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News and Notes

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Series XXI

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1st January = 3rd Ramdhán (9th mo.), 1351, A.H.

“With Strong Crying and Tears.”

THE writer to the Hebrews, in the passage from which these words are taken and at other places (5 : 7-10 ; 2 : 8-10 ; 4 : 14-16), enables us to see our Master learning, in agonizing prayer, the lesson of obedience to the Father, through suffering.

Our Lord here, in the thought of the writer, is grasping the last and hardest lesson of all—that, by so dying and doing the Father's Will He would prove Himself to be, as could no other single act of His, true *Son* (5 : 8).

And we are led by the writer to consider some of the results to Christ from such suffering and obedience.

He was thereby 'made perfect' as the Author of our salvation. The tests of the Son's obedience had been increasingly severe through life, and only when this, the most searching of all, had been passed, could He be 'perfect' in a sense He had not claimed for Himself in the days of His ministry (cp. Mk. 10 : 18). By this supreme act of sacrificial love He was 'crowned with glory and honour'—quite the reverse of the world's judgment in the matter (cp. Matt. 27 : 42). Yet Paul was left in no doubt : because of this 'God highly exalted Him and gave Him the Name that is above every name.'

It was this sacrifice that made possible, and makes intelligible, the raising of the Son to 'the right hand' of the Father (see espec. Heb. 12 : 2).

Furthermore, there are priceless boons accruing to us : He who staked His all on His Father is worthy of our 'confidence,' and is 'able,' as we put our whole trust in Him, 'to save us to the uttermost' (7 : 25).

In particular, having suffered by reason of His own temptations, He is able to help all of us who are tempted. For, We are not dealing with One 'who is incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses' (Moffatt), but with One who, though tempted, never fell; who, though the friend of sinners was without sin; who, striving, always triumphed and now offers to be our Unfailing Friend.

Wherefore, brethren, let us 'hold fast' to Him!

Lessons from Converts' Experiences.

Part III—As a New Member of the Church.

AS to the difficulties of breaking off from old associates the answers divide almost exactly half and half between a simple yes or no; one or two emphasize their stand by saying, "Very difficult." We can do no more than imagine what were the difficulties for many of them. Differences in personal temperament, differences in the particular group from which they were separating and the particular group into which they were fitting anew would all have their influence on the individual case.

Most of these newly baptized Christians found their work and their support from the missions or the churches, by doing evangelistic or school work or going on for higher seminary or college education. Two only reported carrying on permanently without mission or church aid at all. One other continued the life of an independent evangelist for several years and then went to a seminary. One was able partially to support himself but later temporarily found a mission school position.

It is noticeable again that the answer to the question as to what the new convert did himself to establish closer contacts with other Christians is rather directly an indication of the relationship that they had. Several said they went where invited and responded to advances made by others—these are the same ones who also said they did not get well integrated into the Christian community. One or two of these did say that they made some effort but became discouraged. Those, however, who made a more positive effort of friendship, who took the initiative, made the advances, are the ones who reported also having become a real part of the community as a whole. One of these says suggestively, "I pushed myself into fellowship with Christians": and that particular one has gotten in and is still in. One said he had to become a man with a "thick skin", yet did not desist when he met with rebuffs but persisted until he won his place. He says "I entertained the Christians, sent them greetings on special occasions, and sympathy in their bereavement." And he adds, "I get much more from them—when we are ill

or in need crowds come to help us." One of the others, who never was integrated, admits, "This question reminds me of my own responsibility in the matter. I dare say probably it was chiefly my own fault." So it seems that Christians, both the old and the new, held off from one another. Both are urged to be more thoughtful—both to go more than half way in meeting the other.

The unanimous answer of this group as to whether they had ever actually recanted, or outwardly recanted or denied their profession of Christ is, "No, never." This unison of reply is rather specially interesting in refuting a saying, that we sometimes hear, that a convert must go back at least once to his old religion before he is firmly established in the Christian fold. Though he did not recant yet one of these men, referring to his early days in the Church, does say that he was so persecuted that he had to go back and live with his own people. Another says, "I never recanted but my first zeal was much cooled down through contact with Christians."

Regarding the definite question put to them concerning the advisability of having a Convert's Home, only one is positively opposed and he because he fears a Home such as he has in mind would sever the new convert from the Church. This leaves with us almost a unanimous vote by these, who have experienced first hand this period of newness, loneliness and strangeness, in favour of having a central Home of some type. Though some of them were a little hesitant in their approval—having in mind the type of Home that is now in operation—yet they approved of it in principle and the majority of them positively and strongly advise it. They give us out of their former experience and thoughts on this subject many constructive suggestions as to organization and administration. Especially those, who hesitated because of propagating the type already to be found, offer concrete suggestions showing what they think the worth-while Home should be like.

For example one says, "I would welcome a Converts' Home", but he adds: "In my experience Converts' Homes run haphazardly do more harm than good:" some, too, quite properly question the possibility of meeting the needs of all types of converts in any one school.

