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## News and Notes

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

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Series XXI

May, 1933.

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1st May = 5th Muharram (1st mo.), 1352, A.H.

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### Twenty-one Years Ago !

(From *News and Notes*, May, 1912.)

**M**R. JOHN TAKLE in sending out the first issue of *News and Notes* twenty-one years ago, wrote an appeal for support for this League, the need of which had been urged at the Conference for workers among Muslims at Lucknow the previous year. "The proposal is," he said, "to begin in a quiet way *pledging ourselves to help together by prayer and by sending to the Secretary any items of interest regarding work amongst Muhammadans that may be helpful to fellow-members.* If the membership is large enough a monthly circular will be issued with definite subjects for prayer and praise and helpful information.' The membership fee was to be two rupees per annum, as it is now.

Messages indicating hearty support for the project were inserted from Dr. Zwemer (Arabia), Dr. Lankester (Peshawar), Rev. W. Hazen (Bombay), Rev. H. J. (Lane) Smith (Aurangabad), Rev. G. J. Dann (Bankipore), Rev. W. Carey (Barisal, Bengal) and Rev. F. W. Steintal (Y.M.C.A., Calcutta). The latter wrote: "The League should aim at arousing and sustaining the loving intercession from as wide a circle as possible. It must be a bond of union and co-operation among those who are in the midst of the fight; it must advise and help the many whose conscience is aroused and who still, at least for the present, can only give a limited time to Muslims."

Among the news items were the following: Rev. W. Goldsack (Bengal) had been enabled to further his studies in Arabic by a six months' stay in Homs, Syria; the death was announced of Dr. Pennell, of the Afghan frontier, through blood-poisoning—he and his wife had been at the Lucknow Conference; missionary study schools (for the study of Islam) had been held in Simla and Mussoorie in 1911, and were to be repeated in 1912.

A brief advertisement appeared of several tracts published in Urdu by Rev. H. J. (Lane) Smith of Aurangabad. It was stated that friends in Madras, Bangalore, Sholapore, Belgaum, Poona, Nasik, Bombay, Jaipur, Allahabad and Lucknow had eagerly co-operated in the distribution of these. Some of the titles were: Where is the original Gospel? Is the Gospel really corrupted? Is Jesus the Son of God? Why is the Gospel called the New Testament? etc.

A continuation Committee (on Literature) of the Lucknow Conference had met in Cairo with Canon Gairdner in the chair.

## A Purdah Party.

(Contributed)

**SCENE:** A room covered with a beautiful Bukhara carpet, with eight or nine small tables arranged for about twenty-four guests.

Well-made tea, English cakes, sandwiches and most delightful *samosas* (a kind of curry puff) with *kabab*, made a sumptuous repast.

About twenty-four Muslim ladies were at the party, arriving usually in black, or tussore-silk *burqas*, though some were resplendent in purple, red or pale blue satin *burqas*. These were discarded at the door, revealing beautiful *saris* made of pink ring velvet, orange georgette, with about 12 inches of silver embroidery all round—white crepe de chene, embroidered in various colours. A few however wore trousers of satin or velvet, with long shirts of silk, with a fine covering of silk or georgette over the head. Among the ladies present were three who had accompanied their husbands to the R.T.C. All were friendly, and one, in a black crepe de chene *sari* with a gorgeous gold border, was very happy and was embraced by many. I learned that she was a Muslim lady who had married a Hindu, but only a few days before she had brought her husband and three children with her back to the fold of Islam. Her husband, who was a scholar, had only taken this step 'after studying all religions.' One guest remarked to me, "Isn't it splendid that she has come back." Another asked if I did not think she had done well to return. A charming German lady also was there who had married an Indian Muslim gentleman and had herself become a Muslim and so a guest, not knowing me, asked me if I was Muslim too! I was in fact the one Christian present.

Most of these ladies keep purdah, though not strictly, and as I heard them speaking of the R.T.C., purdah etc., I thought of all the influence these few pioneer women among the Muslims will have in the future. Some of the leaders among them have been in touch with missionaries for many years and, though they are still staunch Muslims, their ideas and ideals have been influenced by these contacts.

We were entertained by a little girl who gave two recitations with actions; both were on the subject of Islam and one stated that Islam

had spread to the north, south, east and west ; had lifted up the low, and been a big brotherhood—and the child ended with the action of a pretence to cut her throat and saying words to the effect : “ I’d rather die than leave Islam.”

Beautiful, influential, fascinating, good Muslim women, and yet missing the best in life, because without the knowledge of God’s character as revealed by Jesus Christ. How can we get the message of God’s heart to them? A certain type of literature is needed and would be helpful, but possibly *the way* is to share our experience of the riches in Christ in real friendship.

