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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 XXV.

April, 1937.

1st April = 15th Muharram (1st mo.) 1356 A.H.

Obituary.

FRIENDS of Mrs. Amy Elizabeth Zwemer will learn with sorrow of her death, which came suddenly on January twenty-fifth in New York City.

The funeral services were held in the Third Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan, where she was interred in Pilgrim Cemetery.

A memorial service was conducted on Thursday, the twenty-eighth day of January in Miller Chapel, Princeton, New Jersey.

We send to our friend the Rev. Dr. S. M. Zwemer our deepest sympathy and the assurance of our prayers for him in his sad bereavement. Many of us remember Mrs. Zwemer as a gracious lady who dedicated her ability and the whole of her life to the service and praise of the Gospel.

Care of Enquirers and Converts.

A MEMBER of the M.M.L. writes a very interesting letter on this subject and we pass on the information it contains to the other readers of *News and Notes*. We all recognise that one of our greatest difficulties is the adequate nurture of young Christians and it would almost certainly be admitted by all who have worked among Muslims that the early instruction of enquirers is of vital importance. In our eagerness to bring these men and women to baptism it is quite possible that we may deceive ourselves as to their preparedness and unless very close personal contact is maintained with them it is extremely difficult to judge whether they are prepared or not. Satisfactory answers to a catechism are no substitute for the observation of the prospective convert's growth in grace and devotion. With these ideas in mind we commend the account of our friend's experience as follows:—

"Did I ever tell you of the experiment I have been conducting here for the last few years? Before I went on furlough in 1932, I was impressed by the fact that likely-looking Moslem enquirers did not seem to be able to win through the opposition of their society. They saw us at infrequent intervals, received some teaching and fellowship and slowly went back rather than forward. Seeing this I tried giving them hospitality for a while but that was desultory and was a policy of second best. . . . While I was at home I considered the matter carefully and came back resolved to give refuge not merely as a matter of necessity but as a most desirable and even essential factor in the creating of a real faith which would be based on regular daily Bible teaching, devotions and, as far as possible, witnessing.

"I came back then, determined to give any enquirer whom I considered sincere and worthy, the chance to get a thorough grasp of the Christian faith by being under regular instruction and in regular fellowship. At the same time I would endeavour to find for him some form of work to do so that he would not become a parasite.

"I started off with . . . a Muslim young man who had been an enquirer for two years and was getting no "furrader." A second Muslim of this district who had been an enquirer here and had been baptised elsewhere—unknown to me—arrived in a more or less destitute condition, and while we sought to place him he made No. 2, Nos. 3 and 4 were orphan boys raised by the Mission. No. 5 was the son of a very influential Muslim home in this district. No. 6 was a caste Hindu of another well-known household. No. 7 is a Muslim from the northerly end of our district and he is the present hopeful. No. 8 is another Mission orphan. Apart from these we have had other enquirers in for short periods to help them or test them and one of these is now doing well in his own district. Apart from these one Muslim convert from our district who lives in his own village comes in very regularly for fellowship. I must make it clear that these chaps are all the guests of the Mission. They do for me such odd jobs as I ask them to do, and cook for themselves.

"No. 1 showed steady growth and in spite of strong family opposition was baptised. He now goes to his home every now and then and is being more and more welcomed. He is supported by the local church and is learning watch-making in the town. He is a good lad.

"No. 2 shewed such marked desire for Bible study that I sent him off for training and he is now on our staff and promises to be a devoted, energetic worker. He will do well.

"No. 3 and No. 4. These definitely profited by the teaching and now one is in the police, living decently I hear, the other is teaching in a local Muslim school without pay.

"No. 5 simply mopped up the Gospel, theology and teaching but when approaching baptism was frightened and ran away home. Three months later he returned. He could not get away from the

teaching and the memory of verses of Scripture and the prayer-life which had been poured into him. He is baptised and living in his home . . . full of Maulvis and one Maulana. He earns his living as a quack doctor. He learned that here with me.