What then are the constructive suggestions offered by these, who know the inside needs of the new converts, regarding the institution of such a Home? They come mostly under four heads:—

1. Location—It is reiterated again and again and most emphatically that a Converts' Home should not be in a large city but in a small town—one putting it even a village. Only one seems to favour the large central location and he for the advantage offered there for the converts to learn and earn something for themselves. One would start at least one such Home in each Province.

2. The Administration—The importance of the life character of the one in charge is stressed even more emphatically than that of location. Some make their vote in favour of a Home conditional on having in charge “a consecrated, sympathetic Christian.” Another enlarges this suggestion by saying that this leader must be “a really converted man who is sincerely anxious to win souls for the Lord through love. He must be truly a Christian *Pir*.” Another defines the man needed as “an experienced, deeply spiritually-minded man who can give all his time to this work”; another as a “whole time instructor with exemplary life.”

3. General Plan—An indigenuous type of institution is suggested—not a Home as is commonly understood by that term—but more like the Ashram where Christian men share their life with the new-comers and tell them of the deeper things of Christ; where you can keep them employed after study hours. “Converts must not be allowed to loaf about.” “They should be taught the dignity of working with their own hands and earning their own way.”

4. Support—None suggests that such a Home should be a product of the missions but several urge that it should be the co-operative work of the churches—“That each church should contribute something towards this Home;” again that “the churches or denominations must unite to finance” this plan.

With regard to the older Christian community helping with the economic problems of the new convert by direct gifts there seems to have been contrasting experience. Several, without commenting further on the subject, merely say that you must provide financially for them. On the other hand one says, “Any attempt at giving away money to the new convert, whether by the missionary or any other, is to be decried.” Another says, “it does not pay to get help from the Christians for you lose your own respect. You become lazy, irresponsible and careless. You get into the habit of begging. It stands in the way of your future progress. The church should not be very willing to run after such and support him. The man must work—if possible in the non-Christian world.”

One method of help in support of which there is common favourable agreement is aiding the new convert to find employment. As one puts it: “The first thing necessary is to arouse interest in the Christian community for new converts. When this is done collective help can soon put them in the position they are fit for.” One advises: “Find employment for converts and in cases where they are young place them in schools of Manual Training and let the church meet the expense of this training.”

Again, there is unity of opinion in favour of a definite course of instruction whether this is to be used in a Home or in private study. Some suggestions are offered regarding subjects to be included in this course. One says: “Mostly Bible Study and a mastery of its contents; Church History; Christian Apologetics; Church and

Devotional Literature ; Biographies of Christian converts and others." Another adds to this list: "Devotional Lives of Christ ; Methods of Worship ; Rational exposition of the Commandments and the Lord's Prayer."

A wide variety of opinion is expressed with regard to the length of time a Christian should be considered a "new convert." Possibly this divergence of opinion is due largely to a difference in conception of the meaning of this term. One says that the convert should always be a *nau murid*. Another counterbalances that statement by stating that no distinction at all should be retained after baptism. Two advise two or three years, "in which the convert has had time to get thoroughly acquainted with the meaning and purpose of the Church and its mission. Some keep the new convert period down to a few months. Probably most would agree with this statement: "No arbitrary period can be fixed. It may vary with the various candidates, according to their merits and behaviour."

A Survey of Existing Literature in Urdu, for Muslims.

PERIODICALLY it becomes necessary to overhaul our existing literature and examine it to see what stock we hold, and whether all of it is suitable to the needs of the day. Such a task has been set the staff of the Henry Martyn School in regard to the Urdu section, in particular.

Living as we do in Lahore we are the better able to appreciate the great debt we all owe to the Punjab Religious Tract and Book Society, Anarkali, which is the main source of supply for all India in the matter of literature in this language. In recent months we have carefully classified more than 200 items which the P.R.B.S., advertise from time to time in their catalogues, and now, with a view to enabling those who are using this literature to know its *contents*, *purpose* and *present value*, we propose in a series of two-page memoranda, commencing with this issue, to set out this material in a manner that will be found helpful by our members. It is hoped that funds will permit us to print off separate copies of these memoranda for future requirements.

CLASSIFICATION.

Our method of classifying this considerable output in Urdu will be determined, in the main, by two factors. First, we know pretty well what we require these days, and we shall attempt to show the extent to which the literature now available meets our requirements; and secondly, a large quantity of this literature belongs to an earlier generation, a fact that is not always apparent from the catalogues. Much of this is *contra-Islam* and as such will be shown in special categories.

Our task is made easier through the adoption, five years ago, by the N.C.C. Sub-Committee on literature for Muslims, of a *Minimum Programme* of the more urgent requirements in respect of such literature. Those

who drew up this 'Programme' realised that in the past, and indeed up to fairly recent times, our main efforts have been put into polemical or semi-polemical literature, and they rightly felt that the balance needed to be shifted to the side of the presentation of positive Christianity.

Some years ago, while a Survey of the available literature for Muslims in *English* was being made by the present writer, Rev. J. A. Subhan prepared a classified list, with notes, of this Urdu literature published by the P.R.B.S. But in those two earlier Surveys the plan of classification followed differed from the one we are now adopting. Then, prominence was given to Christian literature on Islamic subjects, whereas the emphasis of the *Minimum Programme* is on that literature which is calculated to commend Christianity to Muslims. This change of emphasis is significant of the new outlook.

