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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

February, 1934.

1st February = 16th Shawwal (10th mo.), 1352, A.H.

Calendar, 1934.

1st Shawwal	17th January	1st Rabi'ul-thani	14th July
1st Dhu'l-qa'da	15th February	1st Jumada'l-ula	12th August
1st Dhu'l-hijja	17th March	1st Jumada'l-akhira	11th September
1st al-Muharram	16th April	1st Rajab	10th October
1st Safar	16th May	1st Sha'ban	8th November
1st Rabi'ul-awwal	14th June	1st Ramadan	8th December

Age-Long Complacency Shaken.

FOR centuries Christians believed that Muslims could never be converted to Christianity. Muslims thought the same, and were so confident that they did not believe that Christian Missions to Muslims could have any success. Two recent signs indicate a shaking of this age-long complacency. First the Egyptian Government has passed an order that no new missionaries are to enter the country. Although this order is in connexion with a particular case in which the Muslims allege forced conversion, it is probably not unconnected with the growing success of Christian Missions in Egypt. Secondly, a Palestinian newspaper has been getting alarmed at the converts to Christianity in Java. The actual number of indigenous Christians in Java of Islamic origin is 60,000; but so great is the panic of this newspaper that it estimates the number as two or even ten lakhs. The writer blames the Javanese Muslims for doing nothing in defence and reform of Islam. He is evidently unaware of the Muhammadiyya Movement in Java, an account of which will be found in the current number of the *Moslem World*.

The Assyrians in Iraq.

THE facts about the recent disaster that has befallen the remnants of the Assyrian or Nestorian Church in Iraq appear to be as follows. Some of these people were persuaded by agitators to cross over from Iraq into Syria, believing that by this means they could consolidate their power and win for themselves political independence. They had with them arms with which they had been provided earlier on by the British for self-defence. As they attempted to cross the frontier they were stopped by the Iraqi police. The Assyrians then attacked the police, and unfortunately there seems to be no doubt that the Assyrians were actually the first aggressors. Then the exasperated Iraqi Muslims felt they had an excuse to vent their age-long wrath on the Assyrians, and massacred some 1,500 of them. Meanwhile His Beatitude Mar Shimun, the Catholicus or Patriarch of the Assyrian Church, was in Baghdad, and was being asked by the king of Iraq to relinquish his claims to political power. It will be remembered that under the Caliphate, and later under the Ottoman Empire, the Nestorians formed a distinct *melet* or politico-religious body, with the Catholicus as their head. So long as the law of the land was the Muslim *shari'at* some such arrangement was necessary, but it should not be necessary in a modern state as Iraq now is. The Catholicus was inclined to agree to the King's proposal; but, being overpersuaded by one section of his people, stiffened his back and refused to relinquish his claim to political power. At this moment news came in to Baghdad of the rising of the Assyrian Christians in the north. The Catholicus was naturally charged with being privy to it, and though we would certainly accept his word that he was ignorant of the plot, the case looked very black against him. The Iraq Government decided to deport him, and by the courtesy of the British Government he was taken by an R.A.F. plane to Cyprus. In a debate in the House of Lords in the first week in December the Archbishop of Canterbury and others urged on the British Government the special responsibility of Britain for the Assyrians. The position of the Government is that since the British gave up the mandate over Iraq in 1932 they have no individual responsibility for the minorities there; but they are working through the League of Nations, which accepted the responsibility, with a view to finding some satisfactory solution. So far the attempts to find a country to which the whole community could be transported have not been successful. Many of us still hope that the Assyrian Christians will stay in their own land and undergo a spiritual revival, so that they may be one of the means of bringing the Gospel to the Muslims of Iraq.

Since the above was written, Brazil has offered to take the whole community of 10,000 and give them agricultural land. A commission is being sent out to view the site that has been offered.

The Actual Position of Women in Islam as seen by Muslim Eyes.

A CONTRIBUTOR has drawn our attention to an article in *The Light* of August 24th, 1933, which depicts the actual position of women in Islam in quite as dark colours as outside critics of Islam have done, and contrasts the actual position with the ideal position intended by Islam. The passage is as follows:—

