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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

May, 1932.

1st May = 24th Zu'l-Hijjah (12th mo.), 1350 A.H.

8th May = New Year's Day, 1351.

"My Mother the Holy Spirit."

IN Hebrew and Syriac the word for "spirit," *ruah*, *ruha*, was feminine. This grammatical fact had the peculiar result of causing some Syriac-speaking Christians to think of the Holy Spirit as "she." There was an early apocryphal gospel called the Gospel according to the Hebrews, written probably in Aramaic, *i.e.*, one of the dialects of Syriac, which was sufficiently like our canonical Gospel according to St. Matthew to have been mistakenly supposed by some people in early days to be the original of it. Origen (early third century) and Jerome (late fourth century) both on several occasions quoted a sentence from this apocryphal gospel, presumably referring to the Temptation, as follows: "Even now did my Mother the Holy Spirit take me by one of my hairs, and carry me away unto the great mountain Thabor." The Quran v. 116 says, "O Jesus, son of Mary, hast thou said unto mankind, 'Take me and my Mother as two Gods beside God?'" It seems very probable that what gave weight to this accusation was the extreme veneration for the Virgin Mary in Abyssinia, with which country we know Muhammad to have had close connexion. But it is at least possible that the original ground for Muhammad's accusation was this passage from the Gospel according to the Hebrews, or something based on it. As late as the twelfth century A.D. a certain Egyptian priest, Mark ibn al-Qanbar, was accused (rightly or wrongly, it does not matter for our purpose) of calling the Holy Spirit feminine: "He held that there was a feminine quality in the Godhead, and he taught that this feminine quality is proper to the Holy Spirit. He held that the eternal Word of God is born through all eternity from the Father and the Holy Spirit."* In

* *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, attributed to an Armenian, Abu Salih, and edited by B. T. A. Evetts, Oxford, 1895, page 40.

Arabic the word *ruh* is either masculine or feminine, the two genders being used about equally according to Lane's Lexicon, but it was always masculine when used by Christians for the Holy Spirit.* This usage was no doubt adopted deliberately to guard against the current error. In the Urdu New Testament the same usage has been adopted of making *ruh* masculine when referring to the Holy Spirit, although elsewhere it is feminine, thus following the precedent of Christian Arabic. It is much to be hoped that Urdu-speaking Christians will maintain this usage, and not leave the door open for a dangerous error out of reverence for a supposed dictate of grammar.

L. E. BROWNE.

How an Indian Convert views the state of the Church in India.

(From a pamphlet privately circulated four years ago)

FURTHER, let us see what evangelistic zeal there is in the Church. It is true that Pastors carry on their Sunday services as a matter of sheer duty. It is true also that in some places bazaar preaching in the good old fashioned way is still being carried on. It is true that some salaried servants of the mission go about selling books. But is this sufficient? I wonder how many Christians are agonising and mourning over the souls around them that have fallen into the deep dark dungeons of destruction—all owing to their want of the one True Light, of whom they have never been intelligently told. How extensive are the regions all over the dark continent that are still without the Gospel of Salvation and have never heard its joyful sound? How much has the Church herself done for its spread among those countless multitudes? How many of our non-Christians have thrown themselves at the feet of our Saviour through the influence of the Church itself?

Then what is she doing to counteract the poisonous efforts which are being made in order to annihilate the Christian faith? What answer has the Church to give to those bitter assaults that Satan and his emissaries have been continually making against her Lord and Redeemer? What practical steps has the Church taken to meet the dangerous and highly-organised propaganda of the Anti-Christ now among us with which they seek to lead astray the very faithful themselves? Yes, what is the Church doing?—this Church built up more or less for the last hundred years, not with stone and lime, but with the blood of its missionaries and the countless wealth of the West. We must admit that some Christians pray that our beloved India may be won for Christ. There is fervour in their voices and perhaps tears in

* Evetts' note, ad loc.

their eyes, but all these longings and desires appear to end with their prayers. They do not flow out in action, so their lives are not transformed. When the prayer meeting is over the door is shut upon all these desires. They step out of the House of God and immediately step into their old dry way of living, as if all their longings were shut up within their four walls.

