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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 XXII

December, 1934.

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A New Door.

SOME three years ago a Muslim who had spent many years as a peshkar in the courts of a certain town in the U.P., and who had retired on a pension, decided to fill in his time for the rest of his days by founding and personally editing and printing a newspaper in Urdu. The purposes of the paper were to be, beside giving general news, (a) to draw the Muslim community together, and (b) to support the Government.

When the first number was in preparation (it is published fortnightly), the writer of the present article was somewhat surprised at being requested to contribute an article on "The Spread of Christianity in India." However, he sent in the article, filling it with as many quotations from the New Testament as he could, and it was published.

Since that time the editor pesters him for more articles than he has time to produce, and has published not only every article the present writer has sent him, but has published articles from the pens of other Christian ministers. In these articles he has published unaltered such statements as the following:—"The only perfect revelation of God is in Christ," and other equally outspoken phrases.

This paper has not a very wide circulation, still, it finds its way into the hands of most of the literate Muslims of the district in which it is published, and the present writer has received proof that his articles are read. Hence it seems that a fresh door has opened through which Christian truth may reach Muslims. The articles referred to may not be of any value in themselves, probably they are not, but it is something that the quotations from the New Testament which they all contain should be before the eyes of so many Muslims. Whether it is cause and effect the writer cannot say, but it is a fact that recently the sales of Urdu portions of Scripture in this district have gone up noticeably.

It might be worth while for others to see whether they can find equally broad-minded Muslim editors, so that this means of preaching may be used to the fullest extent.

The Status of Women in Arabia before Islam,

S. Lane Poole in *Studies in a Mosque* (1892) largely confirms the position maintained by Robertson Smith, which was quoted in the October issue. In that volume however the author repeatedly makes it plain that, whatever may be said in commendation of the theology of Islam, an indelible stain remains in its social system, because it degrades women.

"As a religion Islam is great ; it has taught men to worship one God with a pure worship who formerly worshipped many gods impurely. As a social system Islam is a complete failure : it has misunderstood the relation of the sexes, upon which the whole character of a nation's life hangs, and, by degrading women, has degraded each successive generation of their children down an increasing scale of infamy and corruption, until it seems almost impossible to reach a lower level of vice.

"The fatal spot in Islam is the degradation of women. The true test of a nation's place in the ranks of civilisation is the position of its women. When they are held in reverence, when it is considered the most infamous of crimes to subject a woman to dishonour, and the highest distinction to protect her from wrong ; when the family life is real and strong, of which the mother-wife is the heart ; when each man's pulse beats loyal to womanhood, then is the nation great. When women are treated as playthings, toys, drudges, worth anything only if they have beauty to be enjoyed or strength to labour ; when sex is considered the chief thing in a woman, and heart and mind are forgotten ; when a man buys women for his pleasure and dismisses them when his appetite is glutted, then is a nation despicable.

"And so it is in the East. Yet it would be hard to lay the blame altogether on Mohammad. The real roots of the degradation of women lie much deeper. When Islam was instituted, polygamy was almost necessitated by the number of women and their need of support ; and facility of divorce was required by the separation of the sexes, and the consequence that a man could not know or even see the woman he was about to marry before the marriage ceremony was accomplished. It is not Mohammad whom we must blame for these great evils, polygamy and divorce ; it is the state of society which demanded the separation of the sexes, and in which it was not safe to allow men and women freely to associate ; in other words, it was the sensual constitution of the Arab that lay at the root of the matter. Mohammad might have done better. . . ." (p. 101-2).