"No. 6 in spite of conviction could not bring himself to receive baptism and when his people threatened to disinherit him he returned home. But we know that he is restless there and we fully expect to see him make a stand—even at home.

"No. 7 is still under instruction. He seems a good lad. He is eager to learn and like most of the others did, is now beginning to feel that I am mean because I won't give him some of the extras he never had at home and thinks he might as well have here !!!

"No. 8. Of him I cannot yet speak. He is reading in Class 9 at school and seems to find the morning lesson interesting. He will be getting a background any way and he has good in him.

"The Muslim convert living at home (not No. 5) comes in occasionally and although he is not brainy he gets enough out of the lessons (and fellowship) to keep him faithful.

"The outcome of the experience related above is that I am satisfied that this method is the right one for the present and I think there should be such provision made in each district. This method keeps a man in touch with his people and keeps him from being too sheltered. Relatives and parents, etc. can always visit the people here and I take them to their own homes if possible. The enquirer must be kept busy by odd jobs, kept humble by his cooking and those same, kept progressing by study, by going out with the preachers, book-selling and the cultivation of the devotional life and, where possible, he should be put to learn a trade or something similar. He should not be pampered by getting too much in the way of clothes and bedding, etc., etc., as safeguards against the *Ma-Bap* environment he is being brought into.

"I am satisfied that intensive teaching and devotional fellowship is the only thing to strengthen these sincere enquirers so that they may stand against the opposition that arises. I only regret I did not launch out earlier.

"I think you will be interested in this and I have just recently found that others are looking for a lead and at a recent meeting of they accepted this need for intensive teaching and are proposing to make provision for such a policy. I am not saying that I have solved all the problems or that I have none. In some ways they have increased but this I know that I am getting somewhere with those enquirers whom I feel to be sincere; they are coming through and witnessing in their own district, even in their own homes. It is a distinct advance for hide-bound Bengali Muslim work!

"Now this is all leading up to the fact that I find myself unable to give to these boys all the time I would like. So I want to have one of my preachers go through the Henry Martyn School so that he will become the spiritual mentor to these enquirers. By this means

I will be better able to fulfil the purpose I have to give very regular teaching. During 1934 to 35 and part of 36 I was regular but I find myself being pushed off and so I want to train another man for this position."

[A later note. No. 6 wrote a few days ago saying he was unhappy at disowning Christ and had owned him at home before his people. He had been compelled to flee for safety to a relative].

What are Our Plans ?

(Continued from March number).

THIS does not mean that we should aim at creating a band of research students in Islamics in every congregation. It means that an intelligent grasp of the matters at issue and the attack and defence involved must be the irreducible minimum for the local church and that if this cannot be achieved by every member of the group it must be the task of some individual representing it for his brethren's sake. Specialisation means among other things, the furnishing of missionaries and evangelists with the advantages available in countries where Islam is in the majority or helping them with the accumulated experience of the people who have made themselves familiar with the problems and the best method of approach to Islam in the areas where Muslims are met in greater numbers, e.g., the Punjab or the United Provinces. It is an advantage to the worker to start his work among Muslims with the recommendation of a period spent in Muhammedan cultural centres or with a knowledge of the language of the Quran or perhaps of Persian or the present language of the Muslim intelligentsia, Urdu. Though the people to whom he goes may be backward, they will still have an almost superstitious reverence for these things, and well-spoken Urdu will secure him a welcome in many places where he would not otherwise have any point of contact.

When thinking of the position of the indigenous church in this matter, we must remember that there is a tendency in the churches to take their cue from the past in regard to the part they play in the present. The indigenous church has still great reverence for its founders. What they did, the particular tone of their witness and its direction become a sort of standard for the succeeding generations. Now it is a fact that not very much has been done in the past for Muslims in a vast number of mission areas, but rescue of the down-trodden and unprivileged and despised has been—as no doubt it ought to be—the first care of a church moved by the spirit of the Master. But if missionary societies or parent churches persistently ignore or pass over the Muslim minorities in the areas committed to their charge, can any local church be blamed if at long last it forms ideas such as these: Muslims do not need the Gospel; they are a sort of