'Come now and hear from me about the proselytizing zeal of the Mohammedans, both individual and collective. Every Moslem is a missionary of his faith. Let alone young men, even children as well as frail aged men have this proselytizing zeal running through every fibre of their being. When Christians are preaching at the corners of the streets and squares, it is not an uncommon sight to see mere boys stand up and, with fearless boldness, find fault with the Christian faith and champion their own. Every Moslem from the depths of his heart longs to spread his religion all over the four corners of the earth, and to this he devotes his energies. Even in the way of every-day business life they are for ever seeking to mould others to their way of thinking and make them like themselves. What a tumult of propagating zeal is sounding abroad in these days all over the land! They are dreaming of bringing all Christians and Hindus into their fold. Throughout the length and breadth of the land their Missionary Societies have been formed, and with what fire and fervour they are carrying on their work. Do we not find the names of new converts to Islam printed in their daily papers? Only the other day we read of 200 Sikhs who had accepted Islam, and we have also heard their report of the ten thousand semi-savages in Africa who did the same. Their missionaries, though with scanty means and no facilities, have penetrated England, Germany and America, and have gained ground there. They may not have been blessed with much of this world's goods, they may be feeble sons of poverty, yet in their breasts there beat moving restless hearts, and in these hearts there glows a religious zeal and devotion to their own people. This is the reason why when anyone is converted to their faith, their joy knows no bounds. They hold such dear as the apple of their eye and they bind them unto themselves with hooks of steel; and when any of their number gives up their faith, it becomes a public calamity. Their sky is darkened; they look dejected and crestfallen.

'I remember when five years ago in Mussoorie I decided to become a Christian, how resolutely some Mohammedans there strove to keep me from my purpose. They endeavoured to arouse all my communal feelings. They drew a picture of the awful gulf that would yawn between my nearest and dearest and myself. Day after day they engaged me in one religious discussion after another. When at length all of their arguments proved of no avail, one of them met me one morning and declared: "Last night I could not sleep a single wink. I was pleading with God with tears and agony that He Himself might instil into your heart a great devotion to Islam." While he uttered these words in accents choked with sorrow, tears were coursing down

his cheeks. I can never efface that scene from my memory. The deep impression this religious devotion made on my heart can never be forgotten by me unto all eternity. *God grant that the same devoted spirit may be created in the hearts of our Indian Christians.*

The Christian Message and Islam.

A SUMMARY of the discussion in Cairo on the subject:
 "How can we make our schools better instruments of evangelism?"

1. Though we are far from having succeeded in our purpose, we have at least learned certain principles which should determine our school policy.

(a) The school should be known as a *Christian* school, and pupils should, as a rule, be expected to attend the Bible lessons and religious services.

(b) There should be complete harmony between the members of the staff as to the missionary character of the school. Great help may be derived from regular devotional meetings for the staff each week.

(c) We should encourage amongst the pupils a desire to find out the truth. We should avoid futile discussions, and should make our message as positive as we can. It is better not to remind the pupils of the fact that some of them are Muslims, some Jews, and other Christians. We should not attack another's religion. Our attitude should be frank and friendly.

(d) Our purpose should be to present our religion in the form of ideas and ideals which will change the emotions, instincts and habits of the pupils. We should show forth Christ as the ideal, and, also, as the transformer of human life. We should not preach dogmas or creeds. Our teaching should not be ethical or intellectual only. We should not encourage the mere memorising of passages of scripture. It is not necessarily our aim to teach the whole of the Bible to our pupils.

(e) The value of the project-method has been proved both as a means of evangelising the pupils themselves, and also as a way of enabling them to be evangelists to others.