"We must always remember that we are dealing with a social system of the seventh century, not of the nineteenth. Mohammad's ideas of women were like those of the rest of his contemporaries. He looked upon them as charming snares to the believer, ornamental articles of furniture difficult to keep in order, pretty playthings ; but

that a woman should be the counsellor and companion of a man does not seem to have occurred to him. It is to be wondered that the feeling of respect he always entertained for his first wife, Khadija, (which, however, is partly accounted for by the fact that she was old enough to have been his mother), found no counterpart in his general opinion of womankind: "Woman was made from a crooked rib, and if you try to bend it straight, it will break; therefore treat your wives kindly." Mohammad was not the man to make a social reform affecting women, nor was Arabia the country in which such a change should be made, nor Arab ladies perhaps the best subjects for the experiment. Still he did something towards bettering the condition of women: he limited the number of wives to four: laid his hand with the utmost severity on the incestuous marriages that were then rife in Arabia: compelled husbands to support their divorced wives during their four months of probation; made hasty divorce less common by adding the rough, but deterring, condition that woman triply divorced could not return to her husband without first being married to some one else; and required four witnesses to prove a charge of adultery against a wife—a merciful provision, difficult of fulfilment. . . ." (p. 103-4).

"It is not so much in the matter of wives as in that of concubines that Mohammad made an irretrievable mistake. The condition of the female slave in the East is indeed deplorable. She is at the entire mercy of her master, who can do what he pleases with her and her numerous companions: for the Muslim is not restricted in the number of his concubines, as he is in that of his wives. The female white slave is kept solely for the master's sensual pleasure, and is sold when he is tired of her, and so she passes from master to master, a very wreck of womanhood. Her condition is a little improved if she bear a son to her tyrant; but even then he is at liberty to refuse to acknowledge the child as his own, though it must be owned he seldom does this. Kind as the Prophet was himself towards bondswomen, one cannot forget the unutterable brutalities which his followers inflicted upon the conquered nations in the taking of slaves. The Muslim soldier was allowed to do as he pleased with any 'infidel' woman he might meet on his victorious march. When one thinks of the thousands of women, mothers and daughters, who must have suffered untold shame and dishonour by this license, he cannot find words to express his horror. And this cruel indulgence has left its mark on the Muslim character, nay, on the whole character of Eastern life. Now, as at the first, young girls are dragged away from their homes and given over to the unballowed lusts of a Turkish voluptuary; and not only Turks, but to Englishmen; for the contagion has spread, and Englishmen, even those who by their sacred order should know better, instead of uttering their protest, as men of honour and Christians, against the degradation, have followed the example of the Turk, and helped in the ruin of women. Concubinage is the black

stain in Islam. With Mohammad's views of women, we could hardly expect him to do better; but, on the other hand, he could scarcely have done worse." (p. 104-5).

The Christian Literature for Muslims Committee.

THE twelfth annual meeting of this important Committee was held at Lahore on October 30th, 1934. It is a matter of great interest that the Committee resolved that in view of the undesirability of circulating literature which contains attacks on the Prophet Muhammad, the P.R.B.S. should be requested to make a list of such books and tracts as contain objectionable references of this sort, and to consider the immediate suspension of the sale of such literature; also the C.L.M.C. adopted as a guiding principle for the future, that it will not recommend grants for the publication of any book or tract which falls in this category.

The P.R.B.S. presented a statement which showed that fifty-three of their books and tracts for Muslims had sold out one or more complete editions, and that of these twenty-three had been reprinted, while thirty were completely out of print.

Dr. Murray T. Titus, who has greatly served this Committee as Secretary-treasurer, is shortly going on furlough and the Rev. B. M. Mow has been nominated to succeed him, subject to the approval of the National Christian Council.

Applications for grants were recommended amounting in all to Rs. 2,187 and including the amounts outstanding from last year the American Christian Literature Society for Muslims is asked to contribute Rs. 4,457 or \$1,760. These grants are for literature in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Pushtu, Telugu, Urdu and English.

In presenting the report the Secretary said that in these difficult days, when it was hard to make progress, the C.L.M.C. had reason to be grateful for the way in which its work had moved forward. This is due to the splendid co-operation which has been in evidence all over the field, and to the closely knit organization which makes such co-operation possible. In times such as these one sees the necessity for team-work—team-work with each other and team-work with God, without whose continual help and guidance we could do nothing.

