

Confidential.

Not to be reproduced without  
permission of the Editor.

## News and Notes

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

---

---

Series XX

April, 1932.

---

---

1st April = 24th Zu'l Qa'dah (11th mo.), 1350 A.H.

---

---

### 'Thieves and Robbers.'

ONE of the charges sometimes brought by Muslims against the character of Jesus, as portrayed in the gospels, is that he 'abused' the earlier prophets. Thus, in a disreputable Bengali tract entitled, *Was Jesus sinless?* (pubd. 1915) the writer says: 'Gradually through thus abusing others the attitude of Jesus so changed that he at length used to speak, without any sense of shame, of the prophets and apostles who preceded him as 'thieves and robbers.' Here is an example for our readers. Jesus once said concerning Abraham and Moses and the rest of the prophets who preceded him: "All whoever came before me were thieves and robbers." What more unworthy act could there be than to abuse all the departed saints and prophets and apostles as 'thieves and robbers' as a means to enhancing one's own fame and reputation?'

Doubtless many members of the League have met with this objection in their intercourse with Muslims. It may be that there are some who have not yet thought it worthwhile to find out what exactly our Lord meant when He used those words. It must be confessed that, at first sight, they do seem to convey the meaning which Muslims are apt to attach to them. And yet we feel instinctively that such a conclusion cannot be the right one. How may they be explained?

1. It is never wise, least of all when dealing with argumentative Muslims, to confine one's enquiry in a matter like this to the evidence of a single verse. From a number of other passages in the gospels it can be demonstrated that our Lord's customary attitude to the prophets renders it unwarrantable to read such a meaning into the passage under discussion, (*i.e.*, John 10: 8-10).

For instance, it is a fair inference from the passages we here cite to conclude that our Lord (as we should expect) held the prophets in very high regard :

- (a) *To the disciples* ; ' Rejoice (when persecuted) and be exceeding glad.....for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.' (Mt. 5 : 12).
- (b) ' Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets.' (Mt. 5 : 17).
- (c) ' O Jerusalem ! Jerusalem ! that killeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent unto her.....' (Mt. 23 : 37).
- (d) *In the Parable of Dives and Lazarus* ; ' If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead.' (Lk. 16 : 31).
- (e) *On the road to Emmaus* ; ' O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken !.....And beginning from Moses and all the prophets he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.' (Luke 24 : 25, 27).

\* \* \* \* \*

Nevertheless, Christ did repeatedly warn His disciples against *false* prophets : e.g., those ' which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves ' (Mt. 7 : 15) ; ' many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray.' (Mt. 24 : 11). And such grave warnings it seems to us give the clue to the purport of the words in the particular passage now under consideration.

2. Bishop Westcott, in his commentary *loc. cit.*, points out that the second verb in the statement (' All that (ever) came before me *are* thieves and robbers') ' fixes the application of the words to the immediate crisis of national expectation.' [The writer of the Bengali tract is guilty of a misquotation when he makes the saying read '*were* thieves and robbers.']

It is worthwhile reproducing some of Westcott's notes on this verse. ' The interpretation of the whole phrase lies in the word *came*, in which we see the full significance of the title, *he that should come*, as in verse 10. Thus the term includes essentially the notions of false Messiahs and self-commissioned teachers.....

' They who " came," who pretended to satisfy the national expectation inspired by the prophets, or to mould the national expectations after the Pharisaic type, who offered in any way that which was to be accepted as the end of the earlier dispensation, who made themselves " doors " of approach to God (Mt. 23 : 14.), were essentially, and continued to be, inspired by selfishness, whether their designs were manifested by craft or by violence, and whether they were directed to gain or to dominion. They were *thieves and robbers*. With them John the Baptist may be contrasted. He claimed only to prepare the

way for one "coming" (John 1: 30). Christ came when "all things were ready," in the fulness of time; and therefore whoever anticipated ('before me') by however little the moment of the divine revelation so far violated its harmony with life.'

This, it seems to us, is the most reasonable exegesis of Christ's words.

### **The Christian Message in Islam.**

**A** SUMMARY of the discussion in Cairo on "How can we best bring a Muslim to realise his need of *salvation*?"

Belief in the reliability of the Bible as God's revelation was considered to be of the first importance to any who would seek to bring a Muslim to realise his need of salvation.

It was advisable to attempt to meet a Muslim on his own ground. Though his conception of sin was very deficient and rarely did he realise his condition in the presence of a Holy God, yet he was very conscious of sin in the life and was ashamed of it. This sense of sin should be deepened by bringing him face to face with it again and again; "*Thou art the man.*"

The Law must be much preached to him, recognising that it was the school-master that would bring him to Christ. But with this continued preaching of the Law, the necessity of realising that every opportunity of presenting the truth might possibly be a last one, made it essential to insure that the person addressed did have an opportunity of knowing God's way of salvation.

