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News and Notes

A Monthly Paper printed for the private use of the
Members of the Missionaries to Muslims League.

Series XX

February, 1932.

1st February = 23rd Ramzán (9th mo.), 1350, A.H.

'Id-ul-Fitr = 9th February.

A Parody of Christ.

AS long ago as 1888 Dr. Koelle, for over thirty years a missionary of the C.M.S. in Sierra Leone and Turkey, published his critical study of "Mohammed and Mohammedanism," a volume running to 560 pages. The book is now out of print. At one time it had a considerable vogue and must have greatly influenced missionary thought on the subject for a generation or more. It is characteristic of Koelle's method of treatment and attitude that he deals with the subject of his study under two heads; (1) 'Mohammed viewed in the daylight of history,' and (2) 'Mohammed viewed in the moonshine of tradition.'

In the latter section he has a chapter of close on 130 pages to which he gives the page-head sub-title, 'Mohammed a Parody of Christ.' In this chapter he tabulates 50 features culled from various Muslim sources in support of his contention that we have here the most glaring plagiarism. In a concluding note to the chapter he says (on p. 374) that the attentive reader will probably conclude that these apparent parallels are "*far too close and numerous to be considered accidental.*" (The italics are ours.)

Dr. Zwemer treated the same subject twenty years ago in his book *The Moslem Christ* (Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 200 pages, 1912), in a chapter entitled, 'Jesus Christ Supplanted by Mohammed.' There he refers in detail to Koelle's earlier work, and says '*for all practical purposes Mohammed himself is the Moslem Christ.*' (The italics are his. We believe Dr. Zwemer's book is still procurable and we can heartily commend it to the notice of members of the League.)

This particular method of idealising the character of Mohammed still obtains. With each return of the Prophet's birthday panegyrists seem to vie with one another in their efforts to say something new about Muhammad, and almost invariably they succumb to the temptation to depict in him some feature hitherto attributed to Jesus Christ,

Thus in a recent birthday number of *The Light* (July 24, 1931), in the course of a leading article entitled 'Muhammad the Man' the editor wrote: "Muhammad's heart overflowed with the milk of human love. To serve man, to uplift man,' etc.....this was the be-all and end-all of his life. In thought, in word, in deed, he had the good of man as his sole inspiration, his sole guiding principle. Never in the numerous vicissitudes of his eventful life did this all-dominating passion abate or subside. Ridiculed, pelted, stoned, with feet swollen and bleeding, when some one suggested imprecation against his tormentors, the *Man* in Muhammad revolted against the very idea. "I am not sent as a curse to mankind. I am sent as a blessing unto humanity!" And when lying in the dust and his own blood at the field of battle, knocked down by the enemy, his heart beat with the same sentiment of human love. "Lord!", he was heard to murmur, "Lord! forgive my people, for they know not."

We owe an apology to one of our members who in August last sought information on two points in connection with the prayer alleged here to have been made by Muhammad. To the question as to whether it was genuine we at once replied that it most certainly was not. But for a number of reasons we have been delayed in dealing with his request that we should quote the authority for the statement that those words fell from Muhammad's lips.

Our enquiries have so far failed to discover any 'authority' for this prayer which, like so much else that we have had in mind in writing as we have above, recalls the words Christians have always associated with Jesus on the cross (Luke 23: 34)

There *is*, however, a prayer attributed to Muhammad on that same occasion which seems to breathe a somewhat different spirit. The occasion was the battle of Uhud, and concerning the desperate situation in which Muhammad found himself, Ibn Hisham the biographer (or Shaikh Al-Imam Abi Muhammad 'Abd-ul-Malik bin Hisham, to give him his full title) writes in *Sirat-un-Nabi* as follows: "The two front teeth of Muhammad were broken on the day of Uhud, and they pierced his face. The blood began to flow on his face, and as he was wiping the blood, he said: 'How can the people of that nation flourish who have dyed (with blood) the face of their Prophet—and he calleth them to their Lord!' Then was revealed: 'It is none of thy concern whether He be turned unto them in kindness, or chastise them; for verily they are wrongful doers.'" (Sura III, 123.) (Cairo ed. 1329 A. H. Vol. II, p. 364.)

Without controversy, in much later Muslim writing Muhammad is made to be a parody of Jesus Christ. But the feature we should mark and reflect upon is, not that on occasion Muslim authors of the baser type speak blasphemously of Jesus, but that in their concern to make Muhammad more attractive than he might otherwise be they seem unable to resist the temptation to borrow for him features they find in the historical Jesus. Thus do they unwittingly pay tribute to our Lord.

