

Confidential.

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News and Notes

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Is A New Day Dawning?

RECENTLY in Bengal an educated Muslim gentleman made of a lady missionary the amazing request: "Will you please baptize my daughter? She wishes to become a Christian." Subsequent conversation revealed the fact that this man is the headmaster of a Boys' High School. Years ago he had studied in England, where he took his M.A., in addition to other degrees. While there he went to various churches and cathedrals and came in contact with leading churchmen. Returning to Bengal he lived for many years near a B. M. S. preacher and his family, and Lyla, his daughter, went with the Christian children to Sunday School, and mixed freely with them in their home.

The time had now come for her to perform the customary Muslim prayers five times a day, as she had passed her twelfth birthday, but she refused to do so, saying that she was a Christian, and would never be a Muhammadan. It was this that led to her father's request. He said he did not wish his children to grow up without any religion; rather than that, he would let his daughter be a Christian, and had no objection to her being so, provided she did not play round with her faith.

Next morning was Sunday, and the man's younger brother brought Lyla, her two sisters and one brother to church, and at the close of the service the missionary was given two letters:—The first, from Lyla to her father:

"Father, for a long time I have been attracted by Jesus Christ. From what I have read of Him and the Christian faith in books, and from what I have heard from you and Bela (the Christian preacher's daughter) and the others, it seems to me that the Christian religion is the best religion, and so to-day I have embraced the faith of Jesus

Christ. I do hope that you will agree to this, and give me your blessing that I may have peace in my new religion. Your affectionate Lyla." Written in English and signed at the foot of the page were the words: "My dearest Lyla, I give my fullest consent to your embracing Christianity and I wish you all happiness."

The father's letter to us was: "Dear Sir,—My oldest daughter, Lyla, is approaching you to be baptized as a Christian. Kindly accept her into your fold and baptize her to-day. I shall regularly send her to the Sunday services at the local church."

Needless to say, we were amazed, for never have we heard of a Bengali girl of a Muhammadan home having the courage to take such a stand, and being backed up in it by her parents! A man in his position could have no possible "axe to grind," for as he himself said, he intended her to have the best education he could give her, and her being a Christian would make no difference at all in the attitude of her family to her. So we took it as it appeared to us—a wonderful gift from God—an opportunity with who knows what possibilities!

Thereafter every day for about a month Lyla (and one or more of her little brothers and sisters) came along to us for instruction, joined in the Sunday School and church services, and generally showed herself to be a girl of no mean intelligence, keen and quick, and apparently much older than her years. When she applied to the church for baptism and church membership, the folk who interviewed her could find no obstacle to her confession of her faith, and on Sunday morning, November 6th, she passed through the waters of baptism to her new life. Her uncle, her big brother, and the two little sisters were present, apparently deeply interested in the ceremony. She attends the Government High School, so knows those of our girls who go there every day, and is very happy in their fellowship.

Perhaps the most beautiful part of the story is only just suggested in her letter to her father—"what I heard from Bela." Truly, a little child shall lead them. Bela is the daughter of that Christian preacher, with whom Lyla played from the time she was four. And because of Bela, Lyla has made the Great Discovery for herself.

(From *Our Foreign Field* of the Australian Baptist Foreign Mission).

**"My Word shall accomplish that which
I please."**

(Contributed).

ONE living example of the truth of this promise is Emanuel; formerly Ahmed Ali; who heard the Word and in whose heart the Holy Spirit did His work of grace. Emanuel is a perfume maker, working on a small scale and selling his perfumes on a

commission basis to various drugstores and others. He had long been seeking the Truth, and became convinced that that Truth was to be found only in the Lord Jesus Christ. To make a long story short, in January he made an open confession of his faith in Christ, following Him in baptism and giving a clear-cut testimony of the change in his life. And like Andrew "who findeth his own brother Simon—and brought him to Jesus," Emanuel came back several days later bringing his cousin, who also wanted to become a Christian. The cousin had said to him, "Why didn't you tell me you were going to become a Christian? Then we could have been baptized at the same time."—The cousin needs more instruction, however, before we can feel free to baptize him. We commend these two to your prayers—Emanuel that he may grow in his knowledge of Christ and be His true witness, and the cousin, that he may have a personal experience of what it means to be saved.

