

Confidential.

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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 XXIV.

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1st April=8th Muharram (1st mo.) 1555 A.H.

Good Friday.

A MUSLIM criticism that the Christian holds that he has salvation by belief in a fact of history, strikes us at first as a statement of the truth just as we would express it. But the idea behind the objection is that by mere assent to a fact of history the Christian hopes to gain salvation. The belief which the Christian has in the death of Christ is far more than assent to an historic fact. He *does* assent to the fact but he believes in it *with his whole heart*, for with the heart man believeth unto salvation.

In the death of Christ on the Cross, the Christian sees the winning of a glorious victory over the powers of evil and in-so-far as faith unites him with Christ in His great atoning act, he shares in that victory and enters into an experience of reconciliation with God.

What happens in us to make the Cross of Christ effective in our lives? When we seek to express the relation of the atoning act to ourselves, we have to confess that there is much here which is utterly ineffable. In this life of ours there are things of which we are so fully aware that they have become part and parcel of our lives but yet we cannot speak of them adequately. Our experience of the atoning work of Christ is one of these. It is also true that Christ deals with different individuals in different ways and so it is quite possible that theories of how the Cross exercises its influence may be very diverse. Thus some Christians would be content to say with Coleridge that there is a great mystery here; we cannot explain it but we know it is a fact and we accept it.

There are one or two preliminary facts to be borne in mind. When asked what the purpose of Creation is, we would say that it is the bringing into existence of a fellowship of moral and spiritual beings. Moral and spiritual personality is, so far as we know, the crown of all the processes of this great universe. At the heart of the Eternal is love which, Fatherlike, would bring sons to birth. The "Worker that

hideth Himself" behind the veil of a material universe with its laws, is giving an opportunity to men to develop freely to an ideal of personal and spiritual life, without undue obtrusion or compulsion. Man too feels the attraction of the Divine, and God's purpose is complete when his own self-giving love is met by man's free self-dedication. Thus will the circle be complete and men will be won to spiritual and moral atonement with God.

Muslims would deny the Creative Love in somewhat similar terms to those of Spinoza. In his philosophy we find he would define the essence of love as "seeking union". Similarly in Sir Muhammad Iqbal's *Secrets of the Self*, where he says that love is "assimilation". But the Christian would say that love is self-imparting not a seeking of union or of satisfaction. The form which the reciprocated love of man for God would take would be man's self-dedication; not man's seeking of satisfaction for himself in union, but his self-giving in response to a love which certainly draws him, but does so by the paradoxical means of separating man into an individual, willing and responsible moral being. It is, as it were, as if God sent out from Himself into a sphere of discipline, those who would thus be bound to Himself by the very act of love which thrust them out.

An illustration is thinkable on the lines of the home where a child may remain in a state of passive acceptance of a love which pervades the whole home, and a will, say of a father or a mother, which is immanent throughout the whole life of the home. So long as the child does not wake to a sense of his own responsibility he may cling to the notion of an utterly unbroken unity and be content, so that his negative calm may not be disturbed, to have his personality merged in the stronger personality which rules the home, without making any truly affirmative response. The wise parent, however, will see the need for the child's development of moral individuality, and the more loving he is and the less selfish, he will encourage this freedom. Thus indeed God acts. He assumes a transcendent relationship in an act of love, giving what is His original inalienable freedom, in some measure, to His creation. In this there is the possibility of a movement of willed return on man's part, to the love which draws while it sends man out to find his moral individuality; and thus a reciprocal relation becomes possible which is not possible under any theory which exaggerates immanence.

God's self-giving in Fatherhood and man's response in perfect sonship, a perfect circle of fellowship, was completed once, when Jesus of Nazareth, in the hallowed deeps of His spirit, with full accord and unclouded assurance, from a heart untainted by sin, communed with His Father.

But when we come to think of the possibility of the response of other men, we are well-aware that sin has raised a barrier, and that it can only be by an experience of forgiveness that we may become at one with God. What came to Christ without mediation can come to

us only by His mediation. For what can man do himself to bridge the gulf between himself and God? If he repents, will all be set right then? What can my repentance do? If I have quarrelled with a friend and then, becoming aware of the wrong I have done him, repent even with tears, he may give me his hand and accept my apology but if he does so coldly and unconcernedly, I cannot be sure that he has given me his heart again; indeed I may even feel that he had never really given me his heart. He may have been very magnanimous and I can appreciate that, but I want to know whether he is again my friend. Did my former quarrel touch him to the quick or was he slightly amused that I should take the matter so seriously? Is he even now perhaps saying to himself, "What is this tedious fellow making all this bother about?" I can think of another way in which an injured friend might meet my apology, "My friendship for you was such, and you wounded me so deeply that now I hardly know how I *can* forgive you." I cannot help feeling that there would be more hope of the ultimate renewal of my friendship with that man, though the way might be hard for him and for me. Out of an estrangement which was a real agony for both of us a new love might be born which would be far stronger than the old.