The Christian Message and Islam.

A SUMMARY of the discussion in Cairo on the subject "How can we best present to Muslims the subject of the *New Birth*?"

1. The first difficulty in the way of presenting this subject is the profound difference between the Muslim conception of sin and the Christian conception. The Muslim really believes in the intrinsic goodness of human nature, and that this has only to be rightly instructed so that it will express itself in good works. He is not conscious of his need of redemption, and he looks upon his prophet, Muhammad, as a teacher rather than as an atoner. He has but a faint idea of the reality of the inward struggle for righteousness. He is proudly entrenched in his own religious beliefs.

2. The Muslim, also, has a quite different conception of salvation from the Christian conception. He believes that salvation is achieved by individual effort, and he has great faith in the mercy of God, at least towards the Muslim believer. The orthodox are convinced that evil deeds may be counter-balanced by good deeds, and that no Muslim will enter the Fire. The common people acknowledge more readily the weakness of human nature, but rely fully on the mercy of God. Women, too, by reason of the attitude of their men folk towards them, are aware of their own weakness, and are more disposed to desire a better life. That section of the *effendee* class which is breaking away from Islam, looks to philosophy, science and education to bring "new life" to mankind.

3. Our first objective is to stir up within the soul of the Muslim a sense of his need for a "new life" and a sincere desire for it. One good method of approach is along the lines of personal temptation and the difficulty of achieving victory in the struggle against it. Another is to bring the Muslim face to face with a higher conception of life, as revealed in the Life of Jesus Christ or of a true Christian. Another is to show the futility of good works as an atonement for sin. This result, in all probability, will not be realised at once. It may take weeks of instruction before the spiritual outlook of an enquirer is so changed that he will feel his need of forgiveness, of divine strength, and of a "new birth." At first the tendency of a Muslim is to criticise the teaching of Jesus as "impracticable." Our purpose is to show that it *is* impracticable without the power of the Holy Spirit. Human nature can only be transformed as the spirit of God takes hold upon it and gives it new direction and new power. We must also get the Muslim to realize that behind the gift of the Spirit is the Cross of Christ, and behind the Cross of Christ is the eternal love of God.

4. We must aim to bring home to the Muslim the fact that in order to receive the gift of the Spirit our life must be surrendered to God. Also he must realize the difference between the faith of authority (i.e. intellectual belief) and personal faith. A genuine personal conviction must accompany every real spiritual experience.

5. It is only the Christian worker who has himself a deep conviction of the truth of his message who can be the means of mediating these truths to a Muslim. It is probably the spirit of the worker as he approaches the Muslim that has more influence than his actual teaching. That is why the prayer life of the Christian worker tells so much in spiritual work of this kind.

6. Special care needs to be taken of converts after baptism, that the spiritual experience of a "new birth" may be continued in a steady spiritual growth. It is only too easy for the convert to lose heart and to fall back into his old ways.

Jews Become Christians.

The difficulties in the work among Jews are, in many respects, so similar to those we encounter with Muslims that it makes good reading to learn through Dr. Conning of steady accessions to the Church from amongst God's ancient people.

NO STATEMENT is more frequently made by Jewish leaders when referring to Christian missionary effort in behalf of their people than that it is ineffective and almost wholly barren in results. Ridicule is heaped upon those who seek in any way to win Jews to the discipleship of Christ. Attempts have even been made to estimate in pounds or dollars the high cost of "making a bad Jew into a worse Christian." Unfortunately there are Christians who in ignorance of the facts repeat the assertions.

The fact is that from the beginning Jews in varying numbers have, often at great cost, yielded wholehearted allegiance to Christ. The results of Christ's brief personal ministry have generally been underestimated. We hear of the hundred and twenty in the upper room, but forget the tens of thousands who came under His sway, and who later formed the Christian synagogues which were scattered over Judea and Galilee. In the Christian churches of apostolic origin many thousands of Jews were included. The "strangers" to whom Peter refers in his epistle were without doubt Jews of the dispersion who had become followers of Christ. The existence of an "Epistle to the Hebrews" bears convincing testimony to the wide extension of Christianity among the Jews of the period.

And since apostolic times there has been no age that has not seen many Jews owning the Messiahship of Jesus. In the thirteenth century England had more than one *Domus Conversorum* to care for Jews who had become identified with the cause of Christ. Rev. J. F. de la Roi, a careful statistician, estimated that 224,000 Jews during the nineteenth century entered the Christian churches of Europe and America. And this in spite of the fact that very meagre efforts were put forth in their behalf. Such a result is greater by far than was reported from any other part of the world's mission field. A quarter of a million converts from ten millions of Jews is a vastly greater result than three million converts from one thousand million heathen. In one case the proportion is one in forty, in the other one in three hundred.

