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## News and Notes

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### How Not to Use the Quran.

An Urdu tract examined.

**I**NASMUCH as the Quran is the product of the 7th century A.D. and is markedly anti-Christian in places, we do not go to it for proofs of the truth of Christianity or for evidence in favour of the claims of Christ.

Such use, however, has been made in the past by Christians, and, as we shall see, on one occasion at least by a friendly Muslim.

There lies before us an eight-page tract in Urdu printed from the manuscript of "a Mullah who was an enquirer and a confessed believer in Jesus Christ as Saviour". It was probably written some time before 1918 and was referred to and used by the late Rev. E. M. Wherry in *News and Notes*, July 1918, and *The Moslem World*, July, 1919.

Its name is *Haga'iq-i-Quran*, Truths of the Quran. It was first published in Ludhiana as a tract by the C.L.S. for India, with an edition of 2,000 copies, but by 1919 had appeared in four editions with a total of 19,000 copies. In 1928 the P.R.B. Socy., Lahore, published the 6th edition, totalling 100,000 copies. Christians, Arya Samajists, and Muslims alike keep up a steady demand for it.

The Muslim author attempts, on the basis of statements in the Quran itself, to demonstrate that in reality Jesus was superior to Muhammad. He advances the following fourteen reasons:

1. The Birth of Jesus—Gabriel himself makes the announcement to Mary, and the birth is a miraculous one (19: 17 ff) No such mention is made of Muhammad's birth.

2. The excellence of Mary, the mother of Jesus—3: 37 says 'O Mary, verily hath God chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above the women of the world.' And 5: 79 says that Mary is *siddiqa*, a just or truthful woman—whereas Muhammad's mother is not so much as mentioned; while some Muslims do not agree that she was one of the "faithful."

3. Miraculous events attending the birth of Jesus—an angel comforts Mary in her distress, a stream gives her drink and a palm tree yields dates for her, 19: 24-25. No such events attended Muhammad's birth.

4. The declaration of Jesus, as an infant in the cradle, that he was a prophet to whom God had given the Book, 19: 31—Muhammad did not claim to be a prophet until advanced in years, when he was worldlywise.

5. According to the Quran Jesus was rescued (by angels) from His enemies and from death and was carried up to heaven, 4: 156—but when enemies sought to kill Muhammad he hid in a cave, then fled to Madina and took refuge with *Ansar*, helpers. What a difference!

6. Concerning the exaltation of Jesus in heaven—where he has existed in His humanity without food or drink for 2,000 years; this, too, makes Him superior to Muhammad.

7. Jesus raised the dead and exercised divine power, 3: 42. This is the sole prerogative of God—did Muhammad, or any other prophet, ever raise the dead?

8. The Quran, which declares that God is "Creator of all things," 13: 17, also says that Jesus *created* birds, 3: 43—thus He is superior to Muhammad and all the prophets.

9. He healed the blind, the deaf and lepers by His miraculous power, 3: 43—not so Muhammad; if he did, let someone prove it *from the Quran!*

10. Jesus could tell what people had been doing, eating, etc., 3: 43.

11. The Quran shows all prophets to have been sinners, but in no place is Jesus said to have sinned or repented, or been commanded to repent—Muhammad's sins are mentioned, cp. 80: 1-10, and he is commanded to repent, 47: 21.

12. Over thirteen hundred years ago Muhammad died and was buried, and his body went to dust. Christ has been alive 2,000 years in heaven. The Quran says, "The living and the dead are not equal", 35: 21; therefore Christ is greater than Muhammad.

13. Christ is to come again to conquer *Dajjal*, the anti-Christ, and to re-establish men in the faith, 4: 157—if Muhammad were the last of the prophets why should not he be raised up to do this work? Christ was the first guide and He will be the last,

14. According to the Quran Muhammad was only an apostle (7: 157) and a sinful man (47: 21, 4: 106); but the Messiah is absolutely sinless and a divine person, for, as the Quran says, God "breathed into Mary of His spirit," (21: 91).