Are we therefore wrong in thinking that the One who has been offended by our sin must pass through an experience in some sense the equivalent and counterpart of the bitter experience which is ours when we seek a reconciliation? If it is easy for God to forgive, as our Muslim friend would have it, then is sin *such* a terrible thing and can God be really very troubled that we are sinners? We know it is easy for anyone to say, "I forgive," but forgiveness between those who love is an agonizing thing.

It is true I must repent and *my* heart must be laden with the pain of the offence *but there must also be a realisation of the hatefulness of the sin which caused the estrangement, on the part of the one who is offended.* We want to know how God looks at sin. If it is with an amused indulgence then sin is not so bad; so our penitence will be correspondingly devoid of pangs. It will be simply confession that we have made a mistake which, if it is not too much trouble, we would like to see rectified.

I can hear an exasperated professor saying to a student for whom he has great hopes and whose work has been disappointing, "Take away this trash, I regard your work as a personal insult." I can also hear the student mutter as he goes away crest-fallen, "I never knew he cared so much." In order that a man should be saved, it is necessary that he should have a true view of sin. It is hard to get a man to realise that his sin is against God. He may be prepared to admit that he has sinned against himself and perhaps that he has sinned against his friends or society, but does God care? When a man looks at the Cross of Christ, he has a new view of sin and he goes away saying "I never knew He cared so much."

What could be more adequate than the Cross of Christ to shew the hatefulness of sin? The pride of the Jew, the cruelty of Roman, the self-sufficiency of the priestly guardians of religion and the selfish fear which washed its hands of the crime against the innocent.

White purity is bathed in blood, innocence and kindness the victim of cruelty and pride. That is the end of sin and that sin is what *we* have cherished. When we condemn the sin that brought the sinless to the Cross we condemn ourselves. What can shake man from his immoral complacency? If the Cross of Christ cannot, then nothing can. Remember how Robert Louis Stevenson prayed for some piercing sin to stab us broad awake. Here is the piercing sin to stab all mankind awake if man will but look with eyes of faith, at Him "Whom God publicly set forth dying a bloody death, as one having reconciling power through men's faith in Him, with a view to conferring a righteousness of His own, through the overlooking of past sins in the forbearance of God, with a view, I say, to conferring his righteousness at this very moment, and to his being righteous and at the same time declaring righteous him who founds on faith in Jesus." (*Rom. iii. 25*)

When we are asked what was the need of this agony, "Could not God simply declare that a man was forgiven as in Islam?" we ask in reply "Would the sinner turn from his wickedness if he simply thought God was good-natured and easy-going?" The low moral ideal in Islam is in all probability due just to that very notion that if God will, He will forgive and if not, well it cannot be helped and we must just abide it. The message of the Cross is that God's forgiveness is determined by a Heart acutely alive to the evil of sin. Only such forgiveness can save. Sin caused God's heart to break and he shewed his broken heart on Calvary, so that he might break these stubborn hearts of ours and fold us into the comfort of His love.

J. W. S.

Evangelism by Literature.

Dr. Zwemer writes in a foreword to the *News Letter* of the American Christian Literature Society for Moslems:—

TODAY in every Moslem land the Battle of the Books is on. Every Christian colporteur is a captain in the fight. Every bookshop is a battlefield; every tract a missile of truth against error. Christian literature is the hammer of God, more powerful than that of Charles Martel at Tours. Our Society is polyglot and has captured new Moslem languages again this year for the old Gospel message, in attractive dress for both young and old. Think of the ever-increasing circulation of such books in Persia, Arabia, Moslem India, and Egypt! Holy places which less than twenty years ago, could be visited only in stealth by Christian workers now receive the Word openly—among them Kabul, Kerbela, Nejf, Qum, Riadh, Hail, and even Taif, the near neighbour of Mecca.