Christian; it is hopeless to attempt the evangelisation of Muslims or else missionaries would have done it long ago. Might not a local church be justified if it argued "Our fathers in the faith never did this work. If they were not competent to do it, is it likely that we shall be successful? Let us concentrate on the community with which we have some affinities in language and from which the great bulk of our church has been won." We submit that such an argument would be very excusable and would probably carry weight in a great many church councils when the question of evangelism was brought forward. It is for the more fully equipped Christian groups whether Western or Indian to prove to the Church at large that evangelistic work among Muslims is possible, necessary and likely to be successful. *We have no right to demand a victory from infant churches when we as grown-up churches have shirked battle.*

And in this matter it is essential that the local church should not be left to its own devices. In such a task we must pool our resources. We strongly plead that here there may be no stress laid on the national origins of workers. Whether they be indigenous or overseas workers, key men should be appointed in all areas where there is a sufficient Muslim community. Indian workers will aim at a knowledge of Urdu as well as the local vernacular when that is not Urdu and English workers will also consider that it is their first duty to acquire that language. The former will need the vernacular of the area where they work in order that they may enter into fellowship with the local church. In certain cases their second language will be English as in the case of overseas missionaries, with the same object in view, only in this case they will enter into fellowship with the church through English-speaking Indians and the overseas missionaries of the area. This requirement of a second language is not that we may have linguistic experts but in order that the evangelist should be competent to preach and to teach in an acceptable tongue and, on the other hand, it is in the interests of the unification of our work, to enable the local church to keep in sympathetic touch with the work which the evangelist is doing, and to ensure that he has that fellowship without which it is impossible for him to continue his task. It is necessary for his spiritual health that he should have this fellowship.

If the desirability of the foregoing is admitted, it inevitably follows that equipment and training is an important matter. It may be that for some little time the type of work we have in mind may have to be done by overseas agents. It is devoutly to be wished that this should be but a temporary measure and that indigenous agents may be forthcoming for this important work. The writer, however, has to confess that he has not been able to find one quarter of those for whom there is work already in South India, and in this absence of Indians who can do the work, the Church will have to fall back on the overseas agent. It is with the avowed object of supplying a lack in

this direction that there is in being an Indian Students' Aid Fund for the Henry Martyn School of Islamics, by which scholarships are offered to Indian agents who are recommended by their missions for special training in Islamics. The Fund owes its origin to the vision and generosity of one donor and as yet in this special direction the different missionary societies and the various churches have not felt impelled to support a wider use of the facilities offered.

Whenever an overseas worker is appointed he should consider it his duty and privilege to prepare someone to supersede him. But how remote these things seem to be! How can they come to pass? As yet they are a dream. The ideal is an inter-mission plan, which desiderates a deeper unity. In this plan, in which *all* must join, the aim will be to cover the whole of Muslim India with men at important centres. The supply of men when not forthcoming from the areas where there is a need should be from Urdu-speaking centres as, *e.g.*, the Punjab and U.P. As far as missionaries are concerned these should be, as early as possible, trained in some area where there are Muslims in a majority, or exercising cultural influence. The areas where the greater societies have work among Muslims already must be the nurseries for the whole of their Hindustani work throughout India. In this particular work there should be greater mobility. Workers for instance might freely move between Hyderabad and the U.P. Already some measure of co-operation in respect to Hindustani work is in force by an interchange of missionaries between Calcutta and the U.P. by one of the large British societies. It would be of great advantage if the application of this principle were widened so as to affect more areas. Thus workers who might feel lonely in an area largely Hindu could be sure that they would have at some time the opportunity to go to an area where there would be others working at their task. They would in this way gather inspiration. If they spent some time in what we have called a "nursery" area they would meet there Indian agents, both men and women, whose work lies among Muslims and who would greatly contribute to the overseas worker's understanding of the task to be done. Those personal contacts would be invaluable in the long run.