(f) The "esprit de corps" of the school is all-important. Throughout its organization and in all its lessons, the school should express the Christian spirit. During any lesson the *teacher* is teaching much more than the subject of the period.

(g) In addition to the regular Bible study periods, there is room for voluntary organizations out of school hours, with a view to Bible study, prayer and social service.

2. What matters is not so much what the Christians say, whether they be teachers or pupils, but the life they live. This is why a boarding-school may be such an excellent instrument of evangelism. But there are also many other opportunities for Christian teachers to make friends with ~~their~~ pupils, especially during the hours of leisure and holiday.

3. Our schools can help to give Muslims a better understanding of what Christianity really means. It shows them that Christianity stands for fulness of life for body, mind and spirit. We should not forget the social aspect of our message and our duty towards others.

4. The question was raised whether we did enough at present in the way of following-up former pupils of our schools. It was thought

that with a smaller number of schools better results might be obtained amongst our pupils.

5. Though the direct results of evangelistic work achieved by our mission schools seem small, there is abundant evidence that our schools have made a big contribution to the life of the country through character-building, and through changing the outlook towards life of many of the pupils. Muslims have absorbed many Christian truths without realising their source. Many homes are now open to the evangelist which would otherwise be closed.

6. A plea was made for more courage in our evangelistic purpose in schools. Some teachers would appear not to be sure about the value of conversion. More, too, might be done to raise the tone of the non-mission Christian schools (of which there are several in Egypt).

The All-India Muslim Conference.

A Striking Passage from Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal's Address.

TOWARDS the close of his presidential address on 21st March at the All-India Muslim Conference in Lahore, Dr. Sir Md. Iqbal made an eloquent appeal in his most characteristic vein. He said:—

"The Faith which you represent recognises the worth of the individual, and disciplines him to give away his all to the service of God and man. Its possibilities are not yet exhausted. It can still create a new world where the social rank of man is not determined by his caste or colour, or the amount of dividend he earns, but by the kind of life he lives; when human society is founded, not on the equality of stomachs, but on the equality of spirits; where an untouchable can marry the daughter of a king; where private ownership is a trust and where capital cannot be allowed to accumulate so as to dominate the real producer of wealth.

"This superb idealism of your faith, however, needs emancipation from the mediæval fancies of theologians and legists. Spiritually we are living in a prison-house of thoughts and emotions, which during the course of centuries we have weaved round ourselves. And be it further said to the shame of us men of an older generation that we have failed to equip the younger generation for the economic, political and even religious crises that the present age is likely to bring. The whole community needs a complete overhauling of its present mentality in order that it may again become capable of feeling the urge of fresh desires and ideals.

"The Indian Muslim has long ceased to explore the depths of his own inner life. The result is that he has ceased to live in the full glow and colour of life, and is consequently in danger of an unmanly compromise with forces which, he is made to think, he cannot vanquish in open conflict.

"He who desires to change an unfavourable environment must undergo a complete transformation of his inner being. God changeth not the condition of a people until they themselves take the initiative to change their condition by constantly illuminating the zone of their daily activity in the light of a definite ideal.

"Nothing can be achieved without a firm faith in the independence of one's own inner life. This faith alone keeps a people's eye fixed on their goal, and saves them from perpetual vacillation. The lesson that past ex-

perience has brought you must be taken to heart. Expect nothing from any side. Concentrate your whole *ego* on yours elf alone and ripen your clay into real manhood, if you wish to see your aspirations realised.

“Mussolini’s maxim was—‘He who has steel has bread.’ I venture to modify it a bit and say—‘He who is steel has everything.’ Be hard and work hard. This is the whole secret of individual and collective life. Our ideal is well-defined: It is to win, in the coming constitution, a position for Islam which may bring her opportunities to fulfil her destiny, in this country. It is necessary, in the light of this ideal, to rouse the progressive forces of the community and to organise their hitherto dormant energies. The flame of life cannot be borrowed from others; it must be kindled in the temple of one’s own soul. This requires earnest preparation and a relatively permanent program.”