“Woman was the cause of turning Adam out of Paradise: such has been the verdict of Christianity. Paradise lies at the very feet of women: such has been the teaching of the Prophet of Islam. When however you come to the daily work-a-day life, you find a most cruel irony of things. The one supposed to be the root cause of hurling man headlong out of Paradise, *viz.*, woman, in Christendom has more of Paradise in her life. The other, at whose feet Paradise was to be found, has more of hell in her life! Thanks to the mullah, that great uplifting, ennobling, message that Islam was has been dragged in muck and mire all round. But perhaps nowhere is that degradation more disgraceful than in the fate inflicted on woman in an average Muslim home. No education, no individuality, no right of inheritance, no freedom of will, she is denied the very air and sunshine of God which are enjoyed even by birds and beasts! A virtual slave unto man, his sweet will must be hell to her or heaven to her just as the whim may be. A mere word of *talaq* uttered by him is enough to render her homeless, and throw her, along with the children that he has given her, on the public street to beg, borrow or steal. Just mark the irony of things! The Prophet tells us that the very Paradise can be at the feet of woman. And what is the position to which she has been condemned in an average Muslim home? Why, the very shoe at the feet of man! That is how the common Panjabi saying goes. The Prophet made education compulsory. . . . How that beneficent commandment is honoured may be judged from a meeting held on the 5th inst. in the Dar-ul-Ulum, Deoband, where the teachers and the taught, the present and future pillars of Islam, passed an indignant resolution protesting against the decision of the United Provinces Legislative Council that in the areas where education for boys was compulsory, education for girls must also be made compulsory. Compulsory education, it was declared, was tantamount to destroying the time-honoured moral and religious traditions of Islam among Muslim girls. The religion which put Paradise at her very feet, thanks to the mullah makes a veritable hell out of her life, whereas the religion which drove her out of Paradise restores to her freedom, life and joy.”

This extract is extremely interesting. As a historical statement of the place of woman in Islam and Christianity respectively it is neither convincing nor deep. But as a determination to deal effectively with a present evil it is wholly commendable. From the religious point of view, God does not demand of men that they should be good

historians, or even logical, but that they should know the difference between good and evil, and choose the good. It may be rather hard on the mullahs to have to bear the blame for handing down, as faithfully as they can, the doctrines of Islam that were settled in antiquity. But modern Muslims such as this writer, whose consciences are quickened, demand of Islam something better than the legalistic system it has become. It may be that they will be able to find support for better doctrines and better customs in the Quran and the traditions. But if they fail to find support there, another path lies open to them. Once it was believed that common agreement of the Muslims (ijma') was a basis for sound doctrine. The article by Mr. Soorma in the January number of the *Moslem World* will show that there are Muslims who wish to revive this mighty instrument of progress.

A very different treatment of the question of the position of woman is found in an article in the *Islamic Review* for December 1933, in the course of which the late Khwaja Kamal ud-Din allowed himself to write the following sentence:—

“If polygamy is a matter of necessity in certain circumstances and an economic measure sometimes, then why find fault with Muhammad, when all the great men and benefactors of humanity especially in the world of religion have all of them had more than one wife?”

This is nothing but a perversion of history in order to support an evil custom, a perversion so clumsy that it can only deceive the very ignorant. We would like to see modern Muslim writers more accurate and more critical in their history; but, far more urgently, we would like to see them inspired by a moral sense of preference for what is good. It is on this ground that we accord to the author of the first quotation a meed of praise which we are bound to withhold from the author of the second. And we doubt not that the judgment of a later generation of Muslims, and the judgment of the Last Day, will be the same.

Who is a Muslim?

The Light declares Mr. Pickthall to be in error.

WE saw in our last issue the view which Marmaduke Pickthall, an English Muslim, takes of what is required for “belief” and from “believers” in true religion. For this he is taken to task by a prominent Ahmadi, Dr. Basharat Ahmad in *The Light* (October 16th) who says that his opinions are not borne out by the Quran.

This reply occupies the front page of the paper, and is headed by a statement of the old Muslim view of the matter in its very crudest form, thus:—

“A man accepting the Prophet’s message, however sinful, is yet a loyal subject of God’s rule and a Muslim; a man rejecting that message, however virtuous, is a rebel against that rule, and a *kafr*.”

Now this is the very view which the Lucknow paper *Nigar* strongly

repudiated three years ago, saying, "The whole lot of the 'ulama who side with this nominal Muslim (*kafir* in reality) are also the enemies of God and shall have their doom." *

Mr. Pickthall had argued on the basis of certain verses in the Quran that the requirements for salvation are (1) faith in God, (2) faith in the hereafter, and (3) good works—*i.e.* not profession of faith in Islam as a religion. He arrived at this conclusion by insisting that in the well-known passage, "Whoso desireth any other religion than Islam, that religion shall never be accepted from him" (iii. 79), the term "Islam" is used in its literal sense of submission to God, and not in the sense of Islam the religion.

