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News and Notes

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1st September = 17th Rabi'ul-Akhir (4th mo.), 1350, A.H.

The Cry on the Cross.

OUR attention has been called to the following amazing statement appearing in a book entitled *The Power of India* by Mrs. Michael Pym :

What he (Christ) said on the cross is a matter of some doubt, for very strangely the words "Eli Eli lama sabachthani" have two meanings. In Hebrew it appears they possess the significance usually given to them by the Gospels. But they are also perfect Arabic without a change of word, and in Arabic they mean, "Lord, the splendour (of light) that (is) to succeed me is another." (p. 166.)

There is not a word of truth in this statement, and one can only suppose that someone had been making sport with the author's credulity. The words are not Arabic, and bear no resemblance to the Arabic for "Lord, the splendour that is to succeed me is another."

The truth is that the words as given in the best MSS. of St. Mark are in Aramaic, the vernacular of Palestine in our Lord's day, a language as far removed from Arabic as Hebrew is. In St. Matthew they are given in Hebrew. In both cases they represent the text of Psalm xxii. 1, and in both cases they are immediately followed by a correct translation into Greek, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

It is exceedingly difficult for us to enter at all into the inner consciousness of Jesus, and therefore it is not surprising that Christians have found it almost impossible to understand His inner thoughts at that moment of supreme crisis. But we may note the following points :

(1) As the disciples of Christ, and the evangelists, believed Him to be the Son of God, they would never have invented such a sentence.

It is therefore evidence for the veracity of the Gospel story of the death of Christ.

(2) Christ's humanity was real. His feelings and sufferings were truly human. These words are not the cry of one whose humanity was only a pretence, a cloak in which the divinity was disguised.

(3) Christ did not, even at that moment, lose His faith in God. He could still say "*My God.*" And the whole tone of Psalm xxii, which then came to His mind, is of trust in God although in the depth of adversity.

(4) Christ all through His ministry had felt Himself to be fulfilling the ideal of the suffering Servant of the Lord, mentioned in the later chapters of Isaiah, who through sufferings voluntarily undergone for the sake of others would raise up the tribes of Israel, and be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and bring God's salvation to the ends of the earth. Psalm xxii has the same set of ideas as the Servant passages in Isaiah; and after the expression of the depth of affliction in the first twenty-one verses, turns to the triumphant evangelization of the world: "I will declare Thy name unto my brethren.....All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee." In His hour of anguish Christ knew that He had fulfilled the ideal of the Servant of the Lord, and that, lifted up on the cross, He would draw all men unto Himself.

L. E. BROWNE.

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Dr. A. G. Hogg, of Madras Christian College, also approaches the study of the significance of this cry by way of our Lord's consciousness of Himself as the 'Suffering Servant.' (see *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, xiv, 4). We venture to quote part of the passage because it seems a fitting supplement to what Mr. Browne has said above. "What came upon him (the Servant) was crushing affliction and calamity which might make him feel as if Jehovah were his enemy, even while he *knew* that this could not be so. And amid such a conflict between feeling and faith, the 'Servant' might well make his own that anguished cry of Ps. xxii. 1, which our Lord uttered on the cross. For the words are not a cry of despair but an expostulation; and one does not expostulate with an enemy but with one who is known to be a friend although his conduct seems unfriendly. The words themselves signify despair, but their utterance in the form of an expostulation expresses a refusal to despair. That cry from the cross, then, is the self-preserving cry of faith as it reels under the assault of despair. So far from proving that our Lord knew Himself to be the object of God's righteous indignation, it really indicates the contrary. It shows that while, in the crisis of that grief which was upon Him, He felt all perceptible signs of His Father's Presence to be lacking, yet instinctively He knew the Father to be near and ready to hear when He called. And since the cry was the self-preserving act of a faith

tried to the uttermost, may we not believe that it brought victory and peace ?.....In Gethsemane our Lord suffered agony without any interruption of His filial trust and without beholding any frown on His Father's face, and we have no grounds to suppose that it was otherwise on Calvary."

The Christian Message and Islam.

