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News and Notes

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Series XVIII

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1st February = 1st Ramzan (9th Mo.) 1348 A.H.

Commencement.

ALTHOUGH as yet scarcely able to "lift his head above water" in the turmoil of unpacking and settling, Mr. Bevan Jones is now in Lahore and the Henry Martyn School is established. A New Year with a glorious new opportunity—we welcome them both as we welcome Mr. Jones back to India, and pledge him our loyal support in the enterprise he and his associates undertake in our name on behalf of the Muslims of India. We are eager and expectant—and deeply thankful.

We think it no mere coincidence that the Henry Martyn School first opens its doors in the anniversary year of Pentecost. And as this anniversary is better experienced than celebrated, let us not merely cheer the school, then fold our hands and think all is done. It is only the beginning. It is the opening, we believe, of what we feel to be the Way of God to the satisfaction of Muslim cravings—a means of becoming better able to share the Pentecost experience; that the Muslim may hear in his own heart-language and his own thought-forms the message of a better way of Life.

Let us pray that through the Henry Martyn School
there may come a more complete self-giving to our task—
an utter prostration of our intellectual and spiritual powers
to the needs of others.

There may come less waste of words in logic-chopping,
and a more vivid sense of what is vital in religion.

The Christian Indian may be guided into a closer under-
standing of his Muslim neighbor.

That God's Kingdom may come, and His will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven,

To this end, let us pray for the Principal and Staff, that they may be granted a continuance of the necessary spiritual and physical undergirding for their great work ; and that they may be guided in the establishment of traditions and policies for the school, combining the necessary sympathy with a positive statement of the Good News as experienced in the life of men ; that the school may become greatest of all because the servant of all.

A Book and a Principle.

NUR-AL-HUDA. By the Reverend Barakat Ullah, M.A. Published by F. M. Najin-ud-Din, Lahore. Two Volumes, Annas 8 per volume. Bibliography.

These two little books, in Urdu, are written in answer to *Naiabai-ul-Masihah*, by the prolific Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, Ahmadiya missionary in Working ; a work better known, perhaps, in its English edition entitled *The Sources of Christianity*. The thesis of this latter book seems to be that a source determines the worth of a thing. It makes no distinction whatever between Christianity as a system and Christianity as Life. The emphasis is entirely on non-essentials, such as the origin of the dates of Christian festivals, certain ritualistic practices, and the like ; and as these may rest in Pagan sources, Christianity does not rise above the Mystery religions among which it was born into the West.

The first volume of *Nur-al-Huda*, the English title of which is *Mystery Religions and Christianity*, seeks to answer the charge that Christianity has taken the elements of the mystery religions. It is a neat little study in Church History, with a smattering of the comparative method of the study of religions. The second volume is a study in New Testament Introduction, answering the Khwaja's statement concerning the lateness of the composition of the Books of the New Testament. A valuable Bibliography accompanies each volume. The view taken in the two books is reasonably liberal.

I think we must seek to answer questions sincerely asked in as frank and honest a manner as possible, putting at the disposal of the questioner the results of the sciences of religion, no matter how compromising they may appear. In this I think the author has done a good thing ; he has done a constructive piece of writing that it is well to have at our disposal in Urdu. On the other hand, it opens the whole question of "answers"—particularly to the more cantankerous groups of opposers. Is it really self-giving ? Is it productive ? Does it do either us, them, or our Master any good ? It seems to me that this is at least a debatable question ; do we feel ourselves blessed when liars assault us, for His sake, who was like a sheep before His shearers, and opened not his mouth—in debate ? I wonder if the seed of the Church in India is after this manner of planting ? I leave the question open. Frankly, I don't know.

A Cause for Rejoicing.

In a personal letter, the Reverend H. J. Lane-Smith writes :

‘ I AM glad to be able to tell you that, though, on account of C.M.S. financial stringency, I have to leave Bombay, I am not to leave India until 1932. I have been appointed by the Bishop of Madras to be Chaplain of St. George’s Church, Hyderabad, Deccan. My primary work will be English, but I trust to have abundant opportunities of engaging in the Musalman work going on there in connection with the Australian C.M.S. Mission.”