Great use should be made of the Word of God especially as it sets forth the character of God in all its holiness.

Salvation from the power of sin should be pre-eminent in the message and not the choice of a better system.

It was necessary to realise that the approach to *women* must be different from that to men. With Muslim men one can refer to the Fall, to the expressed need of atonement by sacrifice, to the attributes of God and the necessity that His justice and mercy should not conflict and so on, but none of these methods of approach will do for women. Even well-known terms for sin often convey very different meanings to the women, and step by step one must make very sure of what women actually understand of our message.

A general concensus of opinion was expressed in the discussion that a crucial point was reached when a Muslim had been brought to acknowledge his sin and then there was presented to him Christ as Saviour. There ensued an entirely new atmosphere. Humanly speaking it seemed impossible to go further.

From this emerged the absolute necessity of practically recognising our entire dependance upon the Holy Spirit and consequently the supremely important place of prayer.

## Canon Sell of Madras.

IT is from Home papers that we in the north of India have heard of the passing of the veteran missionary whose name is familiar to all workers among Muslims. Canon Sell had lately entered upon his 94th year and the 67th of his missionary service (1865—1932). Truly a wonderful life-time.

We are indebted to Dr. Weitbrecht Stanton for a review of his career which appeared in *The Record* for 26th February, from which we make the following quotations:

'Canon Sell was one of those pillars of the Church whose foundation was laid in the great C.M.S. College at Islington. By sheer force of character, scholarship and business ability he advanced into the front ranks of missionary service. His qualities were such as would have ensured success in any career. As a great missionary they were of untold value, to the Church in South India especially, to the cause of missions among Muslims generally, and to the promotion of Christian literature. Side by side with Dr. John Murdoch, of the Indian Christian Literature Society, Canon Sell powerfully helped to build up a literature for South India, and especially for the pastors and teachers of our own Church. We mourn in his departure the loss of a genial and faithful friend, a scholar of marked ability and a missionary statesman. We thank God for the ripe fruit in each of these fields which his life yielded to the missionary cause.

Dr. Sell's outstanding business ability was shown very markedly in his tenure of the C.M.S. secretariat of the Madras Mission from 1881 to 1920, and brethren both at headquarters in London and on the field who had dealings with him were constantly helped and strengthened by his clear and prompt business methods. . . . .

Another and more unique work of Dr. Sell's was the development of the so-called "S.P.C.K. Press" in Madras from 1889 to 1930. This institution had originally been started with the help of the S.P.C.K., but had fallen upon evil days when Canon Sell, realising the importance of an organ for producing and circulating Christian literature, especially for the needs of our own Church in South India, took over the guidance of the Press. By his outstanding business ability and industry he developed its work to an extraordinary extent so that many works both in English and in vernaculars, not for Christians only but also of an evangelistic and general nature, were printed and circulated. A considerable depot was added to the actual Press.

Canon Sell was not less, but rather more, active in a personal authorship throughout his long career. He first became widely known through his work on *The Faith of Islam*, a masterly presentation of Muhammadan belief and practice, which has passed through several editions and has been translated into Urdu for the instruction of Indian Muslims. Other specially well-known works are his *Historical Development of the Qur'an* and *Studies in Islam*. The whole list of his works runs to fifty, and there is no English writer who has done more towards a scholarly and careful understanding of Islam, both in its system and in its history, than Canon Sell. But the extraordinary feature of this production is the work done by him since his retirement from C.M.S. service in 1923. For nine years of extreme old age, Dr. Sell has been giving himself to provision for the needs of the Indian Church, more especially of its pastors and teachers. He has published in English a series of *Commentaries* particularly on the Old

Testament books, as well as a Bible Handbook and Guide to the Wisdom Literature and other subjects which may be read with profit by an English person or school-master in our own land. These books are partly intended for the many Christians who read English in India, but many of them have also been translated into various vernaculars for the great benefit of Indian clergy and laity. The services that Canon Sell rendered to scholarship were acknowledged by the bestowal of the Lambeth B.D. degree in 1881 and later by the University of Edinburgh who made him D.D. in 1902, and the meritorious character of his public service, especially in connection with the University of Madras, was signalled by the bestowal of the Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal (1st class) in 1906. For many years he took active part, as a Fellow of the Madras University, in the work of its Senate.

Looking back on such a life we involuntarily say:—When shall we look upon his like again? But we also pray that his example may inspire yet many a potential scholar to offer himself for the work of God's Kingdom in India.