We shall now give a list of the 25 groups into which it has seemed best to us to classify the whole of this literature, new and old. It should be noted that the first 15 of these follow more or less the order in the *Minimum Programme*:

1. Lives of Christ.
2. O.T. narratives
3. Instruction for Inquirers.
4. Christ the conqueror of fear.
5. On *The Trinity* and *Unity*.
6. The Christian Scriptures and Inspiration.
7. The Christian meaning of Prayer.
8. The Christian meaning of *sin, repentance, forgiveness, etc.*
9. The Crucifixion, the fact, the story, and its meaning for our lives.
10. Explanation of misunderstood terms: Son of God, *Injil*, etc.
11. Stories giving Christian teaching (some from the Bible).
12. Rhymes, choruses, hymns (giving social character to the teaching).
13. Christian view of marriage, the home, and family.
14. Short tract on "What is Christianity?"
15. Stories of conversion and Christian experience, etc.

It has to be confessed that the supply under some of these heads is, even in Urdu, still very meagre and by no means up-to-date. But an attempt is being made to fill up the gaps.

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Our list then continues with 10 more groups into which we have gathered practically all the remaining literature, since it does not come within the scope of the *Minimum Programme* :—

16. Gospel leaflets, etc.
17. Instruction for Converts (teaching on the Christian life.)
18. Essays on a variety of Christian Subjects.
19. Essays on various Islamic subjects.
20. In refutation of Islam in general.
21. In refutation of *Necharis, Qadianis, and Ahmadis*.
22. In defence of Christianity and the Scriptures.
23. Comparing Muhammad with Christ.
24. Comparing Scriptures and Teachings (Christian and Muslim.)
25. Pamphlets of an occasional nature.

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As might be expected some of these tracts and booklets contain material of a varied nature so that it has not always been easy to know in

which section to place them. We hope, however, to be able to indicate to which titles reference should be made for a treatment of such subjects as fall within the *Minimum Programme*.

Finally, along with a brief appraisal of the various items, we hope to be able to state the author's name, original date of publication, serial number of the edition, number of pages, price, and whether published also in English.

The Henry Martyn School, Lahore,

Proposed Extension Course at Darjeeling.

May and June, 1933.

IN seeking to fulfil one of the purposes for which this School was brought into existence, arrangements have been made in the past two years whereby the members of the staff have travelled to outlying areas to conduct Extension Courses among missionaries and other Christian workers on holiday. In this way the hill-stations of Dalhousie and Landour in the north, and Kodaikanal, Ootacamund and Bangalore in the south have been visited. The year 1933 is to be the turn of Darjeeling for people in Bengal and Assam. The B. and A. Council have given the School their blessing on this project, and already over half-a-dozen people have intimated their intention of joining the Course for all or part of the time.

In all probability lectures will commence on Monday, 1st May and will be given in the Memorial Hall, close by the Union Church. It is expected that all three members of the staff will take part in this Course. The Principal and Mrs. Bevan Jones will be occupying the upper flat of the Union Church manse, and we are assured that students will be able to find accommodation in several boarding houses in the vicinity.

Charges for board and lodging at these houses range from Rs. 4-0-0 to Rs. 6-0-0 per day. It is suggested that those coming from a distance, who do not know Darjeeling, should write to the Principal (at 5 Egerton Road Lahore), who will be glad to advise them in the matter of accommodation.

If we proceed along the lines of previous courses the work each day is not likely to prove at all heavy. In Landour last year we had two hours a morning only. Students may use books from the Library in Lahore which will be conveyed to Darjeeling.

As previously announced, with a view to defraying part of the cost of running this course, it will be necessary to make a small levy, *viz.*, Europeans, Rs. 5-0-0, Indians, Rs. 2-0-0.

Will those who are thinking of taking advantage of the Course please get into touch with the Principal as soon as possible?

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Several ladies, from different parts of India, are planning to get together at Darjeeling to discuss projects connected with literature for women.

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At the conclusion of the Darjeeling course, Rev. L. E. Browne will proceed, at the invitation of the Bishop, to Singapore for the purpose of investigating the possibilities of opening up work in that area. Rev. J. A. Subhan, it is expected, will go to the Balasore district for a course of lectures to Indian workers connected with the American Baptist and other missions. Further particulars will be published later.

TO THE HELP OF THE MOSLEM WORLD QUARTERLY.

IN these days when one thinks twice before subscribing to some new periodical and also scrutinizes closely those receiving one's support, the claims of the *Moslem World* quarterly occupy a prominent, if not the chief place. 'The future of the magazine hangs in the balance,' says our veteran leader, Dr. Zwemer, the Editor. Everything is being done to run it with rigid economy. 'Neither the editorial staff nor contributors receive compensation.' All who read it know that there is no other periodical to be compared with it. We need it—can we not help the Editor and its promoters to tide over the next two critical years?

At least renew your subscription for 1933, and, if you can, secure one more new subscriber. The agents in India are: The Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, 5, Russell Street, Calcutta, whose rate for the subscription is Rs. 7-8-0 per annum.

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.