There are a number of Turkish Muslims here in Bombay—not from Turkey, but from Chinese Turkestan, away across the mountains the other side of Tibet. A few weeks ago a friend, who was one of the last three missionaries to leave that country after all the others had been expelled and all the Christians thrown into prison by the Communist government, visited us on his way home to Sweden. We took him to see some of these Turkish Muslims, who were overjoyed at meeting one who could speak their mother-tongue. Last week when we went to visit some of them again we found one old man quite ill and weak from dysentery. Some years ago he went on pilgrimage from Turkestan to Mecca, taking his wife and children with him. Practically all their money was stolen on the journey, and the old man left his family behind and came on to India alone, hoping to earn enough money here to enable him to send for them later on. He is still alone. Now he was ill, and too poor to go to a doctor, and he had no one to help him to gain entrance into a charitable hospital. We were able to make arrangements for him to be accepted as a patient in one of Bombay's best charity hospitals, and in a few days he was well on the road to convalescence. He is pitifully grateful for the help we were able to give him, and cannot express his thanks in words. We feel that this was a God-given opportunity for us to get to know these Turks better, and we are confident that through the help extended to this old man the way has been made easier to bring the Gospel to the others of his brethren. We have received Gospels all the way from Cairo in Kashgari Turkish, the language these people know. Pray for this little nucleus of Muslims from a far country. They are far from their heavenly Home, as well as from their earthly one, but the Holy Spirit is able to convict them and bring them back to the Father's House.

We have begun an intensive tract campaign in the city. Our Indian pastor, Mr. Solomon Massey, has written a tract in Urdu on "Signs of the resurrection according to the Gospel", and we have had

15,000 printed (by a Muslim press!) for free distribution. The other day soon after a number of the tracts, on which we have our address printed, had been distributed, two young Muslims appeared with copies of the tract in their hands, and said: "You say in this paper that salvation is through Jesus Christ alone. Please explain this to us." What a joy it is to point seeking souls to Jesus. Pray for these two young men. And pray that as these tracts go into the hands of Muslims all over this great city, the Word of God may penetrate the minds and hearts of those who read, and that there may be many who will seek Him, who has said: "Seek and ye shall find." Pray, too, that means may be supplied for the printing of other tracts for free distribution. We want to work out a series of such tracts on progressive subjects, as we feel that this is a very fruitful means of presenting the Gospel to large numbers of people whom we cannot reach personally.

The other day our door-bell was rung by a young Arab who professed to be selling neckties. However, without even making a pretence of displaying his wares, he immediately opened a conversation on religion. He was invited in and we spent some time talking about Jesus and the way of Salvation. When he left he carried with him a Gospel of John, which he promised to read before his next visit.—He said, "No Muslims ever become Christians, do they"—we were glad to be able to tell him that Muslims do become Christians; many of them—and to invite him to attend the next meeting of the Hindustani Christian Anjuman, a gathering of Christians who speak Hindustani and most of whom have been converted to Christ from Islam. While in Lucknow we organised a small group of converted Muslims to meet for prayer and Bible study two or three times a week. We felt the need of such a gathering, in order to encourage those who had already taken their stand for Christ and give them the fellowship of others of their number who were now fellow-believers, as well as to have a united witness to Muslims and others that these people do become Christians.—We were glad to find such a group already organized here in Bombay. They come from various churches and denominations and meet once a month for prayer and testimony.—We trust you will remember the young Arab in your prayers; he returned a few days later with a broad smile on his face, and said he had read the Gospel and now wanted further instruction about Christ.

Notes.

Mulla and Maulawi.—One is frequently asked to differentiate between a *Mulla* and a *Maulawi*. Both terms properly denote a learned doctor of Islamic law, but in India the former is popularly used to indicate the more conservative type of religious leader. An Indian Muslim author has recently ventured on a definition: "*Mulla* in reality is a *Maulawi* of a small group of the community, whose parasitic activities do not extend beyond the walls of his village or small town, unlike the *Maulawi* who

prefers to live in big towns. But these *Mullas* and *Maulawis* have the same plan of work. Their activities, besides leading the prayers of the congregation, comprise mainly the creation of sects and promulgation of schismatic tendencies among ignorant believers. A *Maulawi* or *Mulla* of a particular sect is always fanning the flames of hatred against other sects He lives by the principle of divide and rule in the community The *Maulawi* of big towns indulges in politics as well. Here his field of activities includes public platform and cheap newspapers, besides the usual mosque *minbar* (pulpit). Being very deficient in his general education . . . he does not devise any means of redemption for his fellow-beings . . . and gives no thought to their emancipation from ignorance and evil practices . . . How much the community has advanced in religious knowledge through the activities of *Maulawis* and *Mullas* can be easily judged from the widely known ignorance of grown-up Muslims about religion and the growing indifference of Muslim youths towards their religious education.