A year ago, the Indian Committee sent in to the A.C.L.S.M., New York, requests for grants totalling Rs. 3,125. Unfortunately income had so declined during the year that our American friends regretfully had to say they could send only \$100 which realized only Rs. 261-12-0, and this was all allocated to the newest language area, Assamese, for the production of *The Best Friend*. As times improve in America there is every reason to believe that these very necessary

grants will be once more forthcoming, for without them there is little or no chance of carrying on the present programme.

The actual production report for the year shows a considerable increase over the report of last year. There were thirty-three items printed this year, or ten more than last year; the cost in grants paid was Rs. 4,555-1-0 as compared with only Rs. 2,501-12-0 last year. The total number of copies published was 249,000, or 91,000 more than last year; while the number of pages turned out was 3,114,000 as compared with 1,814,000 last year, or nearly twice as many. There were 29 1st editions, 1 2nd edition and 3 4th editions published. These publications were distributed among the different language areas as follows :—

Language	Items	Edition	Copies	Pages
1. Bengali	6	1st	60,000	320,000
2. Pushtu	7	"	14,000	200,000
3. Sindhi	1	2nd	3,000	343,000
4. Tamil	6	1st	18,000	162,000
5. Telugu	1	1st	1,000	153,000
6. Urdu	12	3 4th 9 1st	153,000	1,226,000
	33		249,000	3,114,000

The Bengali items were *Namaz, Zakat, Hajj, Kalima, Roza,* and *Baqr 'Id*, all translations of the *Henry Martyn School papers*.

In Pushtu the seven items were True Prophecies, The True Intercessor, Fasting, Isaac and Ishmael, The True Helper, God is Spirit, and Ibrahim, Isaac and Jacob.

The Tamil publications were the Henry Martyn School papers Nos. 1—6.

Sindhi produced a second edition of the Best Friend.

Telugu brought out the first part of The Story of the Prophets.

The twelve items produced in Urdu were: Almsgiving, Fasting, *Baqr 'Id, Namaz, The Sinless Intercessor, Prophecy and Bani Israel, Stories of the Prophets Pt. I., Ahl-i-Masjid, How the Death of Christ Differs, The Person of Christ, Did Jesus Christ found a Universal Religion, and How a Christian worships God.*

Undoubtedly the most important single publication of the 33 listed above was the Urdu version of *The People of the Mosque* by L. Bevan Jones, which bears the title *Ahl-i-Masjid*. The Henry Martyn School staff continues its splendid efforts along literary lines, and the H.M.S. papers, and special tracts for women are greatly appreciated, not only in India, but in other Muslim countries as well.

The balance left in our account is small, only Rs. 6,779-15-0, and consequently our production horizon is growing smaller and smaller, but we give thanks for what we have been able to accomplish, and we look forward with faith and hope to brighter days ahead.

We believe in the printed page, and its silent, yet effective evangelizing power; and we know the promise is not vain that some of the good seed will bring forth fruit in abundance.

The total expenditure for the year ending 1934 was Rs. 4,804 and a sum of Rs. 5,652 is available for grants for 41 items which have been approved but which at the year end remain unfinished. These 41 items are distributed as follows:—Bengali 2, Assamese 1, Gujarati 8, Pushtu 14, Sindhi 1, Tamil, 1 and Urdu 13.

The whole of missionary enterprise in India is greatly indebted to the aid that is afforded by the American Christian Literature Society for Muslims, and we hope and pray that days of prosperity may enable them to continue their great work.

About Ourselves.

SOME little while ago an appeal was issued to those who were in arrears with their subscriptions for the *M.M.L.* We are glad to report that there has been a fair response to this appeal and we are likely to complete the year with a balanced budget. Beginning with the new year we shall economise by sending out *News and Notes* in a wrapper.

It is satisfactory to know this but there is another matter. We should ourselves, as members of the *M.M.L.*, do all in our power to make these notes useful, by contributing such news or items of information as will be valuable to us all. Such matters can be published without causing any embarrassment to the writers.