In our own day there is a distinct movement toward Christianity among Jews in certain parts of Europe. Sir Leon Levison, president of the

World's Hebrew Christian Alliance, after a personal investigation of what is going on, wrote: "The age of miracles has not gone by. Ninety-seven thousand Jews in Hungary alone accepted the Christian faith, in Vienna seventeen thousand, in Poland thirty-five thousand, and in Bolshevich Russia sixty thousand Jews became Christians. We also found Jews turning to Christ in Germany, Sweden and Denmark. Not a few have done likewise in Great Britain." In America a careful estimate places the number of Christians of the Jewish race at not less than twenty thousand.

Dr. Arthur Rupp, the Jewish publicist, whose bias is certainly not toward Christianity, in looking over the entire Jewish field declares: "Even allowing for the thousands and tens of thousands who succumbed to persecution, Judaism to-day should be stronger than it is by millions and tens of millions, were it not for the continuous secession to Christianity."

Nor must we forget the high character of many Jews who have cast in their lot with the Christian Church, since the days of Peter and James and John and Paul. What other mission field has produced a list of distinguished individuals that can be compared with converts among the Jews? We think of men in the nineteenth century like Dr. Paulus Cassel, Dr. Alfred Edersheim, Bishop Hellmuth, the Herschells, the Mendlessons, the Margoliouths, Dr. Capadose, Adolph Saphir, Joseph Rabinowitz, David Baron, Louis Meyer and hundreds of others. In America we think of men like Isidor Loewenthal, the pioneer missionary to Afghanistan, who translated the Scriptures into the Pushtu tongue for the people of that land, and of Bishop Schereschewsky who translated the Scriptures into Wenli for the four hundred millions of China. But for possible embarrassment it would be easy to mention many prominent Christians from among the Jews of our own generation. Speaking of recent converts, Sir Leon Levison says: "Among the men and women who have come out from Jewry for Christ there are many who hold university degrees, doctors of law, medicine, philosophy, science, literature, etc."

Nor should we fail to consider the indirect results of Jewish contacts with Christianity. The disappearance of the ghetto and pale, and the freer associations of modern times are gradually wearing away the old antagonisms and bringing about a new state of mind more favorable to a consideration of the claims of Christianity. Jews to-day are open-minded as they have not been for many generations. They are reading the New Testament and other Christian literature, listening to messages over the radio, and occasionally visiting Christian churches. Most revolutionary of all is the changing attitude toward Jesus. Whereas for long centuries His name was never mentioned by reputable Jews, to-day He is widely acclaimed as a prophet and as one to whom Jews should give heed.

Do Jews become Christians? Yes, always. Wherever Christ is fairly interpreted with sympathy and understanding there is an encouraging response. If the results have not been greater, the fault lies mainly with the Christian Church which has seldom been concerned for the spiritual welfare of the Jews. Rarely has the Gospel been given a fair chance. Prejudice, bigotry, injustice, and ill-will have too often hidden the face of Christ from His people. But a brighter day is dawning. The Church is gradually awakening to a sense of her responsibility. The bringing of work for the Jews within the program of the International Missionary Council gives promise of a larger and fuller service than has hitherto been possible. Over this long neglected field the day at last is breaking.

REV. JOHN STUART CONNING, D.D.,
in the Missionary Review of the World.

The Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies, Lahore.

Correspondence Department.

TO meet the needs of those who cannot attend the regular courses of lectures, it has been decided to start a correspondence department as an extension of the work of the School. The methods will be as follows:—

1. Those desiring to gain a general knowledge of Islam should study the books in the recommended *Course of Study*, and an examination will be set on the subjects covered by those books. (See last issue.)

2. Those who already have a general knowledge of Islam are invited to write to us for guidance in further reading on any special branch of the subject. They should state which languages they can read, as, in addition to sources in Arabic, Persian and Urdu, there are many useful books in French and German which have not been translated into English. During such an advanced course of study we shall be glad to suggest subjects for essays on the subject, and to give an opinion on the essays when written.

3. Those who are in a position to write tracts for Muslims, either in English or in any vernacular, are invited to consult with us about existing literature on the subject of their choice.

4. Those who have particular difficulties or questions are invited to consult us. If we are able to supply the answers they will either be sent privately, or if of sufficient general interest may be published in *News and Notes*.