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Madh-e-Sahaba and *Tabarra*.—These terms have been much used of late in the press in connection with the Sunni-Shia dispute in the Lucknow district. It has been a very long-standing practice of the Shias, in places like Lucknow where they predominate, to curse the name and memory of the first three Khalifas, Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman; contending that they were usurpers and that the place of Khalifa should rightly have been given to Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law. Their denunciation is termed *tabarra*. The Sunnis, in such localities, have in recent years retorted by reciting *Madh-e-Sahaba*, or "Praise of the Companions," *i.e.*, of Muhammad, eulogising the very Khalifas whom the Shias abuse. It is significant that where Sunnis are in the majority neither form of recitation is indulged in.

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Sir Zafrullah Khan—*The Light*, Lahore, takes to task the Hon'ble Sir Zafrullah, now Law Member to the Government of India—a Qadiani—for suggesting that the Lahore section of the Ahmadis came into existence through a revolt against the Khalifa of Qadian. But, says the *Light*, it was the denial, by the present Khalifa, of the *fundamental* principle that "all Muslims who recite the *Kalima* are Muslims" which brought about the split; for he excommunicated all Muslims who would not accept the mission of his father, the founder of the sect. That was "a pill too bitter to swallow."

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Miss Jinnah's marriage to a Christian.—Much consternation was caused among Indian Muslims, at the time, by the marriage of Miss Jinnah ("whose father is the uncrowned king of the Muslims of India") to a Christian in Bombay. It was considered by one correspondent to be "illegal and invalid according to the sanction of the Quranic code, which categorically forbids inter-marriage between a Muslim girl and a non-Muslim man." "Although the consent and capacity of a Muslim girl, who is adult and sane, is an essential to the validity of a contract of marriage entered into on her behalf, yet it does not give her the freedom to go behind the prohibited degrees marked by the Quranic injunction."

The editor of *The Light* pointed out, however, that the marriage took place against Mr. Jinnah's wishes and that "he did everything he could to prevent it. But he could not help it. *The law of the land* gives every adult girl the right to marry whomsoever she likes."

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BOOK REVIEWS.

- (1) *What satisfies Human Instinct—Islam or Christianity?* Published by Christian Knowledge Society, Lahore. Obtainable from P.R.B.S., Anarkali, Lahore, pp. 248. Price—Eight annas.
- (2) *Universality of Christianity.* P.R.B.S., Anarkali, Lahore, pp. 222. Price—Eight annas.
- (3) *Was Jesus sent to the Lost Sheep of Israel only?* P.R.B.S., Anarkali, Lahore, pp. 123. Price—Five annas

Here are three additions from the versatile author, Rev. Barakat Ullah, M.A., to his numerous writings which have already enriched our Christian literature in Urdu. He writes in a fascinating style which at once grips the imagination of the reader and compels attention. His arguments at the same time are convincing and supported by numerous quotations from authorities, both modern and ancient.

The first is an original contribution as far as Urdu is concerned, inasmuch as no one has yet attempted to write on this subject for Urdu readers. Sir Syed Ahmad in the 19th century asserted, perhaps, for the first time, that Islam is a "natural" religion. The author points out, how that Muslims, ignorant of the fact that the significance of the term "nature" has since then gone through a change, so that its old meaning no longer holds true, continue to use it in its old sense and persist in claiming it to be the distinctive feature of their religion.

The author, however, by taking into consideration the results of the study of modern psychology, shows that it is Christianity and not Islam that satisfies human instincts and ennobles human nature. Mere mention of the headings of the chapters will indicate the scope covered by this valuable book. These are: (1) The Characteristics of Instincts, (2) The Instinct of Fear, (3) The Sexual Instinct, (4) The Parental Instincts, (5) The Pugnacious Instinct, (6) The Instinct of Curiosity, (7) The Herd Instinct, (8) The Instincts of self-assertion and self-debasement, (9) The Acquisitive Instinct.

The author says, that in order to be fair to the Muslims he has quoted such authorities on psychology as are not Christians, and for this reason has based his arguments on the works of Prof. McDougal. These arguments are further supported by quotations from Muslim periodicals and other Islamic literature. To Chapter 9, the author has added a supplement on "Communism and Christianity,"[†] which has further increased the value of the book. The book, I am sure, will prove itself to be of great value to thoughtful Muslim readers as well as Christians.

