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News and Notes

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Questions by an Educated Muslim Woman Student.

WE give below some questions asked by a Muslim Woman Student. They are typical and we suggest that our readers should exercise their minds over them until our November number when we propose to answer.

1. Can a religion be strictly judged by its followers? If so, is the West living according to Christian principles, especially the capitalists?
2. Islam is blamed for its militant spirit, yet the war was blessed by the Church, and the Pope blessed Mussolini and urged him to fight the Abyssinians who are also Christians.
3. (a) Religion to the founders of Islam was not merely a moral philosophy. Every phase of life was to be governed by its injunctions in every way, even politically and economically. (b) Islam as you see it to-day is not Islam as it is meant to be, there is not a single state run on the lines advocated. The real Muslim state was only till the end of the first four Caliphs.
4. Compare the position and rights (of women) in the Islamic Law and the sayings of St. Paul. The West has only now given rights allowed to Muslim women 1,300 years ago.
5. (a) Is it better to have four legal wives (and observe the condition that they must be treated equally well) than have many mistresses? (b) What do you do when there is a surplus of women?
6. Are all men monogamous? If they are not, what happens then?
7. Divorce under Islamic Law is as easy for woman as for man. In a case when a husband marries again his first wife can get a divorce. At the time of the *nikah* any written stipulation can be made.

8. Will you kindly study the circumstances of the Prophet's marriages. By how many of his wives did he have children, and how many of his wives were virgins?

9. In your second lecture you said that Mohammed fought at Medina often without provocation. Please give specific instances of this.

10. In a socialist Islamic state there should be no reason for stealing. In any state which is not run on Islamic lines the authority has no right to apply the law only as far as it suits his purpose. In Abyssinia to-day thieves hands are cut off.

11. What of Spain? Is that Christianity? What of the Inquisition? If you judge the Muslims by the Karachi incident, are we to judge Christianity by the above?

12. The Moulvies are a self-ordained party—where are they ordered to be? neither in the Koran nor in the Hadith.

13. Compare the Moors and Christians in the 15th century. (see Drapper's *Intellectual Development of Europe*).

14. (a) Modern Science points to an impersonal God. (b) How does a personal God allow such misery? Suppose we are not predestined, how do you explain the fact that the Omniscient and Omnipresent one allows misery? (c) Why does He, who is so interested in our petty lives, not prevent the good and evil suffering alike, in that case the good and bad are not differentiated in any way. Is starvation and torture and the exploitation of man by man a loving Father's test of his children? (d) Somehow, as recent statistics show, it is easier for a Christian to become an atheist than for a Mohammedan.

15. If Christ, thousands of years ago, died for the sins of the world all Christian sins are automatically forgiven?

16. Did the generations before Christ that were born before Him have to suffer a handicap in the forgiveness of sins as compared to those following?

17. Are the metaphysical conceptions of the Trinity easier to understand than the simple "There is no God but Allah"? You must remember that the Quran was first sent to the Arabs who were polytheistic and in view of this, "*La Ilaha Il-Allah Muhammad ur-Rusul Allah*" is very simple.

18. The Koran gives a high place to Christ. If you say that the Koran was not divine it shows that Muhammad was being modest. If divine the Koran is complete in itself and gives each prophet his own place. This only proves the power of the Koran.

19. Those who try to bring accusations against Christ deny the Koran and hence cannot be true Muslims.

20. If we believe in Muhammad more it is only a natural weakness because he gave us faith and taught a wild race to worship a Supreme Being and not wooden idols.

Cook's Tours to Mecca.

THE extract we give below with reference to the arrangements for Indian Muslims going on pilgrimage to Mecca would be of interest to our readers. It appeared in the *Hyderabad Bulletin* for July 20th, 1936, under the heading "Pilgrimage to Mecca by Land. Arrangements through Messrs. Thomas Cook and Sons."