5. We regularly receive lists of second-hand Oriental books from several different firms, and shall be glad to help correspondents to get books which are out of print. But it should be noted that it is frequently a long time before such books appear in the second hand market, and the prices are often very high. We can generally supply information about the publishers and price of books that are in print.

All correspondence on the above matters should be addressed to:—

Rev. L. E. BROWNE,
5 Egerton Road,
Lahore.

15-1-32

Wise Counsel.

‘SHUT your mind against foolish, popular controversy; be sure that only breeds strife. And the Lord’s servant must not be a man of strife; he must be kind to everybody, a skilled teacher, a man who will not resent injuries; he must be gentle in his admonitions to the opposition—God may perhaps let them change their mind and admit the truth; they may come to their senses again and escape the snare of the devil, as they are brought back to life by God, to do His will.’ (II Timothy, 2: 23-26. Moffatt’s translation.)

The Moslem World Quarterly

January, 1932.

The Evangelization of the World of Islam.

IT is a little over six centuries ago that Raymund Lull challenged the church of his day to carry the Gospel to the Moslems of North Africa and the Near East. He was, in a sense, the first and the greatest of missionaries to Moslems. Extracts from his writings and a picture of his statue at Palma, Majorca, occupy the first place in the January number of **THE MOSLEM WORLD**. His method and his message seem surprisingly up-to-date; a challenge from the thirteenth to the twentieth century.

The Right Reverend Bishop Linton, of Persia, contributes a report on present-day evangelism through schools and colleges, which will awaken lively discussion, because of contrasting policies and methods now at work.

Islam itself, indeed, claims to have an evangel, as Professor Frank Hugh Foster, of Oberlin, points out in a scholarly article on the message of Mohammed to the world of his day.

The longest and most important contribution in this issue of the Quarterly is by the Arabist and Orientalist Professor Duncan B. Macdonald of Hartford. It is a thoroughly scientific study on the meaning of *Ruh* (Spirit) in Islamic thought, a term which has produced some confusion in the Christian message, because of its popular and technical usage in Islam, and which therefore needed elucidation.

Professor Richard Bell of Edinburgh, and Professor Nathaniel Schmidt of Cornell, contribute studies on the "Men on the A'raf" (Surah 7: 44) and on Ibn Khaldun's Prolegomena. A Turkish Professor discusses the meaning of the *Hanif* referred to in the Koran. More popular and practical are the articles on Medical Missions by Dr. E. M. Dodd, formerly of Persia; on the Sources of the Koran, by Dr. E. E. Calverley; and on Chinese Moslem Chronology, by Issac Mason of Shanghai.

Book Reviews, Current Topics and Survey of Periodicals.

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M. M. LEAGUE.

Financial Statement, 1931.

<i>Receipts.</i>	Rs.	A.	P.	<i>Expenditure.</i>	Rs.	A.	P.
Balance From 1930	431	13	3	Printers' Bills—			
Members Subscriptions and Donations	557	6	6	"News and Notes"	673	12	6
				Special Pamphlets	65	4	0
					739	0	6
				Postages	19	1	0
				Office Sundries	10	10	0
					768	11	6
				Balance carried forward	220	8	3
	Rs. 989	3	9		Rs. 989	3	9

Audited and found correct—
 (Signed) W. H. BAPTIST,
 January 9th 1932.

Punjab Christian Council.

Missionary Extension Course, April, 1932.

Preliminary Notice.

AT its last meeting the P.C.C. requested The Henry Martyn School to arrange the Missionary Extension Course in 1932 with *Islam* as the special subject. The dates for the Course have been fixed as follows:—Friday, 8th April to Tuesday, 12th April. As on the former occasion, when Dr. Macnicol was the principal lecturer, there will be, on the week-days, a two hours' session, morning and evening. On Sunday evening there will probably be a public meeting with an address on the Christian message.

Will members of the League resident in the Punjab kindly make this Course known as widely as possible ?

OUR THANKS ARE DUE

To Mr. S. F. Robinson, Superintendent of the Orissa Mission Press, Cuttack, for his valuable services freely given to the business side of the affairs of the League. No editor could have been better served than has the present writer by Mr. Robinson. Our very best thanks and all good wishes to him as he proceeds on furlough with his family.

NEW MEMBERS.

Miss M. F. Cousins
Miss R. Redman
Miss C. Redman

Mission Hospital
Z.B.M.M.
do

Jhansi, U. P.
Lahore.
do

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.