H. U. WEITBRECHT STANTON, D.D.

### Notes.

*Prayers in Turkish or Arabic?* When asked his opinion recently concerning Mustapha Kamal's innovation in ordering Mosque prayers to be said in Turkish because Arabic was not understood, Dr. Sir Md. Iqbal, of Lahore, is reported to have said: 'My own belief is that the congregational prayer, *i.e.*, the prayer conceived as a world institution, must necessarily be in Arabic, the language of the revelation, and further, the language of a country which occupies the central position between three continents. What matters most in the congregational prayer is the social fact and psychologically a uniform attitude of mind. The intelligibility of language, though helpful in securing the uniformity of mind, is of secondary importance.'

To this the editor of *The Light*, in which paper Dr. Iqbal's views are reported, takes strong exception. While admitting that uniformity of language is a binding force among the Muslims of the world, he says the question of intelligibility is "very, very important, and we are inclined to think that prayers shorn of the true spirit as embodied in the words are a dead ritual. . . . To our mind this attitude of uniformity is not much different to the uniformity of the parade ground where soldiers are daily drilled and made to go through similar bodily movements. . . . We would request the learned philosopher, Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, to please throw fuller light on (the question). Intelligibility of prayer is, as we have tried to explain, of the very essence of prayer. And yet the retention of Arabic as a common language for the whole of the world of Islam and as the Word of God is equally important. The difficulty is how to reconcile the two, where the vast masses of people do not understand Arabic. Shall we sacrifice uniformity to intelligibility and substitute local languages for Arabic? That is what Ghazi Mustafa Kamal has done. Or shall we sacrifice intelligibility to uniformity and retain Arabic even where it is not understood? This is the course suggested by Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal."

\* \* \* \* \*

On the eve of leaving China our friend Mr. Isaac Mason wrote: 'I want to keep in touch with you and to receive the "News" still, and if at

any time I could contribute anything of interest I shall be glad to do so. I am to spend some months in America on my way home, and among other things I expect to speak some time on the Muslim subject, and to encourage prayer and interest therein.' Let us remember this friend in our prayers.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Tracts for Women in Bengali.* Rev. D. A. Chowdhury of Budge Budge, Bengal, is undertaking to do the *Tracts for Women* (Kalima, Roza, etc.,) into Bengali for the benefit of those requiring these in Bengal. The one on the *Kalima* has already been translated and we can assure those who use this language that it has been really well done. It appeared in the February number of *Muslim Suhrid*, the excellent little 4 page monthly which Mr. Chowdhury edits.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The Best Friend in Urdu.* The first edition in Urdu of this little life of Jesus for Muslim readers (5,000 copies) is exhausted and a second and thoroughly revised one has just appeared. The *Katib* has written it in a very clear hand, so that the book now runs to 96 (formerly 86) pages. But the price is the same. One anna. Copies may be had from the P. R. Book Society, Anarkali, Lahore.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The Islamic Review, Woking.* In a recent appeal sent out locally in India to supporters of this periodical, the following claim is made: 'The *Review* has almost destroyed Christianity in the West. Faith in the West has been from time to time in the melting pot of modernisation (*sic*) but it is sure to produce good results at this time. The Modernist Churchmen have approached the matter right earnestly. Their culture and education would not allow them to stoop to any nonsense especially when they see their work of 15 years in cleansing the Church of all that had been incorporated into its faith from the pagan origin.'

The modernists nearly make half of the people of the West. We admit that they will not come under the flag of Islam at once, but they are bound to assimilate principles of our faith into their creed. It is now high time to bring the Quran before them. We appreciate the noble efforts of the modernists and with a genuine desire to help them Khwaja Kamal-uddin Sahib, the Editor of the *Islamic Review*, has begun to publish a new commentary of the Holy Quran. . . . We have requested our modernist friends to read the pages of our new commentary and have assured them that they will find enough material in the pages of the Quran to base their new creed on its tenets.'

The new commentary referred to above is to appear first of all in the pages of the *Review*, in fact half the Journal will be taken up with it.

The Khwaja intends the commentary chiefly for modernists of whom he appears to be greatly enamoured. Writing of the achievements of the *Review*, and Muslim propaganda by means of it in the West, he says in a pamphlet that is issued with the appeal: 'Our work has so far been confined more or less to that of exposing the hollowness of Christianity. I think this work is almost completed. "Vacant pews and empty benches" of the churches in the West eloquently speak that the religion passed under the name of Christ is not wanted. Our success in this respect became accelerated by the noble efforts of the Modernists in the Christian camp. . . . They spent their efforts in purging the Church of all that crept into it from paganism. It means a total destruction of the very

superstructure on which the Church in the West has been built. (The Khwaja's English is really funny at times). In doing so they have followed the Quran word by word. . . . In September, 1931, they gave a final knock out to Christianity. *They now want to dispense with the prevailing creed itself and desire for a new religion.* In other words, they have exiled the formal Christianity from her homeland.'