The greater mobility will also make for greater unity in scattered areas, the stronger churches will be supporting the weak. Our plea is for unification rather than for specialisation because the specialisation at which we aim is not the creation of a number of pedants or pundits but the pooling of all our resources, the sharing of our acquired experience for the great end of a completely effective witness of the Church of Christ in India. Through the vision of the International Council and the National Christian Council, the Church has made it possible for the pooling of those resources to be effectual in its "clearing house" at the Henry Martyn School. The machinery is there. What use will be made of it?

It is quite possible that there may be some hesitation at

embarking on an ambitious programme with insufficient means and meanwhile we shall go on trusting to an occasional solo effort on someone's part, here or there in this vast field of India. We would be sanguine indeed if we expected the complete reorganisation of our work in a short time but there is nothing to prevent us from making what is long overdue, a complete survey of the whole field from the stand-point of Muslim need and the extent to which the church is meeting that need. *How many great Muslim cities are to-day practically untouched by direct evangelistic effort? Where are the successors of Wherry, Valpy French and Letroy? And what is the Church going to do about it?* Another question we would ask is whether all the resources we have are being used? In short our plea is for a definitely planned campaign in which the resources of all missions may be employed to the best advantage and which will bring the whole Church of India to a happy confidence in a special task done for the Lord who redeemed her. No easy and quick solution is in sight of the problems involved in what we have here outlined. But whether we contemplate a five-year or a ten-year plan, *let us have a plan and let it be an all-India plan.* Let us spy out the land and then go in and possess it.

J. W. SWEETMAN.

New Members.

Rev. R. G. Brown	New Zealand Baptist Mission	Chandpur, A. B. Ry.
Miss A. Frederick	Lal Bagh Church	Lucknow.
Miss E. M. Coad	Brahmanbaria	E. Bengal.
Miss M. A. Johnston	Victoria Hospital	Damascus, Syria.
Miss K. H. Henry	American Mission	Beyruth, Lebanese Republic.

Prayer and Praise.

LET US PRAY for a recent convert, a married man with a child that guidance may be given to his friends in trying to arrange for his future employment.

LET US PRAY for a young man in Bombay who has left Islam to follow Christ and particularly that a way may be opened for him to serve Christ in church work—his earnest desire.

LET US PRAY for the Henry Martyn School and especially that the forthcoming summer schools in Landour and Mussorie may have the blessing of God and that this valuable co-operative work may not suffer through lack of funds.

LET US PRAY for those who are just about to take up their missionary work among Muslims, workers in training and learning the language of their fields.

NOTICE.

The Editor's address from April 10th will be
Lal Tiba,
Landour,
Mussoorie,
U.P.

NOTICE.

Any notification of change of address, names of new members or remittance of subscriptions 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. 0d).

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 :—

Rev. J. W. Sweetman,
30, Mozang Road,
Lahore.



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Have We Advanced ?

SINCE we wrote the article which appeared in March and April, entitled *What are our Plans?*, a letter has come into our hands written by the Rev. Arthur French of the S.P.G. over twenty-one years ago. We reproduce it here and would request our readers to consider its bearing on the plea which we advanced.

S. P. G. HOUSE,
Byculla, Bombay.
January 27th, 1916.

FROM REV. ARTHUR FRENCH.

MY DEAR MR. GOLDSACK,

You are a member of the Lucknow Conference Continuation Committee I send you a letter from the Convener, Dr. Zwemer. From this letter you will perceive that he is in entire sympathy with a proposal I submitted to him to form an All-India Missions to Moslems League on interdenominational lines. The proposal has the approval and support of the Bishop of Calcutta, Dr. Lefroy, who was a prominent member of the Conference, and is a member of the Continuation Committee.

It is strongly felt by many of us that the position of Missions to Moslems in India is weak in the extreme, and calls for Co-operative Action. The forces are weak, scattered and out of touch with each other; we are merged in Missions working generally among Hindoos and native congregations, and there is serious danger that in a few years distinctive Missions to Moslems may even disappear. We number at present under 200 as against five thousand engaged in other sides of Mission work.

Missions in India are coming more and more under the operations of the Indian Missionary Conference which recently met at Matheran close to Bombay. The proposal is to form a Committee