These facts, concludes the author of the tract, are so clear that Christ's superiority over Muhammad is established. If any will not accept this truth it will be because of self-conceit and bigotry.

"May the merciful Lord heal my Muslim brothers of this disease and enlighten their eyes with the true light, Amen."

Dr. Wherry reported at the time that this tract fell like a bomb in the Muslim camp. Letters were addressed to the *Paigham-i-Sulah*, Lahore (the Urdu journal of the Ahmadis), urging a reply to it. The editor however declared that the orthodox could not make a reply; that would have to be done by the Ahmadis. As we shall see such a reply was made by Maulana Muhammad Ali in 1921.

But a still earlier rejoinder came from an utterly unexpected quarter. Within a year of its publication one who signed himself "Abdullah", of Jessore, E. Bengal sent a type-written reply to Dr. Wherry.

This "Abdullah" proceeded to show that the aforesaid tract "published by some Christian padres, is composed of a compound of ignorance and bigotry such as is seldom met with even in the writings of Christians."

In his preface he objects to the way in which the *hadith* had been ruled out of the enquiry, because the Christians themselves rely on biographies of their Prophet which were written long after His death and therefore amount to traditions.

Moreover, he stresses the fact that the Quran does not profess to be a 'biography' of Muhammad. It was for this reason that Allah gave to men further revelation such as we find in the traditions.

Then turning to a detailed examination of the 14 reasons advanced from the Quran, he says:

1. The author's first point is really the fallacious method of arguing from the silence of scripture. As well say that because Muhammad's birth is not mentioned in the Quran, therefore he wasn't born! In any case, we need to remember that an angel announced the birth of John the Baptist also.

2. Are we to understand that a man's status before God depends upon his mother? On the contrary, Abraham, "the Friend of God", was the son of idolaters! The Quranic phrase "God hath chosen thee above all the women of the world" means, according to commentators, "those of thine own time."

3. Though none are mentioned in the Quran, the Traditions have records of many prodigies attending the birth of Muhammad.

4. The assumption that because a man receives his prophetic call late in life he is therefore inferior to one who receives it in childhood, is a false one. Was Abraham for this reason inferior to Samuel, or Moses to Jeremiah? "Life is measured by deeds not years"; and so must we judge of Muhammad. But we need to remember that Jeremiah and John the Baptist were chosen *even before their birth!*

5. We thank the padre for emphasizing the fact that Jesus did not die but was taken up alive to heaven; though we reject with scorn the implication that our Prophet, because he was not so taken up is therefore inferior. Christ's work was finished (or rather was a failure) and so God took him; but had God so taken Muhammad his mission of founding the final and perfect religion could not have been accomplished. The padre's reference to the cave in which Muhammad hid omits an important particular *e.g.*, the unbroken spider's web—proof of God's care of the Prophet!

6. Other prophets were taken up to heaven and have lived there for many centuries longer than Christ *e. g.*, Moses and Elijah. These then must be superior to Christ. But our Prophet also took the "Night Journey" to heaven!

7. In making so much of Christ's raising the dead the padre definitely misleads his readers, for he fails to observe what the Quran actually says, *viz.*: that he did so *by the permission* of God, *i.e.*, by the delegated power of God. Moreover, others have done likewise *e.g.*, Elijah, Peter and Paul. On this score these, too, must be "divine".

8. Likewise in the Quran when Jesus is said to "create"—it is by the *permission* of God, *i.e.*, he had no power of his own to do so. We have previously seen that the padre argues from the silence of scripture; but here he is suppressing scripture—which is a crime!

9. As we have said, all Christ's miracles were performed "by God's leave"—this the padre omits to mention. But the padre lies when he says that Muhammad performed no miracles, *e.g.*, the splitting of the moon is mentioned in the Quran (54: 1-2). But let him read the Traditions. Christ's miracles were a sign for the people of his day, whereas the great miracle of Muhammad—the Quran—is for all people and for all time.