"A Notification issued by the Information Bureau says:—

Persons intending to travel by land for pilgrimage to Mecca or for a visit to other holy places from Basrah to Baghdad and therefrom via Palestine to Egypt with a view to reaching Jeddah from Suez by the Khadive Mail Line Steamer are hereby informed that Messrs. Thomas Cook and Co., have agreed to make, upon the recommendation of His Exalted Highness Ecclesiastical Department, all arrangements for their comfortable journey. All those desirous of benefitting from this arrangement may kindly approach the Ecclesiastical Department for the purpose."

Was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad a Reformer ?

(Continued from September Number).

PROFESSOR Salim goes on to point out a strange consequence of the Mirza's doctrine that the office of prophethood is now open. He names a number of poor misguided people who have been associated with his community who have made claims that they are prophets. Miyan Mahmud Ahmed had said that just as Ghulam Ahmad had been made a Prophet by the seal of the Prophet Muhammad so other people could be. Prophethood was a 'mercy' which would continue till the last day. The coming of more prophets is implicit in the Qadiani interpretation of *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*. "The seal was given to the Prophet to make other prophets" (see *Haqiqat-ul-Wahi*, page 96). "The name of the last degree of human attainment is prophethood." (*Haqiqat-un-Nabuwwat* by Mahmud Ahmed, page 153). "This is quite true that everyone can develop and can attain to the greatest of all ranks, even as far as this, that he may even surpass Muhammad." (Mahmud Ahmed in *Al-Faql* for July 17th, 1922). "How extravagant and false is this idea that after the Prophet the door of divine inspiration remains forever closed and that in future unto the last day, there should be no hope of its opening." *Danima-i-barahin-i-Ahmadiyya* (Appendix to the Proofs of Ahmadiyya), Part 5, page 183. Thus the claim is made that in submission and obedience to Muhammad a man may become a prophet, that prophethood is a stage of the religious life to which any one who he excels may attain and such a man may even surpass Muhammad. If these things are true then why should the later aspirants or claimants of prophethood from among the

Qadianis be described as deranged and if now the door to prophethood is open how can discrimination be made between the true and the false? And, again, if it is hurtful that the door of prophethood should be closed forever must it not be equally hurtful that the door of the Shari'at is closed?

Professor Salim in the course of his interesting articles compares the Mirza of Qadian with the great mystics of Islam. He says they did not flatter and cajole the powers that be. They did not throw the traditions into the waste-paper basket nor cause dissensions in Islam. They did not eulogize themselves or issue challenges to their opponents offering money. They spent their lives in the service of Allah, taught the ignorant, brought men near to God, helped the indigent, nursed the sick and in all they did preached Islam and brought wanderers into the right path. They were content with barley-bread for food and a sack for clothing. In India they brought great numbers of men to Islam whereas the only legacy the Mirza has left is perpetual strife within the Muslim community. Speaking in ironical vein he describes the chief work of the Mirza as the locating of the tomb of Christ. In thirteen centuries that had not hitherto been the work of a 'reformer' but now it was so important that God had to send a special preacher. Saints of old did not open collection registers, build cemeteries and lighthouses but the Mirza spent a great deal of his time in raising money and he proclaimed to his disciples that he had a dream of a place which would serve as the burial ground for his followers and that any one who was buried there would be *Bihishti*, i.e., an inhabitant of heaven. The uneducated might easily think this an easy way of going to heaven. He prophesied the coming of plague and said that all who were in his house would be safe as in an ark of sanctuary but that alas! his present house was not very big and it would be wise to increase its size. (*Kishti-i-Nuh*, i.e., Noah's Ark, page 76). Did not these acts encourage superstition?