The more literacy takes the place of illiteracy, as is the case in Turkey, Egypt and India, the more important is the production and circulation of clean, Christian literature for all classes. If the Government schools create a reading public, Christian missions must produce books for them to read. We have witnessed large personal gifts for education and for medicine, who will make a *large* gift for literature? One envies people of wealth this extraordinary opportunity. One drop of ink can make a million think. Mohanmed said, "The ink of the scholar is more sacred than the blood of the martyr." The Apostles began the battle of the books. It will not end until the Word of God rides triumphant in Armageddon, and all that is untrue and unholy in life and literature is forever banished by His glory. He is saying to us to day, "*What thou seest, write in a book and send it. . . .*" The printed page is the most economical and most effective of all present-day missionary agencies. *Will you send it forth.*"

REPORT OF THE SOCIETY.

It should bring a feeling of thankfulness that we have been so used for the upbuilding of God's Kingdom abroad, a greater realization of our responsibility for the millions of our brethren who are undernourished spiritually, and a strengthened determination to enter more fully into our opportunity for holding up our Lord Jesus throughout our widespread field. Let us see what we have been doing in the several areas.

India, the largest centre of Moslem population, has naturally received a large portion of our benevolence. There is no lessening of the demand for Christian literature in this land. *The great intellectual ferment in the minds of the educated, the gradual increase of literacy and the growth of the feeling of responsibility among missionary workers in the Moslem-Christian problem—all tend to bring India to the fore in our thought and prayer.* While it is a pleasure to work with the well-organized Committee that directs the printing of Christian Literature for the Moslems of India, Burma and Ceylon, yet it is staggering to see their authorization for tracts in their ten or twelve languages, compared with our ability to meet but a fraction of their appeal for aid. This year about half of our grants have gone to India and we have not reached their itemized request sent out in 1933. Your money is being spent in general for small tracts, strictly evangelistic, and definitely written to awaken thought in the Moslem mind. You may be interested to note in the languages of these tracts, how widely we touch the life of this great land. In their last report we see the following: Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Oriya, Pushtu, Telugu and Urdu.

Egypt. The Egyptian Advisory Committee which supervises the distribution of our grants for printing the Arabic books and tracts which themselves and in translations have figured so largely in the literature work of the various missionary societies has continued to

receive a large share of our gifts. In letters sent to us in the past year they tell of the books and tracts, approved by us, which have been printed by the Nile Mission Press and are now being circulated throughout the Arabic-speaking world. Recalling the great value of our own heritage from the past we are hopeful that such books as "*Joel, a Boy of Galilee*," "*Abdullah*," and tracts like "*Why I believe*," will serve their purpose in revealing the work of the Spirit in the lives of present-day Orientals. In spite of the present unrest in Egypt, we have not heard of any serious objection to the printing and circulation of our literature.

Malaya. We are pleased to receive an acknowledgment of a gift sent for the printing of Dr. Shellabear's "Verses on the Loving Prophet" in Romanized Malay. Our correspondent says—"Our Malays here in Sumatra are inordinately fond of verses. Most of them are afraid to buy our Gospel portions. Only occasionally is one brave enough to buy a copy of the New Testament. But they are willing to read the Gospel message if it is presented in the form of verses and we are hopeful that the second edition will sell as well as did the first."

Turkey. We were sorry to learn that the Publishing Department of the American Board had not been able to use a grant of \$200 sent to aid in publishing in Modern Turkish a "Life of the Lord Jesus Christ," written by missionaries on the field with a special appeal to the Moslem of the Near East. It seems that some opposition from the Government made it unwise at this time to proceed with its printing.

Persia. A year ago we noted that the Persia Committee was awaiting our action on their request for aid in printing a series of little booklets on the Life of Christ with coloured pictures. During the past year we were able to send them the money needed for this purpose and we have received samples of these attractive little tracts which are being sold for a cent a copy. A recent letter says, "The illustrated tracts are very popular and one of our converts from Islam was telling me the other day what an appeal they have made to his and other Iranian children. The edition numbered 30,000 and the several titles were as follows:—The Birth of Christ; Three Parables of Christ; The Last Supper; The Denial of Peter; The Crucifixion; The Resurrection. This series should be of prime importance in our work for children and in making clear the life of our Lord to the semi-literate, for whom we have too little Christian literature."

A NEW APPROACH TO MOSLEMS.