10. Here is another instance of the Christian's "astounding arrogance". What of Elijah's dealings with Gehazi, Peter's handling of Ananias? The fact is Muhammad foretold events, *e.g.*, the fall of Mecca, and the defeat of the Persians. Are Elijah and Peter to be accounted divine? Yet even Jesus did not know the time of the Day of Resurrection!

11. This is another argument from silence. The sins of many other people are not mentioned in the Quran; must we

therefore assume that they were sinless? Are we to consider that man to be blind of whose sight no mention is made? That Jesus was a sinner we know from his own words, "Why callest thou me good?" The demand made of Muhammad that he should ask for pardon is that he should be an example of humility to his followers.

12. In making so much of the *living* Christ the padre omits to mention that in the Tradition about Christ's return to earth it is definitely stated that he will *return to die*. If, therefore, this argument is worth anything at all, Elijah must be considered superior to Christ.

13. Again the padre omits to mention that according to the Tradition which he quotes, the true faith which Christ is to establish on his return is ISLAM, the faith which he (Christ) himself must embrace before he can obtain final salvation. This fact proves the superiority of Muhammad.

14. The padre here seeks to prove too much, for the Quran says that God breathed His spirit into Adam also. Was Adam then divine?

In closing, "Abdullah" asks permission to quote the following verse from the Quran:

"Whosoever followeth any other religion than Islam, it shall not be accepted of him, and in the next life he shall be of those that perish," 3: 79.

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Now the amusing—some may prefer to think 'amazing', fact about this vigorous rejoinder is that "Abdullah" of Jessore, was no other than the Rev. William Goldsock, of the Baptist Mission—as he himself confessed to the present writer before he left India!

(To be concluded.)

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## Notes

*Worship of the goddess Kali by a Muslim.* The Statesman of 20th August contained the story of an extraordinary incident—no less than the worship of the Hindu goddess Kali by a Muslim—ending in a law court case and the conviction of four men and a woman.

A certain Muslim, called Babu Shaikh, had been suffering from severe chest pains, and dreamed that if he worshipped Kali he would be cured. Thereupon he made an image of the goddess and commenced to worship the same in his own home; he even engaged drummers to play the requisite music.

This incensed his immediate neighbours and some others

who, on hearing of this worship in a Muslim house, forcibly entered the place and finding Babu Shaikh, abused and assaulted him and smashed the image. The man sustained a fractured arm and sued his assailants for damages. The chief of these was sentenced to four months imprisonment and was required to pay a fine of forty rupees, as were three others one being a woman.

*Hindu Marriage Bills—a correction.* Reference was made last month to the statement of Mrs. Nilima Devi to the effect that Mr. Govindlal's Bill on Polygamy was rejected by the Council of State. A member of the Council, Mr. Susil Kumar Roy Chowdhury of Calcutta, has written to the press to say that it was his Bill, not Mr. Govindlal's that suffered from the opposition of the Muslims. He wrote: "It was my "Polygamous Marriage Restraint Bill" which was opposed at the time of introduction (very unusual) by the Muslim members to a man, as my Bill applied to all communities of British India."

*Inland China.* A missionary of the C.I.M., who with his wife recently studied at the Henry Martyn School in Lahore, writes: "The Japanese bombed and destroyed practically all the leading universities in China as these were located near the coast." Under orders of the Chinese Government there was a great trek of the faculties, students and some equipment to the remote interior. Thus "places which for centuries have been entirely satisfied with their gross ignorance, superstitions and uncouthness were suddenly awakened to find thousands of cultured professors, teachers and students, etc., in their midst. That bombing has "accomplished in one year what Chinese legislation could not have effected in one hundred."

These missionaries noticing hundreds of students roaming the streets with nothing to do, immediately put up a notice to the effect that they were starting Bible classes in English. On the very first day there were twenty registrations and the number has been steadily increasing. Some of these are Muslims. The missionaries have six to seven classes a day! The centre of class-work has been the English Bible. It has been a joy to see some of these young men give their hearts to Christ. They ask for our prayers.