A SUMMARY of the discussion in Cairo on the subject "The Value of Posters, Pictures, etc., in Evangelistic work."

1. Testimony was borne to the value of pictures of all kinds, especially when dealing with people of simple intelligence. Such pictures include :—

- (a) Book illustrations.
- (b) Wall pictures, illustrating Bible stories.
- (c) Sunday School cards, for general distribution.
- (d) Posters on health subjects and on Bible stories.
- (e) Magic lantern slides.
- (f) Films, dealing with educational, social and religious topics.
- (g) Baby Welfare pictures.

2. Various suggestions were put forward as to the best methods of using these different kinds of pictures in educational, social and evangelistic work, such as :—

- (a) Encouraging Egyptians themselves to design posters. Surprising originality had been displayed in the competition, organised by the American University at Cairo, for posters dealing with eye diseases in Egypt. Boys and girls in schools and members of Christian Endeavour Societies were being encouraged to draw posters to help forward the campaign against drug-taking and intemperance.
- (b) Muslim leaders in Egypt had opposed vigorously an American proposal to have a film made of the life of the prophet, Muhammad. This left us a clear field for using the film in our various departments of Christian work.
- (c) Series of wall-pictures were being displayed with great success in different hospitals in Egypt.
- (d) Much more use might be made of the magic lantern in evangelistic work in the villages. Some had found it helpful to begin with a talk on prevalent Egyptian diseases, and then to pass to a simple parable of our Lord's.
- (e) Each week a Bible picture was displayed on the railings fronting the C.M.S. Buildings at Boulac, Cairo. The

picture was explained by two or three lines written in bold Arabic script. An invitation was also extended to any who wished to come inside and see the book from which the picture was taken. This "Silent Preacher" had proved very effective, and the idea was being copied in other centres.

- (f) More might be done in the way of selling good pictures to be hung in the homes of Christians. Some Muslims were also willing to have pictures in their homes.
 - (g) The suggestion was put forward that for the sake of avoiding misunderstandings, and in the interests of economy, Bible pictures should be standardized. Not all agreed to this.
3. In regard to the kind of pictures shown it was suggested :—
- (a) That these should be as simple as possible, especially for the sake of those who were being approached for the first time.
 - (b) The number of figures appearing in a picture should be small.
 - (c) The meaning of the picture should be obvious.
 - (d) Care should be taken to guarantee that the picture portrayed correctly the country and the habits of the people who appeared in it.
 - (e) The picture should aim not only at conveying correct information, but also at developing a spirit of Christian reverence in the hearts of those looking at it.
 - (f) Some subjects were better not illustrated but left to the imagination.
4. Reference was made to the scheme whereby missionaries could obtain pictures at cost price plus postage from the Central Literature Bureau, C.M.S. Building, Boulac, Cairo.

Milad Celebrations.

AT the time of the recent celebrations of Muhammad's birthday (which strictly speaking coincided with 1st August, the 12th of Rabi'ul Awwal) a meeting was held in Dalhousie, on 29th July, under the auspices of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman of Lahore. Speeches were delivered and poems recited in honour of Muhammad.

The chairman made the naive suggestion that the study of Hinduism by Muslims and of Islam by Hindus was the one way to Hindu-Muslim unity. In his opinion the teachings of all religions were the same—the reflection of one light passing through a many-coloured lantern. He summed up the essence of Islam in two words—*Fear God*. He looked upon the second half of the Muslim *kalima*—'Muhammad is the apostle of God'—as a *brake* on man's proneness to go to extremes. Muhammad is an apostle *and nothing more*.