### ‘Lack of Knowledge.’ (Hosea 4 : 6).

**A**MONG my little circle of Muslim women friends, there is one who is almost at the end of her journey. She has been ill for some weeks and cannot live much longer.

“There is nothing you can do for me, except to pray that I may die soon. I want death, that is all ” she said one day.

She is a very orthodox Muslim, and has performed all the religious duties required of her by her religion, and now in her distress, she is trying to get some comfort from the thought that she has done all that is necessary, and is resigned to the will of Allah.

When her illness was at the beginning stage, we wanted her to go into hospital and have an operation, but she demurred, saying, “Yes, I know I am a very sick woman, and ought to do as you say, but let me wait until Muharram is over, for I want first to observe all the ceremonies connected with this time of mourning. Let me shed a few more tears for Imam Husain,” she continued, “for such tears count, you know, with Allah, and my reward will be great if I sorrow for the sufferings Imam Husain endured.”

Her days are numbered now, and she is looking back on all she has done, and hoping for, but not sure of her reward.

We are praying that in His own time, Christ will enlighten our friend’s mind and give her a vision of Himself.

Others are visiting her too, and in conversation with one of these Muslim women friends, I asked her :

“Is there anything in your religion which can bring comfort of mind to such a one. Does your religion bring such help to a poor dying woman, so that she may face the unknown, and not be afraid?” She looked at me, wondering what to say.

“Will you tell me,” I continued, “what you say to a friend, who is so ill, and you know she will not recover. How do you comfort such?” She thought a moment, and then replied.

“What *can* we say? We tell them that they are going to get better, that they must not be troubled, they will recover and live for years and see their children married, and that they must not think they

are dying (!) . . . If we said anything else, they would be very troubled, and so would the relatives ; although we know of course, they will not get better, but what else can you say to comfort them ?”

What an opportunity to tell the good news of One, who has tasted death for every one so that we need not fear—One, who takes the hand of every trusting soul and can lead such through the dark valley, and the gate of death, into the Father's Home. “When we are about to take that journey we need someone who knows the way, do we not ?”

She agreed.

“Our religion, the Christian religion, teaches us that we need not take that journey alone. There is a sure and perfect Guide who knows the way, and many fearful souls have received real comfort, and have proved that He is a safe Guide and trustworthy. That is the great hope our religion is able to give us. It is worth thinking about, is it not ?”

“Indeed it is,” was our friend's reply.

E. M. MITCHELL.

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## Whither Turkey ?

‘*Turkey discovers the Quran.*’—The January issue of *The Moslem World* quarterly has an interesting article under this title, describing scenes of excitement in the mosques of Istanbul, Smyrna and Angora and other cities of Turkey on the occasion, a year ago, of the use for the first time of the authorized Turkish translation of the Quran.

“On the 30th (January) for perhaps the first time since the Turks embraced the Faith, the Call to Prayer sounded in Turkish from the Mosque of Mohammed, the Conqueror. . . . The “Night of Decrees fell on the 3rd February and the service on that day” may easily have been the most remarkable since the Turks came to Constantinople. Thirty *hafiz*-reciters, it was announced, would read the Turkish Quran, and the entire service would be broadcast by radio. By 4 o'clock in the afternoon hundreds of men, women and children were gathered at the doors, and shortly after the sunset prayer the doors had to be closed again in the face of thousands. So densely was the Mosque packed that during the ensuing *namaz* hundreds had no room to prostrate themselves and were compelled to remain standing or seated. An American estimate of their numbers is as low as ten thousand, but the press reports were three to four times that number, with an additional thirty thousand in the courtyard.

The scene during the chanting of the *Maulid*, or Birth-Song of the Prophet, defied description. The congregation broke ranks so as to get near to the singers. “The roar from this human whirlpool was like the thunder of rivers or of an earthquake.” . . .

‘At half-past eight the *muezzins* lifted their voices in an overpowering cry, ‘God is great!’ But no longer was this the *Allahu Akbar* which rings in the ears of the faithful from the Western Sea to the Pacific Islands. *Tanri uludur!* they affirmed—Tanri, the sky-god, who had brooded over the infancy of the Turkish peoples in their fertile homelands of Central

Asia ages before . . . " With that cry something deep and long-pent surged from the Turkish heart. Men felt that in that moment the religious life of the Turkish Republic took a definite turn."

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*Twelve months later.* Recently, (6 Feb.) Reuter telegraphed that on the arrival of Mustapha Kemal and Ismet Pasha at Brusa, Turkey's old capital, prompt action was taken against certain reactionaries. A number of priests and *imams* were arrested for having made an attack on an unfortunate *muezzin* who, according to orders, was reciting the prayers in Turkish instead of Arabic. The police had to quell a demonstration outside the Mosque.