The Ahmadi takes the line that what really determines the matter is the attitude one takes towards revelation, and in seeking to meet Mr. Pickthall's protest about mere professors of religion who lead, meanwhile, an immoral life, he says, "The man who accepts divine revelation is not a rebel in regard to the divine government. His short-comings in practical life are like the breach of law on the part of a loyal subject, and he will receive proportionate punishment for these. . . . The man who rejects the revelation is guilty of high treason. . . . The first will be considered a loyal subject and dealt with accordingly. . . . the second will be treated as an outlaw . . . and can by no stretch of imagination be considered as a Muslim" —Mr. Pickthall's point was who is entitled to *salvation*—"If we once accept the need of divine revelation then we cannot help confining the acceptance of Islam to the acceptance and observance of the Quranic revelation . . . the final revelation . . . Mr. Pickthall appears to dispense with the need of revealed religion altogether. . . . And he who disbelieves the very fact of revelation cannot be regarded as a Muslim."

The Ahmadi returns to the subject in the issue of 24th November, in which he examines more particularly the verse on which Mr. Pickthall based his main contention; *viz.*, "Those who believe, and the Jews and the Christians and the Sabaeans . . . whoever of these believeth in God and the latter day, etc." (ii. 59). Concerning this he says there is much more at the back of such "belief" than Mr. Pickthall allows. The Quran makes clear elsewhere that salvation is granted to those who possess *taqwa* ("piety," see ii. 238). Four things constitute this piety, *viz.*, faith in God, faith in revealed books, faith in the prophets, and faith in the hereafter. The Quran, having once mentioned these things clearly, afterwards merely alludes to the first and last parts: all the rest are included in these, as Mr. Pickthall himself should have known. "From this it is plain," the writer goes on, "that faith in *all* prophets is essential. A man who believes in Moses but disbelieves in Jesus, or believes in Jesus and does not believe in Muhammad, is described in the Quran as a *kafir* indeed." (He cites various verses). "Faith in *all* the books and *all* the prophets is indispensable for being a Muslim and for salvation. . . . Faith in God without faith in the Prophet Muhammad is, according to the Quran, an absolutely vain claim." "This surely is the orthodox Muslim view."

A third correspondent in the issue of 16th December points out a technical error in Dr. Basharat Ahmad's interpretation of certain Quranic passages, yet, while agreeing with his main thesis, strongly affirms that in the case of "a Jew or a Christian, supposing he really believes in the unity of God, in the hereafter, and does good deeds, and (yet) prefers to be called a Jew or a Christian, the Quran gives him the liberty to do so, and his salvation is assured under the verses v: 72-73, "fear shall not come

* For the extracts see *News and Notes*, April, 1931.

upon them, etc." This is a very interesting situation, for this last writer would seem to back Mr. Pickthall against Dr. Basharat Ahmad.

L. B. J.

Can you Employ These Converts?

(1) Maulvi Hafiz ur-Rahman, son of Azim ud-Din, of Behar, Bachelor, aged 25. Baptised in 1927 in the presence of Miss M. M. Fent of Behar. He has written an account of his conversion in Urdu. He resigned his post in favour of another convert with a family, who became a Christian through him. He is a B.A., and has passed the highest Oriental examinations in Urdu, Persian and Arabic as follows:—Senior Fazil in Urdu, Calcutta, 1919; Munshi Fazil in Persian, Punjab University, 1926; Maulvi Fazil in Arabic, Behar, 1929. He is capable of teaching Urdu, Persian and Arabic in a High School, also to College classes, but does not know English. Missionaries speak very highly of his Christian character, evangelistic zeal and scholarship.

(2) Mr. P. Abbasi of Saharanpur District. Bachelor, aged about 21. Baptised 4 years ago. Failed Senior Cambridge. Studied in Deoband, and has been to England for a short time. He has been a language teacher at the Landour Language School for a short period. He speaks English fluently. He comes of a highly respectable family, and has points of contact with high class Muslims. He possesses a high Christian character, and desires to work as an evangelist.

A Puzzle Solved.

THE Rev. A. Nielsen of the Newman School of Missions, Jerusalem, in his "Palestine Translation Service," refers to an article in a Jaffa newspaper entitled "Islam sweeps away the other religions" which quotes a speech by the Rev. Taylor, Chairman of the Conference of Churches in England. He is said to have spoken about Islam as a heaven-sent religion, that has had more success than Christianity and has served humanity more than it, for Islam furthers abstinence more than Christianity. Islam is not against Christianity, and there is no reason to criticize Islamic polygamy and other things as long as you shut your eyes to what is or has been taking place in Europe, as slavery, licence, etc. Mr. Nielsen says, "It is difficult to distinguish what is direct quotation from the speech of that clergyman and what has been added by the newspaper in its translation; there is no indication of source and no further information about this "Chairman of Church Conference in England" when and where he lived. And it is typical of the newspaper that, although more than one Christian reader has asked for further information or for an opportunity of correcting possible mistakes, the paper has given no answer, neither in print nor in letter."