Professor Salim points out that a Reformer should be noted for his godly fear and in this connection cites the case of Muhammadi Begum. The Mirza published a prophecy that he would marry this young woman, applying to himself some words of Muhammad which are recorded in tradition in relation to the coming again of the Messiah, "He will marry and have children." He said that this had special significance as a sign of his mission. He wrote that the parents and relatives would not agree but that in spite of this the marriage was bound to take place. Then he wrote to them and told them that if they would not agree there would be a lamentable end to the affair. The husband proposed for the girl would die within two and a half years, and her father within three, if he did not comply and quarrels, penury and affliction would be their lot. He promised the father some land if he would give his consent. He wrote to his younger son Fazl's father-in-law Ali Sher Beg who was uncle to the girl he wished to marry, suggesting that he should be the one to aid him in

bringing the prophecy to fulfilment, and then to the younger son's mother-in-law, saying that she should make her brother agreeable to the match or else he would cause Fazl to divorce her daughter. Then he wrote to Muhammadi Begum's father asking *him* to be a means of the fulfilment of the prophecy, because "thousands of padres were waiting to see this prophecy proved false." He declared in court on oath that though he was not yet married to the girl (1901) she would certainly be his wife. He even proclaimed the achievement of this marriage proposal as a test of his truth or falsehood. He said that God on His throne had already joined him in marriage to Muhammadi Begum and that it was a fixed decree (*Taqdir-i-Mabram*); all his opponents would be put to shame (their noses cut and their faces blackened till they appeared like monkeys or pigs!). The prospective husband Sultan Muhammad's death was also a fixed decree and "if I am a liar may this prophecy not be fulfilled." He prayed that God would destroy him with a humiliating death if this prophecy was not from Him. When he was very ill and this 'prophecy' had not yet been fulfilled he applied to himself those words of the Quran "Truth is from thy Lord and thou art not of those who doubt." When all his efforts were unavailing and because his elder son Sultan Ahmad and Sultan Muhammad's mother had refused to sever their connections with the parents and relatives of Muhammadi Begum, he disinherited his son and divorced the mother. He also prevailed on his younger son to divorce his wife.

This then is the man whom Maulana Muhammad 'Ali accepts as the Reformer of the fourteenth century A.H. The 'prophecy' was not fulfilled and even if had been after all this intrigue and campaign of threats, would it have been a sign of the Mirza's mission? And if the matter was a fixed decree, *i.e.*, by absolute predestination, then why all these efforts. Was the course the Mirza adopted a legitimate way of attaining a legitimate object? And why was it thought necessary to make a victim of an innocent woman, the wife of his younger son Fazl by causing her to be divorced? Why flatter and cajole people into giving him assistance? Did ever any prophet, saint, reformer or Messiah adopt such methods to bring about the accomplishment of his prophecies? As Salim says he "vented his spleen" on the poor innocent wife of Fazl.

"The bearded fellow's was the fault ;

The chap with the moustaches caught.

"The man who said that God could not be such as the Christians teach and let the innocent Jesus suffer for the guilty! What if the Christians should ask: Why should the niece suffer for the uncle's fault?"

In regard to the Mirza's belief in his own mission, our authority says that no true prophet could ever promise that he would not prophesy even if his continuing to prophesy should result in his death. In this connection the agreement of the Mirza of Qadian given after the

decision in a court case in which he was concerned during January and February, 1899.

"I, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, in the presence of Almighty God promise in truth that in future :

1. I will refrain from publishing any prophecy the meaning of which may or may be taken to mean that any harm will happen to any person, Muslim, Hindu or Christian, or that he will be the object of (divine) displeasure.
2. I will also refrain from making any request of God that he should by abusing any person, whether Muslim, Hindu, or Christian, or by shewing that person to be an object of the divine displeasure, make it manifest in religious controversy who is true and who false.
3. I will refrain from attributing anything to divine revelation of which the intention may be or which may be a reasonable cause for attributing such an intention, that a certain person, Muslim, Hindu or Christian will be humiliated or will be an object of divine displeasure.