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*The Student Movement* for March quotes as follows from an interesting article in the Turkish Press: 'We are committing the old historical mistake. We have decided to follow the Western civilisation. But before all else we have to know the meaning of civilisation. While adopting a new civilisation, have we to take over all its institutions and elements, or may we leave out some parts? In entering the Islamic civilisation the Turks accepted all the institutions of that civilisation, and naturally its religion also. To-day, while entering the Western civilisation, shall we accept Christianity also?'

'To-day religion plays an important role in life . . . with the exception of Russia, no States, no nation has dared to declare irreligion. And since the Turkish nation also needs a religion, what should it be?'

The writer of the article quotes a Turkish professor of psychology at the University as saying: 'Since we desire to identify ourselves with the West, it is necessary for us to make our religion identical also. And seeing that it is impossible for the West to accept Islam, we have to accept Christianity.'

The writer then goes on to say that "to-day a good many belonging to the 'Enlightened Group' are of the same opinion. According to some of these no greater mistake can be committed than adhering to the barbarous religion of Mohammed with its Feast of Sacrifice, while there is the humane religion of Jesus.' There is a group of enlightened Turks, that is to say, who are inclined to Christianity. 'They want Christianity, *not because it is a religion*, but because it is a way leading to civilisation and humanity.'

This writer declares that the movement to Turkify, Islam "is passing away like a flame of chaff," but "*this* movement moves on like water under a heap of chaff." "Let us be careful:" he says, "let us beware of making the same mistake when we adopt a new civilisation. Our national culture is in danger." (There certainly is need to be "careful" lest Christianity and civilisation be regarded as synonymous terms.—Ed. *N. and N.*)

#### FOR 'JEW' READ 'MUSLIM.'

**T**O the Jews of our Lord's day the Law stood in a sense between them and God. It was the means to His favour, Its commands were to be obeyed, God had decreed it and obedience brought the blessing. Its ritual was to be carried out, not because its significance was understood and appreciated, but because it was of

divine ordination. Jesus definitely opposed this whole attitude. . . . "Religion is the vital relation of man to God. Its object is the good of man. No tradition, no law, no ceremony must be allowed to interfere with this. If it does interfere, it thereby is proved an enemy to religion and must be set aside. From their point of view the Pharisees were justified in resisting Jesus and planning His destruction. He and they could not both be right. If He represented God, then they misrepresented Him, as Jesus said."

(Wm. E. Wilson, *The Problem of the Cross*, p. 30-32.)

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### THE MOSLEM WORLD

For April, 1933.

*American Investments in the Near East.*

**T**HE current number of *The Moslem World* contains an important historical resume of American philanthropic and educational work in the Near East, by the Reverend James L. Barton, D.D. One is astonished to learn how large have been the investments of men and money and spiritual forces for the past one hundred years.

In the same number, Mr. Wilbert B. Smith tells of the Y.M.C.A. in the Near East and its successful efforts to bridge racial and religious chasms. Dr. Louis P. Dame, an American medical missionary, describes a remarkable journey which he took from Bahrain to Taif across the Arabian Peninsula, as the guest of Ibn Saoud. He even held a medical clinic at Taif, which might be called a suburb of Mecca.

The editor takes us to Mecca itself. The frontispiece in this issue of the Quarterly represents the Black Stone, with pilgrims kissing it, and the editorial describes the palladium of the world of Islam in its ancient historical setting and present-day religious importance.

Other notable articles are those on The Origin of the Feast of Sacrifice, by Professor Richard Bell of Edinburgh, the Translation of the Koran into Bulgarian, the Spiritual Results among Moslems in China, and the Religious Background of the Moghuls in India. Professor Lee Vrooman, Dean of the International College at Izmir, Turkey, presents a Turkish Interpretation of World History, and Professor Gaius J. Slosser of Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, writes on Early North African Christianity.

The usual wide range of current topics and book reviews, with a survey of recent periodicals, afford the reader an up-to-date survey of present-day conditions.

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### NEW MEMBER.

Norman A. Ellis,

Baptist Mission Press,

Calcutta.

### For Praise and Prayer.

Praise for the completion of twenty-one years' service by and through our League—and prayer that it may be increasingly used to fulfil the purposes of the founders.

Pray very specially for those who are foregathering in Darjeeling to attend the Extension Course conducted by the staff of The Henry Martin School, Lahore.

Pray for the women in Islam, especially educated ladies of the type referred to in this issue.

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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,  
Panjab, India.