The main speaker was Maulana Muhammad Ali, M.A., LL B., President of the Ahmadiyya Community and Author of an English commentary on the Quran. The case he made out for Muhammad was, in substance, as follows:—

A man is honoured as great in proportion to the greatness and benevolence of his deeds. People's regard for such is spontaneous. These men stand on a level above their fellows and are, in the words of Nietzsche, *supermen*. Among the 'great men' of past ages are to be reckoned Dayanand, Nanak, Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Ram Chandra, Buddha, Confucius, Tao, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. These have won renown because of the work they have done in the interests of humanity—and their greatness is to be judged by the degree of their success. The greater the man the greater his success. The truth of this statement may be shown by comparing the achievements of Dayanand, Ram Mohan Roy, Nanak and Keshab Chandra Sen (in India) with that of Muhammad (in Arabia). The former tried to wipe away idolatry from their country, but signally failed. Arabia had the worst type of idolatry which, for five centuries, as Sir William Muir points out, both Judaism and Christianity had tried in vain to uproot. What they failed to accomplish, Muhammad did single-handed. His success is unparalleled in the history of the world. Notwithstanding the proximity of the Christian Roman Empire in the north and of the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia in the south the success of Christianity in Arabia was "less than the ripple raised by the breeze on the surface of a calm sea." (Muir) On the other hand, as the *Encyclopædia Britannica* puts it, 'Muhammad has proved to be the most successful of all the religious leaders in the world.' It is for this reason that we pay the greatest regard to Muhammad.

Now this success was not achieved through the power of the sword. It was not in Muhammad's nature to use force. He was a kind man. He would even visit the homes of non-believers in their sickness. He stood up on one occasion when the corpse of a Jew was being carried past, to show his respect for such dead. (This is the subject of a poem reproduced in the Birthday Number of *The Light*, July 24th). He was generous in his treatment of his enemies. He granted religious liberty to the Christians of Najran. In an expedition to the borders of Syria, undertaken in the year before his death he returned without striking a blow for he did not make contact with his enemies, although he had under him 30,000 men and could easily have invaded their territory. His very nature was repugnant to fighting and until he was 53 he did not fight at all. He was 40 years old before he joined in a war-like expedition. He only fought in self-defence and in defence of his community (which was made up of poor followers) and that after thirteen years of persistent persecution.

The success of Islam was not due to the power of the sword. Its progress has always been greater in times of peace. Muhammad's peaceful policy was continued by his Companions, and is illustrated by the Khalifa Umar's treatment of the *zimmi*, i.e., subjects who paid the poll-tax. He once saw a poor Jew begging and was told that he was soliciting alms in order to pay the *jizya*. He, therefore, gave orders that thenceforth this Jew and all penurious *zimmi* should be not only exempted from the tax but should be supported from the *Bait-ul-mâl*, or government treasury.

Nevertheless (said the speaker) we Muslims must not forget the example set by Muhammad, for, though gentle by nature, he did not hesitate to use the sword in defence of his community, *and so must we*.

J. A. SUBHAN.

An Introduction to the Study of Islam.

THE need has long been felt of an up-to-date manual on Islam, in the various vernaculars, to be placed in the hands of Indian clergy, pastors, evangelists and teachers. We are glad to announce to all whom it may concern that the MS. of such a book, in English, is now rapidly nearing completion. We hope that it will be published by the S.C.M. Press in England (and thus be made available for the public served by the S.C.M.), and that simultaneously a cheap edition will be put out by The Association Press, Calcutta. The book is likely to run to 275 pages.

The following list of contents will indicate the scope of the manual:

Section I.

THE RISE AND EXPANSION OF ISLAM.

1. Arabia and its People.
2. Muhammad.
3. The first Four Khalifas.
4. The subsequent Expansion of Islam.

Section II.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF ISLAM.

1. The Quran.
2. The Traditions.
3. Muslim Canon Law.

Section III.

THE FAITH AND PRACTICE OF ISLAM.

1. The Creed.
2. Religious Duties.
3. Muslim High Days.
4. The Sects of Islam.
5. Sufism.
6. The Mystic 'Path'—Religious Orders.

Section IV.

ISLAM IN THE MODERN WORLD.

1. Islam in the Near East.
2. Islam in India since the 10th century.
3. Reform movements in India.
4. The new Apologetic.

Section V.

CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM.

1. Christianity and Islam in India since the 16th century.
2. Sources of strength in Islam.
3. The inadequacy of Islam.
4. Christian beliefs in the light of Muslim prejudice.
5. The new Muslim polemic.
6. A candid inquiry into our methods.
7. The line of approach to Muslim hearts.