The speech in question was made by Canon Taylor at the Church Congress at Wolverhampton in 1887, and is quoted, evidently with approval, by T. W. Arnold in his *Preaching of Islam* (1st edition, p. 62). It was a foolish speech, showing no deep knowledge of the early history of Islam, and it is surprising that Professor Arnold thought fit to quote from

it. Only the first few words as quoted by Mr. Nielsen seem to be taken from Canon Taylor's speech: the rest was added by the editor. He has certainly not strengthened the Muslim cause by basing arguments on the opinions of an obscure individual of forty-six years ago, and it is not surprising that he refused to say when Canon Taylor lived.

The Moslem World for January, 1934.

DR. Zwemer recently spent two months in China, and considerable space in this number of his quarterly is devoted to China. He himself gives an editorial on the history of Islam in China and its modern revival, and there is an article by Mr. H. D. Hayward on the Kansu Muslims. Professor Richard Bell contributes an article on Muhammad's call, and the Rev. J. Robson on Magic Cures. Dr. Hilma Granqvist writes on marriage in Palestine; Mr. H. B. Young on the Modern Press in Persia; Mr. D. Campbell on Bible Distribution across the Sahara; Rev. A. C. Hanna on Islam and the Mongolian Races; Rev. F. J. Barny on the Creed of al-Sanusi; and Mr. Soorma on Islam and Intellectual Freedom.

Codex Sinaiticus.

THIS famous manuscript was first seen by Tischendorf at the Convent of St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai, in 1844, and was afterwards secured by him and presented to the Czar of Russia. Both the Old and the New Testaments were written in the fourth century A.D., though not all by one hand, and are thus one of the oldest biblical manuscripts. The New Testament is complete, but the Old Testament only contains the poetical and prophetic books in full, with small fragments of Gen. and Numb., larger portions of I Chron. and II Esdras, and the Books of Esther, Judith, Tobit, I and IV Macc. It is of course well-known that the science of the textual criticism of the Old Testament has never been worked out with the same completeness as that of the New Testament; but it seems certain that in the Old Testament both Codex Alexandrinus (at the British Museum) and Codex Vaticanus (at Rome) preserve an earlier text of the Greek version. The great importance of Codex Sinaiticus is in the New Testament. It was the discovery of Westcott and Hort that this manuscript and the Codex Vaticanus, especially in the Gospels, preserved an extremely early type of text; and Westcott and Hort rarely adopted a reading which was opposed to the combined testimony of these two manuscripts. The English Revised version, and the Urdu version, of the New Testament, are translations of a text very similar to that of Westcott and Hort, and are therefore in the main based on the agreement of Codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus. Later researches, since the time of Westcott and Hort, seems to suggest that the text represented by these two manuscripts is not quite the archetypal text, but was one of two types of text which were current in the second century A.D. The other type of text current in the second century may in some cases be nearer the archetype; but it is not so easy to get at, as it is not represented by any one or two manuscripts, but by the agreement of a considerable number of Greek manuscripts and manuscripts of the old Latin and old Syriac versions. The difference between these two types of text is small, and is nothing like so great as the difference between the Authorised and the Revised versions, the Authorised version having been translated

from later and inferior manuscripts. It would probably be agreed by scholars that Codex Vaticanus is the most important manuscript of the New Testament, and Codex Sinaiticus the second in importance. Readers will have seen with pleasure that Codex Sinaiticus has recently been secured by the British Museum for £100,000 from the Soviet Republic, the British Government having guaranteed half the price if the rest is raised by public subscription.

Missionaries to Muslims League.

Financial Statement—1933.

<i>Receipts.</i>	Rs. A. P.	<i>Expenditure.</i>	Rs. A. P.
Balance from 1932	202 7 0	Printing	388 10 0
Members Subscriptions	555 12 0	Postages	367 0 0
		Sundries	8 14 0
			704 8 0
		Balance in hand ...	3 11 0
	<u>768 3 0</u>		<u>768 3 0</u>

Examined and found correct,
 Sd. W. H. BAPTIST,
 12-1-34.

NEW MEMBER.

Rev. L. F. Geddes, C.M.S., Dera Ismail Khan, N.W.F.P.

Prayer

For Miss Balchin, B.M.S., Delhi, a former student of the Henry Martyn School, who is returning home with a serious illness which has not yet been fully diagnosed.

For the removal of the hindrances to missionary work in Egypt.

For peace in Kashgar (Chinese Turkestan) and continuance of the Swedish Mission there.

Notice.

The Rev. L. E. Browne is temporarily editing *News and Notes*. Matters of interest to members of the Missionaries to Muslims League, items of news, and requests for prayer and praise, should be addressed to Rev. L. E. Browne, 30, Mozang Road, Lahore, 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 Editor. The annual subscription to the League, including *News and Notes*, is Rs. 2-0-0 (English 3 shillings).

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