**Gujarati :**

1.	"The Best Friend,"	Bevan Jones	...	292
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**Hindi :**

1.	"The Best Friend,"	Bevan Jones	...	292
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**Urdu :**

Nineteen Titles, in all a grant of	...	5,310
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Rs. 7,166

or

\$ 3,068.00

M. T. TITUS,

Hardoi U.P.

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### **Note**

A valuable suggestion comes from Dr. Zwemer. "Could you not get the members of the League to send in a number of translations from the Muslim press in India? At present we have nothing of the sort, and there is no index to Muslim thought more valuable than this." Bangalore has made provision for one capable man to keep a watchful eye on the vernacular press—may there not be others who will follow this lead, and give us all the benefit of their findings?

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## For Praise and Prayer

**PRAISE** for success in Kashgar, Chinese Turkestan. "Six young Muslims have been baptized this spring. May God give them strength to endure all things for His sake."

**PRAISE** for the many evidences of renewed interest and effort resulting from Dr. Zwemer's visit to India—and especially for the Bangalore United Hindustani Mission, its organization and personnel.

**PRAISE** for a year of accomplishment in China.

**PRAYER** for the Malabar Muslims; that the call of this unoccupied field may arouse missionary activity among the Moplahs.

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### NEW MEMBER

135. Rev. J. Lyle, M.A.,  
279. Dr. R. P. Wilder,

I. P. Mission

Gogha, Kathiawar.  
Cairo, Egypt.

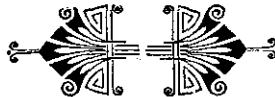
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### NOTICE.

Any notification of change of address, names of new members or remittance of subscription, etc., should be sent to the Superintendent, Orissa Mission Press, Cuttack, India, and *not* to the Secretary of the League. The annual subscription to the League is Rs. 2-0-0 (English 3s. od.).

Matters of interest to members of the League, items of news and requests for prayer should be sent (if possible early in the month) to the Hon'y. Secretary:—

Rev. M. S. Pitt,  
M. E. Mission,  
Jubbulpore, C. P., India.




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Edited and Published by Rev. M. S. Pitt, Jubbulpore, C. P. India,  
and printed at the Orissa Mission Press, Cuttack, by S. F. Robinson,  
Superintendent.