We learn from Egypt that the old controversial type of book has been replaced by a newer type which seeks to meet the difficulties of the Moslem without letting him know that the book is meant for him as a Moslem. The most significant advance has been made in the New Testament Commentaries for Moslems, the latter volumes of which, having been written by an Egyptian pastor, have a general

power of appeal which the earlier volumes had not. Even more recently, a new form of apologetic has been introduced in the form of a Christian novel, written by Mr. J. E. Kinnear. The story is meant to present a contrast between the ideals and practices of a Christian and a Moslem young man. Some of the claims of Christianity are introduced into the dialogue portion.

THREE GIFTS FOR LITERATURE IN 1935.

The Secretary for India, Rev. B. M. Mow writes:—

“Many will be wondering how it has been with the C.L.M.C. in 1935, and with the A.C.L.S.M., on whose concern and generosity we lean so heavily in our effort to produce and sell literature for Muslims cheaply. In 1934 hard times had descended cruelly upon the A.C.L.S.M., and they were able to give only 100 dollars. With this in mind we have had three pleasant surprises in 1935, the first in April, when a draft for \$400 came; surely that was all that could be expected. Then in June came \$250. And lastly, on Dec. 35th (sic) another \$250 arrived. They had done it again! May the Lord reward them.

The money is badly needed, of course. It comes to about Rs. 2,400. There is a longish waiting list of applications approved, and it has been our effort to assign the money to the most urgent of these, many of which are already printed. Rs. 952 are apportioned to six Urdu leaflets, and Rs. 1,235 to twenty others. Rs. 1,127 of the latter has been paid out, together with Rs. 3,151 of older grant money. Thirty-six tracts have received grants since October of 1934. Don't forget to buy and distribute these tracts!”

PRAYER AND PRAISE.

LET US PRAISE God for the greater interest in the present day in the evangelization of Islam, especially in India.

LET US PRAY for the Literature Societies at work in various lands.

LET US PRAY that lands for which there are as yet inadequate funds for literature suitable for Muslims, China, Albania, Philipines and Mesopotamia may soon be better equipped in this respect.

LET US PRAY that the power of the Cross may become known to the people who still regard it as a stumbling block.

LET US PRAY for the Depressed Classes Conference to be held in Lucknow on April 17 and following days.

Henry Martyn School of Islamics, Lahore.

Extension Course of Lectures at Naini Tal.

As already announced the three members of the Staff of this School are to be in Naini Tal this year to conduct a course of study in Islam from 25th May to 30th June. It is fully expected that the Methodist Hindustani Church building will be available as the centre for these lectures.

The Principal will be glad to give information regarding accommodation available; charges from Rs. 4 - a day.

Indian Students' Aid Fund.

The C.M.S. in Lahore have placed at the disposal of the School a building in which certain quarters have been furnished for the use of Indians who may come for the course of study during the period 1st October to 30th March. It is calculated that Rs. 25/- per mem. will suffice to meet board and other expenses of the average student. No charge is made for the course of lectures or for rent. Now, through the generous gift of a lady in England, the Committee offers a small scholarship to enable Indians to take advantage of these facilities, and notice in hereby given of the conditions on which scholarships will be granted:—

1. Written applications for such scholarships must be received by the Principal on or before 15th August each year and will be finally dealt with by him in consultation with the Staff.

2. Candidates should be able to give assurance that they feel called to give themselves to the work for which the School prepares its students, and that they are to be employed at the termination of the course of study.

3. All such applications must have the written support of the College, Mission, Church, Synod, etc., which undertakes to send the student.

The Committee is prepared to grant as many as three scholarships in any one year, and takes this opportunity to appeal to Christian friends in India to help them to augment the principle (which has been invested) and so extend the benefits of this Fund.

Enquiries regarding both this Scholarship and the Course at Naini Tal should be addressed to

REV. L. BEVAN JONES,
5, Egerton Road, Lahore.

NEW MEMBERS.

Rev. E. Bellingham	Hyderabad.	Deccan.
Rev. G. Garden	Hyderabad.	Deccan.
Mr. Hughesdon	Hyderabad.	Deccan.
Miss Webster	Hyderabad.	Deccan.
Mrs. E. A. Seamands	Bangalore.	Mysore State.
Rev. N. J. Le Shanna	Lal Bagh.	Lucknow.
Rev. J. R. Peacey	Calcutta.	
Rev. R. H. Bradshaw	Boulac.	Cairo.

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 Hony. Secretary:—

Rev. J. W. Sweetman,
Henry Martyn School,
5, Egerton Road,
Lahore, Panjab, India.