Our rejoicing is in the fact that there is to be a respite, during which it will somehow be found possible to readjust things so that Mr. Lane-Smith may be saved for Muslim work in India.

Muslim Questionings

‘ THERE has come to our desk from the Central Literature Committee a great stack of questions which have been collected by Miss Padwick.

These are the common difficulties expressed by Muslims regarding Christian scriptures. It will be impossible to print these in full. It is not at all our intention to answer them—it may, however, be to the point to suggest material now and again, from which the answers, may be gleaned or inferred.

We do not answer these specifically because we believe that a broad background is necessary. Students have come to us demanding a list of such questions with answers; their intention was to memorize the answers and hurl them at opponents in the Bazaars. We disapprove of so mechanical a method.

In general, we think it our duty to be first of all honest. Facts and facts alone should be allowed to speak; if we seek to shield our Muslim friends from critical results, thinking thereby to avoid compromising answers, we speak of things they have already heard from hostile sources. They need our interpretation, and our integrity must be preserved.

Specifically, the material necessary for the answering of the following questions is (1) common sense, (2) a knowledge of Textual Criticism, (3) a knowledge of the History of the Canon and criteria of Inspiration, (4) a knowledge of New Testament Introduction, and (5) a knowledge of the sources of Muhammed’s information about the Injil as well as something of the Quranic position and that of the Hadith. All this, plus the most important element, namely, a sweetness of disposition under fire, born of an impassioned desire that these things be understood that Jesus may be exalted, and these brothers know Him.

The following are under the caption GENERAL QUESTIONS ON THE GOSPELS :—

1. Why are there four Injils ?
2. Why do Christians not agree on one Gospel ?
3. Is it the real Injil ? Is it the one that Mohammed said was inspired ?
4. Why have Christians changed the Gospel ?

5. What is the difference between your Injil and our Koran? Everything about Jesus is written in our Koran.
6. How old is the most ancient manuscript of the New Testament?
7. Have you a copy of the original Injil?
8. Which is the oldest Gospel?
9. It seems that all the writers of the Gospels wrote their books many years after Christ's ascension to heaven, yet their accounts do not vary much. Did they consult each other or were they contemporary to Christ?
10. Do the Gospels contradict one another?
11. Why is the Gospel of Barnabas not included in the N.T.?
12. Why not choose one of the four Gospels so as to avoid confusion and contradictions, and discard the others?
13. What was the original language of the Gospel?

As to that material that might not ordinarily be the possession of all of us, I am prompted to quote below from the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, the article on the *Injil* by Carra de Vaux.

"INJIL. From the Quran as well as from numerous authors we see that the Muslims had a certain knowledge of the Gospels. It is easy to show with the help of a few quotations the extent of this knowledge. On the other hand, it is often difficult to define positively and not merely by way of induction how this knowledge was obtained. Some of it was certainly obtained orally in controversies or friendly conversations between Christians and Muslims. But this method of transmission for the most part lacks historical record. There were also reminiscences of Christianity which were brought in by Christians converted to Islam. A similar Christian influence made itself felt on the rise of Sufism, in the teachings of which traces of Christianity can be clearly seen. Finally, one may certainly assume that there were Muslim seekers after knowledge among the Arabs who read Arabic translations of the Gospels made by Christians. We therefore here give a brief survey of what can be known about these translations, followed by some instances of recollections of the New Testament in the *Quran* or the writings of various writers.

"The Christian Arabs translated the Gospels from the Greek, Syriac, or Coptic. The translation from the Greek took place very early, as is shown by the great antiquity of the manuscripts (Vatican, Arab. 13, and Museo Borgiano-Progaganda), which date back to the VIIIth century A.D. According to Barhebraeus, there was a still older translation made between 631 and 640 by the Monophysite patriarch Johannes by order of an Arab prince, Amr b. Sad.