#### SPECIAL OFFER!

Dr. Titus, Budaun, U.P. offers the following back numbers of *The Moslem World* free, on payment of postage: 1911, Jan—1912, Feb. Jul. Oct—1913, Jul. Oct—1914, Apr—1915, Oct—1916, Jan. Apr—1917, Jul. Oct—1919, Apr. Jul. Oct—1920, Jan—1922, Jan. Oct—1923, Apr—1924, Apr—1925, Apr—1926, Oct—1927, Jul—1928, Jan—1929, Jul—1932, Oct—1935, Apr. Also a bound copy of Vol. I (1911), Rs. Six plus postage.

### Book Review.

*Sufism, its Saints and Shrines*—an Introduction to the Study of Sufism with special reference to India. John A. Subhan, B.A., B.D., Lecturer in The Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies. Lucknow Publishing House: viii + 412 pages, with two illustrations. Price, Rs. 4-0-0.

This book—a review of which in our pages is much overdue—is the product of long and painstaking study, during the course of which Arabic, Persian, Urdu and English sources have been laid under contribution. Moreover, the author has a natural sympathy for, and an intimate acquaintance with, this mode of the religious life because he was formerly a Muslim and, for a time, himself a member of the well-known Qadiri order of darweshes.

One can confidently affirm that, as concerns India, we have here the first work of its kind in the English language, for Mr. Subhan has gathered together into a compact volume elements hitherto only to be found in the separate works of numerous scholars, in one or other of the languages mentioned above. True, the whole comprises a presentation of the facts rather than an attempt to evaluate the phenomena; nevertheless the book is packed with most interesting material, whether viewed as history or as the detailed delineation of the practices of those who follow the Mystic Way. As such this informative study is assured of a cordial welcome from all who sincerely desire to understand the religious outlook of the Muslim masses.

The book opens with a graphic account of customary methods in the practice of *dhikr*, and though we might be disposed to characterise these as barbarous, there is created in the mind of the reader a desire to have the bases of these astonishing ceremonies explained. This Mr. Subhan proceeds to do, giving us in the first three chapters a brief history of Sufism, followed by another three on Sufi traditions and practices. The next two chapters tell of how Sufism came into India, and there is more than a hint of indebtedness to Hindu thought. The remaining twelve chapters deal with the four major Religious Orders—their origin, tenets, special features and sub-divisions; all of which have their representation in India. The book has this additional value that appended to it are a list of the principal saints revered in India, as well as a table of the dates of their *'urs*, or anniversary. Finally, there is a very full index of 36 pages.

We would urge all missionaries who are anxious to know the inner thoughts of devout Muslims to acquire a copy of this book.

L. BEVAN JONES,

**NOTICE.**

The Annual Meeting of the Committee of Management of the Henry Martyn School has been fixed to be held at the Y.M.C.A., New Delhi, on Wednesday, 15th November.

In accordance with the usual custom, the meeting of the Christian Literature for Muslims Committee, (N.C.C.) is being called for that day, 8-30—10-0-0 a.m.

Will those responsible for the literature programmes in the various language areas kindly note that their applications for grants-in-aid should be sent in to Dr. M. T. Titus, Budaun, U.P., by 15th October, at latest.

**For Praise and Prayer.**

**PRAISE** for the open door among students in the interior of China—pray that the missionaries may be greatly used of God.

**PRAISE** for the fuller use made this year of the Henry Martyn School at Landour—pray that the Committee may have the guidance and blessing of God at its meeting in November.

**LET US GIVE THANKS** for the valuable service in past years of the Literature for Muslims Committee in India—pray that continued financial support may be forthcoming.

**PRAY** that God's work in Muslim lands may be maintained in these days of war.

**NEW MEMBERS.**

Miss E. M. Hewitt,	A.U.P. Miss.	Campbellpur, Punjab.
Miss M. T. Peterson	do	Rawalpindi, Punjab.
Miss H. V. Weede,	do	Zafarwal, Punjab.

**PLEASE NOTE.**

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. 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 Acting Honorary Secretary :—

Rev. L. Bevan Jones,  
Lal Tiba,  
Landour, Mussoorie,  
N. India.