The second book throws light on the subject from various angles. Though there already exist a few other small books on this subject in Urdu, yet they either treat it in comparison with Islam or deal with it in a very cursory manner. This book on the other hand discusses the subject on the merits of Christianity itself, in four separate sections, covering several chapters.

The first section is on the characteristics of a universal religion, the second demonstrates the universality of the teachings of Christianity in their application; the third presents Jesus Christ as the Perfect Example for all mankind, the last is on "Christ, the Saviour of the World". Many side issues, such as, the practicability of Christian teaching and its originality,

[†] This is also obtainable in a separate booklet form from P.R.B.S., Anarkali, Lahore, for one anna.

the historicity of the Christ of the Gospels, His temptations, and sinlessness, etc., are raised in the course of discussion and dealt with.

The third book meets a common objection against the universality of Christianity, based on Mathew 15: 24 and 10: 5-7.

Arguing from these texts opponents of Christianity have often tried to prove that Christ's Mission was limited to Israelites only, and that He never meant His religion to be for all mankind. Several attempts have been made in the past to meet this argument, resulting in production of a number of booklets, and these may be taken to be decisive replies to it. Rev. Barakat Ullah, however, presents his reader with an exhaustive study through an exposition of the texts themselves, and has given a much fuller reply to Muslim arguments.

J. A. SUBHAN.

THE WILD RUE, A STUDY OF MUHAMMADAN MAGIC AND FOLKLORE IN IRAN, by Bess Allen Donaldson, London, Luzac and Co., 1938. pp. ix-216. 10sh. 6d.

If anyone, whether a student of Islam or not, wishes to peruse a fascinating book, replete with the vagaries of unadulterated human-nature, let him dip into this recent human-nature document from Iran. Every chapter is brimful of facts and incidents that make you laugh, or weep; that fill you with amazement or despair. It is full of the thing for which Fraser's *Golden Bough* is famous, and it reminds one of the chapters on magic in Herklots', *Islam in India*. One thing certain, *The Wild Rue* is not dull.

It whets one's appetite just to read the table of Contents. Here is the bill of fare (some of it):—The Evil Eye; Practices at Child-birth; The Jinn; Love and Marriage; Death, Burial, and Resurrection; Seasons and Weather; Oaths, Curses and Blessings; The Koran; Snakes, Scorpions, and Insects; Dreams and Sleep; Nails, Hair, and Teeth; Divination and Exorcism; and there is plenty more of the same kind.

The writer save, what we all know, that of course this story of magic and folklore in Iran largely "represents the old life, with its fears and superstitions, which, happily, are now *beginning* to pass away." However, it is well to emphasize that word "*beginning*," for while the present ruler of Iran has already brought about "tremendous changes in laws and customs of the country, and while some of these measures have operated directly against the superstitious practices and outworn ideas that have prevailed for generations," yet we may well believe that the great masses of the people of Iran, and of Muslim countries generally, hold much of what is here written as vital to their daily life.

The value of such a study for the missionary in India, for instance, is, that by acquainting himself with this amazing outlay of superstitious knowledge and belief, he can the more readily understand and appreciate the "strange" doings of the vast majority of his Muslim neighbours. . . . the 90 per cent who are illiterate. This book because of its more extensive treatment of the subject than any other with which I am familiar, unless it be Dr. Zwemer's *Animism in Islam*, should be in the library of everyone who wishes to achieve sympathetic understanding of the more intimate workings of popular Islam. The book is beautifully printed, and is amply illustrated with six full page illustrations.

The author has for all of twenty-five years been a missionary in Iran, and now with her husband, the Rev. D. M. Donaldson, Ph.D., resides in Meshed, where they are connected with the American Presbyterian Mission.

MURRAY T. TITUS.

FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER.

- PRAISE** for a young convert, recently baptized, who having long been inclined to Christianity was led to final decision after reading *Christianity explained to Muslims*.
- PRAISE** for the school girl who boldly declared her faith in Christ—pray that she may now share with others her great discovery.
- PRAY** for the enquirers and converts in Bombay, that they may prove to be the first-fruits of many more.

NEW MEMBERS.

Rev. Gustaf Westmo,	Swed. Miss.	Bombay.
Miss Ethel E. Ward,	F.M.M. Nor. Amer.	Digres, Berar.
Rev. A. G. MacLeod,	Eng. Pres. Miss.	Rajshahi, Bengal.
Miss L. Wilkinson,	W.U.M.S.	Jhansi.

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. 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:—

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