"A likewise very old translation from the Syriac exists in a Leipzig ms.; according to Gildemeister's investigations (*De Evangeliiis* p. 35), it must have been made between 750 and 850 A.D. The Muslims were thus able to become acquainted with the principal books of the New Testament at quite an early date through direct reading of Arabic translations.

"Besides the canonical gospels we possess Arabic recensions of the following New Testament apocrypha; the gospel of the Childhood, Protoevangelium of James, Apocalypse of Paul, a sermon by Peter, and one by Simon, a Martyrdom of James, and of Simon, as well as a small number of others, which do not appear to have been known in Muhammadan circles. R. Duval, *La Littérature Syriacque*, Paris 1899, p. 96, mentions an Apocalypse of Peter which, according to him, is an Arabic compilation of the XIIIth century.

"Muhammad was less acquainted with the canonical gospels than with the apocryphal. He did not obtain his knowledge from purely Christian sources, but must have obtained it orally from Christian Jews. This is shown by the kind of legend preserved in the Quran. They must have taken their form from those whom Muhammad calls *hanif's* and who traced their religion to Abraham. This question however is only a particular case of the more general question of the origin and sources of Islam.

"Poetry is also one of the ways by which Christian ideas found their way among Muslims. At the time of the rise of Islam poets were fond of visiting Hira where they were on friendly terms with Christian Arabs. They then related in Arabia the legends which they had heard in the wine booths in Hira. Among these poets are mentioned Zaid b. 'Amr b. Nufajl and Umaiya b. Abi'l-Salt, of whom the latter was particularly well versed in Jewish legends also. Poetry thus formed for a fairly long time a link between Muslims and Christians. We know with what favour the Christian poet al-Akhtal was received at the court of the Omayyads; Medicine and administration also led to much intercourse between the two religions. We need only recall the names of Sergius Mansur, secretary to four caliphs and father of John of Damascus, and the numerous Christian clerks who were employed by the Muslim government, as is evidenced by the order made by al-Walid b. 'Abd al-Malik forbidding them to keep their books in Greek. But let us come back to the Quran.

"Jesus, Mary, and the Gospel are frequently mentioned in the Quran, and Muhammad knows the essential difference between the Gospel and the Quran regarding morals, namely compassion and mercy (lvii. 27); he also knows to some extent the parable of the sower (xlvi. 29) and the promise of another messenger of God (vii. 156, cf. xvi. 17). He is also aware that the Gospel is put forward as a confirmation of the Pentateuch (v. 50). Of the miracles of Jesus he mentions the healing of the blind and of the leper as well as the raising from the dead.

"The most popular tradition in those circles from which the Prophet obtained his knowledge, seems to have been that of the Annunciation. "He has chosen thee among women" the angel says to Mary in Quran, iii. 37 (cf. Luke i. 28). He likewise adopts the virgin birth of Jesus (xxi. 91). When the crucifixion is denied in Quran (iv. 156 and iii. 47), he is following the view of the Christian sect of the Docetes. The briefly mentioned ascension brings the life of Jesus to a conclusion at the moment when, according to the Gospels, the Passion should begin (cf. al-Zamakhsari, ed. Lees, i. 169, where a tradition of Ibn Abbas is quoted).

"The calling of the apostles is distinctly mentioned (iii. 45-46). The institution of monasticism is connected with this as in the work of the Ikhwan al Safa. A miracle in the Acts of the Apostles finds mention in the Quran: Jesus lets down from heaven a covered table for the apostles (v. 112-115; cf. Acts, x. 9 *sqq.*). The story that Jesus miraculously gave life to a clay bird (iii. 43; v. 110) is taken from the Gospel of the Childhood. The name "second Adam" given to Christ is approximately found in Sura iii. 52. The expression "strengthened by the Holy Ghost," which Muhammad uses in ii. 81, was not understood by him. He confuses the Holy Ghost with the Archangel Gabriel.