We also need fifty new members of the *M.M.L.*

The Editor.

Religious Education in Indian Islam.

WE publish herewith a questionnaire on the above subject by Dr. Murray T. Titus. Pressure of work has made it impossible for Dr. Titus to proceed with his plan but, realising that an enquiry based on the following questions would be of value, both to those who conduct the enquiry and to those to whom the results are made known, we present it to the readers of these notes. Sometimes we fail to acquire useful knowledge because we cannot frame suitable questions. Dr. Titus helps us in this respect and probably his questions will suggest others. The editor will be glad to receive any information which our readers gather and if there is an adequate response will report the result in the pages of *News and Notes*. The subject is one about which much must be known but which has not been systematized.

Questionnaire.

INTRODUCTORY. Name and age of person from whom the replies have been received.

Sect : *Sunni—Ahl-i-Sunnat wa'l Jama'at ; Ahl-i-Hadith, Nechari, etc.*

Shiah—Ithna Ashariyyah; Bohorah; Khojah; other.

Others—Ahmadiyyah ; Ahl-i-Quran, etc.

1. Religious worship in the home :—
 - (a) Is this worship in which all the family members join, or do individual members practice it only?
 - (b) Please describe briefly the *form* and nature of this family worship.
 - (c) Is it *farsz*, *Sunnat*, or *nafil*?
 - (d) Is it held daily (or if oftener how many times) weekly, irregularly, not at all, or at what time or times?
 - (e) Is it led by father, mother, or Mulla?
 - (f) What other religious services (*Ibadat*), if any, are held in your home, *i.e.*, during *Ramazan*, *Muharram*, *Mawlid-i-Nabi*, ' *Id-ul-duha*, ' *Id-ul-Fitr*, ' *Aqiqah*, *etc.*
2. (a) I was years old when I began to study the Quran.
 - (b) I was years old when I finished reading the Quran for the first time. There was or was not a ceremony or tea-party to celebrate the occasion.
 - (c) I have memorized the whole of it ; half of it ; certain parts of it such as *Surat-ul-Fatiha ; Ayat-ul-kursi ; Ayatul-nur ; Surat ul-Ikhlās ; Al-Nas ; Ya-sin ; Yusuf ;* and others ?
 - (d) How regularly do you read the Quran: daily? weekly? Irregularly? What are you favourite Surahs or passages?
 - (e) Do you read and *understand* the Quran in Arabic?
 - (f) Do you use an Urdu translation or other translation? If so, what?
3. (a) My first religious teacher was, my father, mother, mulla.
 - (b) I began to learn the *Namaz (Salat)* when I was years old.
 - (c) My father, mother, mulla taught me.
 - (d) I was years old when I first said *Namaz* in the *Masjid*.
 - (e) I was years old when I first joined in the *Juma' ka Namaz*.
 - (f) I do or do not say the five daily prayers regularly. If not, why not?