What he is getting at becomes clear in the next sentence. 'The Modernists till now have nobly helped in our work. . . . It is now our duty to help them in arriving at their new creed.' . . . '*But my labour would remain ineffectual if the circle of its (the Review's) readers is not widened. . . . I wish to bring thousands of non-Muslim gentlemen on our complimentary list. . . . Two subscriptions would enable us to issue one copy free of charge in the desired quarters.*'

All seems very simple, even the modernists!

---

#### THE MOSLEM WORLD QUARTERLY, APRIL, 1932.

THE April number of *The Moslem World* has an editorial and three other articles that deal with Persia and Shiah Islam. Doctor Zwemer writes on the Shiah saints, 'Ali and his two sons, Hasan and Husain, with Qanbar their servant. A frontispiece gives a facsimile of a rare Persian representation of these mediators of Shiah Islam. The Reverend J. Kingsley Birge introduces "Some Bektashi Poets," and the Reverend F. M. Stead describes the 'Ali Ilahi sect. In this old world of Islam the new Persian Church rises into life, and Reverend William N. Wysham tells how its evangelical fervor gives promise of a new and better days.

James Haldans, of the Southern Morocco Mission, describes how, since the occupation by the French, and the initiative given by Marechal Lyautey, new economic, social and moral forces are at work. Missions face new opportunities, but also new difficulties.

The article on *Ruh* (Spirit) by Professor Duncan B. Macdonald, of which the first part appeared in January, is completed in this issue. A young Orientalist, Joseph Finkel, contributes a scholarly article on Old Israelitish Tradition in the Koran, and Professor Frank H. Foster of Oberlin asks the question, Is Islam a Christian Heresy? Was Islam, after all, a search for truth, and was Mohammed sincere? Islam surely cannot be classed with the non-Christian religions, because it has a Christology. Professor Amry Van den Bosch gives a careful study on "Christianity and Government in Netherlands India" and the resultant problems for Missions.

The Book Reviews and Current Topics cover a very wide range of subjects, supplemented by the excellent Survey of Periodicals by Miss Hollis W. Hering of the Missionary Research Library.

Published by the Missionary Review Publishing Company, 156, Fifth Avenue, New York City. \$2.00 a year.

---

## **School of Islamic Studies at Barisal, Bengal, 1932.**

**U**NDER the auspices of the Christian Council of Bengal and Assam, a short school for the study of Islamics will be held from 7th-27th May, 1932, and accommodation for men and women students has been secured on the premises of the Baptist Mission at Barisal.

The staff will consist of Rev. J. A. Subhan, B.A., B.D. (of Lahore), Rev. D.K. Badshah and Rev. H. M. Angus, B.A., B.D. The syllabus will include of (1) The Qur'an, (2) The Traditions, (3) Muslim objections to Christianity and the Answers thereto, (4) Modern Movements in Islam, (5) The Qadianis and the Ahmadiyya's attitude to Scriptures and Christ; new claims for Islam and its attitude to other faiths.

The charge for messing service will be approximately Rs. 10/- besides travelling and out of pocket expenses, which will be borne by sending missions. Intending students are requested to apply *at once* to the undersigned who will be glad to supply any other particulars required.

D. A. CHOWDHURY,

*Church of Scotland Mission, Budge-Budge, Bengal.*

## **The Henry Martyn School,**

DARJEELING, 1933.

**W**E have much pleasure in announcing that the Bengal and Assam Christian Council have agreed to our proposal that the school should conduct an Extension Course for missionaries in Darjeeling during the Summer of 1933. It would seem that the best time for this will be the months of May and June, but we shall welcome suggestions from people in that area. Further particulars will be published later.

## **Praise for Prayer.**

Special prayer is requested on behalf of *Mr. Firman Ali*, one of the students now passing out from the Henry Martyn School, that some field for service may be found for him.

**PRAY** for definite blessing to rest on the visit of *Mr. Subhan* to the Vernacular Theological Seminary at *Gujranwala*, Punjab, where he is to lecture to the students, 18-22 April.

**PRAYER** is requested for *Mr. Bevan Jones* as he conducts the course for missionaries at *Kodaikanal*, Sunday 24th April—Sunday 1st May; pray that some may be led into new effort for the Evangelisation of Muslims.



**NEW MEMBER**

Miss L. I. Daubendick,

M.E.Ch.

Jubbulpore, India.

---

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.*