Commenting on this, Professor Salim says, "It is not necessary to make it clear that inspiration or revelation is sent down so that it may be communicated to men. But it is an amazing thing that the Mirza of Qadian gave preference to the order of the Deputy-Commissioner rather than the command of God and agreed to conceal the truth."

Another charge made against the founder of the Ahmadiyya sect is that which we have already noticed in Sir Muhammad Iqbal's criticism. This is that the Ahmadiyya policy has been responsible for the forfeiture of Islam's independence. The following quotations are made from the Mirza's writings :—"I am sure that as the number of my disciples goes on increasing, so the number of people who believe in *Jihad* will go on decreasing; for to acknowledge me as Messiah and Mahdi is to repudiate the doctrines of *Jihad*. "*Tabligh-i-Risalat* (Preaching of the Apostolate), Vol. 7, page 17. "The service I did for the English Government was this. I caused fifty thousand books, notices and articles to be printed and published in this country and other Muslim countries to the effect that it is the duty of every Muslim to be truly subject to the English Government." *Sitara-i-Qaisariya* (Imperial Star), page 3. "But alas in the long course of eighteen years compilations which were full of exhortations regarding submission to the Government, the benign Government never paid any attention and although I reminded them several times it had no effect." (Request to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in *Tabligh-i-Islam*, Vol. 7, page 11). This last reference would seem to exonerate the British Government from collusion in the Ahmadiyya movement which some people hint at.

It is reasonable to suppose that if Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a reformer on the Muslim pattern that his followers would have no

difficulty in respect to the prophecies he made and the acceptability of his prayers. Before the birth of Bashir Ahmad the first, the Mirza published his *Sabza Ishtihar* to the effect that "God has told me that a comely and holy son will be given to me. His name will be Immanuel and Bashir. And he is the Light of God and the Word of God; he will cleanse many diseases; he will make three four; a son and exalted, revered and noble, manifestation of Truth and Glory, whom God will send down from heaven. We will put our spirit in him and he will be famed to the confines of the earth." (*Proofs of Ahmadiyya*, February 20th, 1886). The son was born on 7th August, 1887. He died November 4th, 1888. The Mirza then said that this was not the son about whom the prophecy had been made. (*Sirat-ul-Mahdi* or Life of the Mahdi, page 87). He prophesied the death of Deputy Abdullah Atham within fifteen months, *i.e.*, before December, 1864. Actually Atham died in July, 1896. He prophesied the death of Dr. Abdul Hakim within his own lifetime and he actually died fourteen years after the Mirza. To Sher-i-Islam Maulana Thana Ullah he wrote "If I am a liar I will die in your lifetime" and he prayed that if he lied he himself might die a mean death. The Maulana is still alive and the Mirza died in 1908. As Salim says "Thus one of his prayers was accepted and that proved him a liar." He prophesied that a special sign would come between January, 1900 and December, 1902. No sign came.

(To be concluded)

Prayer and Praise

This is my faithful counsel, and here I take my stand. That is to say, let a man strive and wrestle with all his might to obey God and His commandments so thoroughly at all times and in all things, that in him there be nothing, spiritual and natural which opposeth God; and that his whole soul and body with all their members may stand ready and willing for that to which God hath created them; as ready and willing as his hand is to a man, which is so wholly in his power, that in the twinkling of an eye, he moveth and turneth it whither he will. And when we find it otherwise, we must give our whole diligence to amend our state; and this from love and not from fear and in all things whatsoever, seek and intend the glory and praise of God alone. We must not seek our own either in things spiritual or in things natural. Theologica Germanica.

LET US PRAY for new converts who will be in Lahore this winter.

LET US PRAY for the Hyderabad group of missionaries and workers in their new ventures.

LET US PRAY for the students who will attend the Henry Martyn School, this winter.

LET US PRAISE God for all those who are alive to the great need for maintaining the missionary enterprise among Muslims in India, and pray that all their efforts may be blessed.

NOTICE.

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 Honorary Secretary :—

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