"The commentators still further develop the legends in the Quran connected with the New Testament, particularly those of the childhood of Mary. On the whole the figure of the Virgin Mary is a very attractive one in the Quran and not very remote from Christian sentiment. On the other

hand, the figure of Jesus is much more uncertain and, in comparison with the Gospels, a much lower one. Jesus is rather only a pious prophet. Muhammad leaves him the name Messiah (iv. 169 sq.), but this name does not seem to have any definite theological meaning with him. Of other New Testament personages, Muhammad only mentions John the Baptist and Zachariah.

"The New Testament had an important influence on Tradition (*Hadith*). Various miracles, sayings, and ideas which are attributed to Muhammad or his followers have their origin in the Gospel. The stories that Muhammad increased supplies of food or water go back to the miracle of the loaves and fishes in the Gospel rather than to that of the wedding at Cana, as Goldziher thinks. Numerous traditions regarding the high position of the poor and the difficulty of the rich in entering heaven, again reflect the doctrine of the Gospel and are in contrast to the views of the heathen Arabs. As Goldziher has shown, an Arab traditionist, Abu Daud even puts a version of the Lord's prayer into the mouth of Muhammad. H. Lammens also points out to me that the tradition, according to which Abu Bakr is moved to tears on hearing the Prophet preach, is of Christian origin. The "gift of tears," which is known to Christian mysticism, was little fitting to the temperament of the Arab conquerors.

"On the legends of the Mahdi and on Muslim eschatology Christian apocalyptic literature had a considerable influence.

"In several Muslim historians we find a rather extensive knowledge of the Gospels. Al-Yakubi, one of the fathers of Arab history, gives a synopsis of them. Such an inquiring spirit as al-Masudi does not conceal his relations with the Christians. In Nazareth, as he tells us, he visited a church highly venerated by Christians and received a large number of Gospel stories from them. He knows of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, his childhood in Nazareth, the saying of God in Matthew III, 17: "This is My beloved Son," which he gives with slight alterations. He has also heard the story of the Magi who visited the infant Messiah, according to the Gospel and other sources. He gives the story of the summoning of the Apostles accurately. He also names the Four Evangelists and speaks of the "Book of the Gospel," of which he gives a summary, as if he had seen it. On the other hand, he shows a certain distrust of this book, in contrast to the great reverence with which the Quran speaks of it. Al-Masudi is comparatively well informed about the lives of the Apostles. He twice speaks of the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul, but ascribes to the latter the same kind of martyrdom as, according to tradition, was the fate of Peter only. He knows Thomas as the apostle of India. On the whole, Thomas seems to be the apostle best known to the Muslims next to Peter, and even Paul is less known than Peter.

"Al-Biruni is still better informed than al-Masudi. In order to write his *Chronology*, he had to consult Nestorian Christians. He knows various parts of the Gospels and also of the commentary of Dadisho (Jesudad, cf. Duval, *Litt. Syriaque*, 2nd ed., p. 64) and discusses it with a certain spirit of criticism. The four Evangelists to him are four recensions, which he compares with the four copies of the Bible, the Jewish, Christian and Samaritan. He notices, however, that these recensions differ considerably from one another. Al-Biruni gives the genealogies of Joseph in full from Matthew and Luke, and tells in a very interesting passage how the Christians explain this difference. He speaks of other gospels which the Marcionites, Bardesanites and Manichaeans possessed, the two first of

which differed, according to him, "in some parts" from the Christian Gospels, while the others were contradictory. In view of all these different recensions he concludes that one cannot rely very much on the prophetic value of the Gospels.