- (g) I regularly engage in *du'a* and *munajat* times daily or times weekly.
- (h) The first religious ceremony I can remember was when I was years old.
4. (a) The doctrines of *Iman* and the religious duties of Islam (din) were first explained to me by my father, mother, Mulla; at home? or in the Maktab?
- (b) The books used for this early religious education in the Maktab are?
- (c) The books used for religious education in the different classes in the ordinary Islamiya High School are?
5. (a) Have you been initiated by a *Pir* into any of the following *Khandans* or *Silsilas*: *Chishti*, *Qadiri*, *Naqshbandi*, *Suhrawardi*, *Shattari*, *Qalandari*, etc.?
- (b) At what age did you become a *Murid*? How often do you visit your *Pir*?
- (c) Do you attend the *Zikr*? How often; weekly? monthly? What nights of the week?
- (d) Do you visit the graves of *Pirs*? If so, for what purpose? How often? With what results?
- (e) What is your belief regarding the *Karamat* of *Walis*? Do you believe in charms (ta'wiz)? The evil eye (Nazar)? 'Ilm ur-raml? What '*Urses* have you attended?
6. (a) What devotional (*i.e.* *Mazhabi* books beside the Quran) or books of *Tasawwuf* do you read for spiritual help?
- (b) How do books of *Tasawwuf* help your religious life?
7. How much use do you make of the books on Traditions (Hadith)? What book on *Hadith* do you prefer: *Mishkat-ul-masabih*? *Sahih Bukhari*? *Sahih Muslim*? etc.
8. I do or do not make use of the *tasbih*. It is used by me for the following purposes:—
9. (a) I have been on the following pilgrimages alone, or with my father, or mother, or Mulla; to Mecca and Madinah; to Karbala, Meshed, etc.
- (b) I went when I was. . . . years old.
10. I observe the following festivals in the order of their importance. . . . I began to keep the fast of *Ramazan* when I was. . . . years old.
11. (a) I give, *Zakat*; *Khairat*. How much of each annually?
- (b) I give my *Mulla*, *Pir*, *Imam*, Mosque fund Rs. . . . , annually.

12. (a) I sing religious songs on the following occasions ; *Mawlid*, *Muharram*, 'Urs of a Pir etc., and in honour of the following persons ; the Prophet, Imam Husain, Hazrat 'Ali, a *Pir* or *Wali* (if of the two latter give the name and *Khandan*).
- (b) These songs were taught me by. . . . They are contained in the following books. . . .
13. (a) I was given adult status in religious matters when I was. . . . years old.
- (b) The following special religious or social observances were held.
14. (a) Before eating we do or do not observe a religious ceremony in our home.
- (b) If so, what is the nature of the prayer that is offered or other formula used such as "Bismillah" etc. ?
15. (a) The religious training of girls differs or does not differ from that of boys.
- (b) If it does differ, in what respect does it do so?
- (c) Do women take part in all religious exercises and festivals the same as men?
- (d) Are there any festivals or other religious exercise which they observe which men do not ?
16. Have you or have you not had a special awakening of your religious life similar to that which Imam al Ghazali experienced? If so, briefly describe it.
17. I do or do not expect or desire to become a Mulla, or religious teacher?

Good News !

Rev. J. W. Sweetman, of the Methodist Mission, Benares, now editor of *News and Notes*, was recently unanimously appointed to the staff of the Henry Martyn School and has come, with Mrs. Sweetman, to reside at 5, Egerton Road, Lahore, which will be their address while we ourselves are on furlough in 1935. We give them a very cordial welcome !

L. BEVAN JONES.

PRAYER AND PRAISE.

PRaise for God's most evident guidance in the appointment of Mr. Sweetman to the staff of the Henry Martyn School, Lahore—pray that he may be greatly used of God in the work of the School.

PRAYER is asked on behalf of a young man who has intellectual difficulties but who is continuing the study of the Scriptures, and feels his need of Christ.

LET US praise God for more open-mindedness and deeper interest in the message of the Gospel among the Muslims of the East U.P.

NEW MEMBERS.

We welcome the following new members.

Rev. F. S. Briggs	Methodist Mission (of England)	Ghazipur, U.P.
Rev. S. R. Holt	do Akharpur Dist.	Fyzabad, U.P.
Rev. J. S. Moon, M.A.	do	Benares, U.P.

Notice.

PLEASE note the new address of the Editor.

Our next number will be sent out V.P.P. to members in India to collect the usual subscription.

We would hereby notify members in other lands that it will greatly facilitate business at the Press if they send in their dues early to the Superintendent.

Matters of interest to members of the Missionaries to Muslims League, items of news, requests for prayer and praise, should be addressed to Rev. J. W. Sweetman, Henry Martyn School, 5, Egerton Road, Lahore.

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 Editor. The annual subscription to the League, including *News and Notes*, is Rs. 2-0-0 (English 3 shillings).



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