Appendix A. The Indian Church, a Home for converts.

„ B. A Glossary of Islamic Terms.

Notes.

'Segurdod yw clod y cledd
A rhwd yw ei anrhydedd.'

Baffled? It's a Welsh proverb enshrining a great thought:

'The glory of the sword is its idleness
'And its rust is its honour.'

* * * * *

Slaves to be freed! It has been estimated that there are about five million slaves in the world to-day, notably in Abyssinia, Arabia and China. As a result of the protests of the British Anti-Slavery Society, Ras Tafari, the Emperor of Abyssinia, has decided to abolish slavery in his realm, in accordance with the undertaking given by Abyssinia when she entered the League of Nations. Two million slaves will thus be set free!

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Muslims in Kashmir. The lot of the Muslims of Kashmir, an independent state under a Hindu Sovereign, has for long excited the pity and evoked the protests of their brethren in British India. They form about 95 per cent. of the population yet have only a ridiculously small share in the lucrative appointments under the State. Muslim publicists are writing of this fair Paradise of Earth as being, for the Muslims in it, 'a vale of tears.' Feelings have at last reached the point of exasperation and there has been an unfortunate outburst of mob violence and bloodshed. We earnestly hope the united appeals of the community will lead to a redress of their grievances.

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'*The Solitary Throne.*' The Rev. Bishop Brenton Badley, of Bombay, has done a timely service in bringing together in a booklet of 62 pages, various sayings of Mr. Gandhi confronted on the opposite page with the words of Christ. Two conclusions are inevitable. Mr. Gandhi is not prepared to give Christ the pre-eminence; consequently, it is incorrect to speak of him as a Christian. It is a book to be read and lent to others. Issued by The Methodist Publishing House, Madras. One Rupee.

* * * * *

Pictures in Islam. It will be known to many that two Muslim youths recently murdered, in cold blood, a Hindu publisher and his assistant in a bookshop in Calcutta, as a protest against the insertion of a picture of Muhammad in a text-book which had been approved for the use of students. When the case was being heard before an English High-Court Judge a prominent and highly educated Muslim educationalist of the city stated that Muslim 'custom' was against the pictorial representation of *any animate object*. Letters have been sent to the Press by Muslims protesting that this is a misrepresentation of the facts, and that in any case such an act is an offence when it is a Muslim who makes the picture. The irony of the whole thing lay in this that the Hindu publisher was merely reproducing a picture *made by a Muslim* some centuries ago!

* * * * *

Death of Mr. S. Khuda Bakhsh. The death took place recently of Mr. Salahuddin Khuda Bakhsh, in Calcutta after a short illness. He was the son of the founder of the famous Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna, which contains many rare and beautiful Arabic and Persian manuscripts.

Mr. S. Khuda Bakhsh was a distinguished barrister and had won a name for himself as a scholar in Arabic and Persian. Among his best-known writings are *Essays Indian and Islamic* and *Studies*. He was 'modern,' as Muslims go, and, in his *Essays*, fearlessly exposed the blots in Muslim Society. There is more than meets the eye, we may be sure, in the phrase used by a less advanced Muslim editor in an obituary notice: 'He (the deceased) had his share of human frailties.' (!)

NOTICE.

Will the secretaries of the Provincial Committees on Work among Muslims (N.C.C. India) please note that all applications to the A.C.L.S.M. for grants for literature for Muslims should be sent to Dr. M. T. Titus, Secy. of the Literature Committee, on or before 1st October. His changed address is: M. E. Mission, MORADABAD, U.P. Dr. Titus will soon be issuing detailed information to secretaries.

NEW MEMBERS.

Rev. Harris J. Stewart,
Rev. J. J. Kingham,

A.U.P.M.
M.E.Ch.

Gujranwala, Punjab.
Ipoh, F. Malay States.

Our total membership is now **400**.

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 Hony. Secretary:—

Rev. L. Bevan Jones,
5, Egerton Road,
Lahore,
Punjab, India.