"The Persian version of Tabari's *Chronicle* (French ed. by Zotenberg) contains New Testament legends, which are more detailed than in the Arabic original and correspond with those found in the stories of the Prophets (*Qisas al-Anbiya*). Certain details from the Passion for example are given, such as the repudiation by "Simon," the betrayal by one of the Apostles, who is not mentioned by name, and the story of Mary under the Cross. For the rest the author holds the Muslim view that another person, whom he calls Josua, was substituted for Jesus. As to the history of the Apostles he gives the tradition which makes John come to Edessa.

"In the mystic literature, one finds numerous allusions to the Gospel, there are even traces of some knowledge of the exposition of some passages in scripture by the Fathers of the Church. What is given by the Muslim mystics as sayings of Jesus, however, is very far from always agreeing with the Gospel. For example, the sayings ascribed by al-Ghazali to Christ are almost all incorrect. On the other hand we find in al-Suhrawardi an accurate and complete version of the parable of the sower. The *Rasa il Ikhwan al-Safa* contain remarkable passages about the crucifixion of Jesus, the actuality of which they assume, about the Resurrection, the assembling of the Apostles at the last supper and their scattering over the face of the earth. *Acts of the Apostles (Afal al-Hawariya)* is expressly quoted there (Dieterici, p. 605).

"The philosophic literature also shows a large number of controversies between Christians and Muslims. Among the celebrated polemicists we need only mention here Abu Ali Isa b. Zura, who in 387 composed a reply to Abu'l-Kasim Abd Allah b. Ahmad al-Balkhi, and Yahya b. Adi, a Christian scholar and pupil of al-Farabi. The latter produced an apology for Christianity, which he dedicated to Shaikh Abu Isa Muhammad b. al-Warrak. He also replied to strictures by al-Kindi on the Trinity.

"The Muslims in general respect the Gospels and revere Jesus and Mary. The Turks call it *Injil sherif*. Various writers who have lived in Turkey say that many Turks in secret recognise the superiority of the Gospels to the Quran. In particular they mention the case of Kabiz who in the reign of Soliman I openly professed his preference for the Gospels and was therefore executed."

A New Volume of "The Moslem World."

THE twentieth volume of "an encyclopædia of current events, literature and thought among Muslims" begins with the January number of the *Moslem World Quarterly*. This Review, a year older than the *International Review of Missions*, was one of the results of the Edinburgh World Conference and of that held at Lucknow in 1911 on Missions to Muslims. It has kept step with events and progress all these years and continues to sound a note of advance in evangelization.

The extent of the world of Islam and its population is vividly brought before the mind in a series of new colored maps given as a frontispiece, with an illuminating descriptive article on the geography of the Mohammedan world by Dr. Isaiah Bowman of the American Geographical

Society. The awakening of Islam is described from the educated Muslim's stand-point by S. Khuda Bukhsh of Calcutta, and it is well worthwhile to learn from him what Muslim India thinks of the present situation.

Two articles deal with Turkey. Professor Nicholas M. Martinovitch of Columbia University gives an interesting sketch of Turkish Education in the Eighteenth Century, and Professor Lee Vrooman of the International College at Smyrna tells the story of the early Turks. A missionary in Mosul presents the strategic value of that city, not because of the oil interests but because of human values that center there.

There are brief articles on Morocco and Central Asia and, in the Current Topics, on Islam in Burma, West Africa, North Africa, Lithuania and Oman. The Rev. W. Wilson Cash contributes an account of the work of the Anglican Church in Persia. The article on "Nebi 'Isa and the Skull," translated from an Egyptian source, gives an insight into the mind of the common people, as does also Rev. E. J. Jenkinson's essay on the origin of the Muslim Anti-Christ Legend.

There are twenty pages of Book Reviews, and an unusually extensive Survey of Periodicals.

Kindly note that all exchanges for *THE MOSLEM WORLD* and correspondence for the editor should be permanently addressed to

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M. M. League.

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	1,130	6	0		1,130	6	0

Audited and found correct.

W. H. BAPTIST.

Dated Jan. 31st, 1930.

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 request for prayer should be sent (if possible early in the month) to the Hony. Secretary:—

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