FOR REFLECTION.

‘Nothing after all tells in discussion but the positive truth we elicit; the true idea, if we have it, pushes out the false one by its own momentum, and, without open hostilities, reigns in its stead.’

PROF. H. R. MACINTOSH.

‘Every man has a ‘context,’ a human and a divine context. Take a man ‘out of his context’ and you will never see the *man* at all.’

The dynamic creed of Christianity is just this: ‘We love Him because He first loved us.’

The Henry Martyn School, Lahore.

EXTENSION COURSE FOR MISSIONARIES, LANDOUR.

AS previously notified the members of the Staff will be present in Landour this summer to conduct a four weeks’ Course in Islamic studies.

The Course is due to commence on Monday, 13th June, and the lectures will probably be given, two in the morning and two in the afternoon, on the alternate days at the Community Centre. Further details will be announced in Landour later. In the meantime any enquiries should be addressed to the undersigned at Zig Zag, Landour, Mussoorie, U.P.

REV. L. BEVAN JONES,
Principal.

Concerning Books.

DR. ZWEMER writes to inform us that his books *The Moslem Christ*, and its companion volume *The Moslem Doctrine of God*, are still both available from The American Tract Society, New York City, or through British publishers.

Our friend desires that members of the League should remember Mrs. Zwemer and himself in prayer during the next two months, May and June. They are to be in Britain for the May meetings, and will also visit Belfast, Dublin, and Edinburgh, possibly also Oxford and Cambridge. They may be addressed c/o Edinburgh House, 2, Eaton Gate, London, S.W. 1.

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Rev. Ahmad Shah, (now living at 'Shah Manzil,' 37, E.C. Road, Dehra Dun, U.P., India), formerly of the S.P.G. Mission, Cawnpore, and still an honoured member of the League, tells us that he has a few copies of his valuable *Concordance of the Quran* (Miftahu'l Qur'an) which he is prepared to dispose of to missionaries at Rs. 10, postage extra, for both parts bound together. The bindings are a bit soiled and in some cases damaged. The lowest price elsewhere is Rs. 15.

Reviewing this work in the *first* volume of the *Moslem World* (1911), Dr. Zwemer set a very high value upon it:

"It is more exhaustive (than Fluegel's), the references are to derived words as well as to roots, and this book can be used for all editions of the Qur'an and not only for the edition by Fluegel himself.

"The book is well printed.....Not only is this a complete concordance, but the pronunciation of every Arabic word is given in Roman type, and a glossary to the Qur'an is added. . . . An appendix gives a list of all the Arabic roots found in the Qur'an which will prove exceedingly valuable to the missionary student. We welcome this book as an invaluable companion to the intelligent study of the Qur'an in the original. *Every College where Arabic is taught should have a copy in its library and every missionary among Muslims will find it of the greatest value.*"

Can we not assure Padri Ahmad Shah that the remaining copies will be taken off his hands? He asks us to say that, if remaining copies (nine) can be ordered to be sent to *one* address, he himself will pay the postage. Come now, some one!

For Prayer.

PRAY for a *maulvi* in Bengal who knows much of Christianity and now, through the death of his daughter, is filled with a new concern and asks for prayer 'that he may find peace and salvation.'

PRAY with a group in North India, for very well-known and influential Muslim 'that he may be given repentance and faith in our Saviour Christ, and that his blind eyes may be opened.'

PRAY for Dr. and Mrs. Zwemer during their visit to Britain in May and June, that they may be much used of God at the May meetings and elsewhere.

NEW MEMBERS.

Miss A. R. Simmonds,
Miss B. I. Hardie,
Miss D. Mathew,
Rev. W. A. Zoerner,

C.M.S. Hosp.
New Zea. Pres. M.
do.
A. P. M.

Multan.
Jagadhri, Punjab,
Kharar, Punjab
Ambala, Punjab.

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.

