

Missionaries to Muslims League.

NEWS AND NOTES, SERIES III, No. 12. April 1915.

NOTES.

We recently had occasion to ask an educated convert from Hinduism who works partly among Muslims, whether he has found any particular method of approach helpful. For answer he described a recent railway carriage conversation with a learned Muhammadan acquaintance. His starting point was the name *Muslim*. He said that he wished he himself might be a true Muslim, which statement, from an ex-Hindu and a Christian, proved a surprise. He continued by asking the question, "What constitutes a man a true Muslim?" The reply was, "Entire resignation to the will of God." Then this conversation ensued:—"Have you ever known anyone entirely resigned to the will of God?"

"No, it is an ideal only to which we aspire."

"Did Muhammad himself wholly achieve the ideal?"

"No, he did not profess to have done so entirely."

"Then, if he did not entirely succeed, himself, how can he show us the way?"

"Why, I don't know."

"My friend, I am a Christian Muslim because I hold Christ to be the only true *Muslim* Who has ever lived—the only One, that is, Who lived His whole life in absolute obedience to the will of God. To Him, then, I look to teach me the way, and to give me the power, to do the will of God, because He knew it to the full and performed it to the uttermost. My great ambition is to be, like Him, a true *Muslim*, and I ask you to consider whether, if such is your ambition also, you can do better than to expose yourself utterly to the teaching and life of Christ?"



Just as he was leaving India for his short furlough in England, referred to in the last *New and Notes*, Rev. H. J. Smith of Aurangabad sent us this letter for publication:—

"Will you kindly announce in *News and Notes*, that, as I am going on furlough in a few days, D.V., the Urdu tracts for Musalmans which I have been issuing the last few years, and which have been subscribed for by over 20 missionaries in India and Burma, will be issued in my absence by the Rev. G. E. Brown, M.A., C.M.S., Hyderabad, Deccan. A supply of the last four numbers (21—24) can however still be obtained from Miss L. Wood, C.M.S., Aurangabad. The price is still the same, Rs. 4 per 1,000 carriage forward, or 8 annas per 100 post free."

The Hablul Matin of Calcutta recently referred to the rumour that the Kaiser has become a Muslim in deprecatory and somewhat sarcastic terms. We quote in part :—

“ A silly rumour about the conversion of the German Emperor to the Islamic religion has been spread all over the Islamic countries. We are certain that it has imposed upon very few of the Moslems, even in Turkey. In India, it has provoked a good deal of mirth among our brethren in faith. The Kaiser has secured the Subriquet of Haji Mohamed William among some people. Our readers will, perhaps, remember that we alluded to this fact before as a comic interlude in the grim tragedy of the war. But it seems that our contemporary at Allahabad has been somewhat perturbed on account of this foolish canard.

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“ We can assure the *Pioneer* that not a single Moslem in India, with the exception, perhaps, of a few idiots or imbeciles, puts faith in the Islamic professions of the Kaiser. If the German secret service agents had started the rumour, they had done their master the greatest injury. For the silly nonsense had made him ridiculous in the Islamic world. In India, some have taken serious offence at this irreverent reference to our religion. But for the most part, it has excited laughter. Haji Mohamed William can never secure the confidence of the Islamic world after his intrigues at Stamboul. The Haji has done so much evil, that we doubt whether a pilgrimage to the Holy Mecca can secure his absolution. The *Pioneer* says that ‘the wildest rumours now-a-days gain some believers.’ We have reason to believe from the tone of the paragraph that it is the conviction of the Allahabad journal that some of the Indian Moslems have put faith in the story of the conversion of the Kaiser to the Islamic religion. We can assure him that such is not the case. Let the *Pioneer* be reassured by the sober and thoughtful remarks on the point, which are published in the columns of a leading Indian journal. Says the *Bengalee*: ‘We do not believe that any Mohamedan puts his credence in the rumour of the Kaiser’s conversion to Islam.’ This is the plain truth, and let the subject be dropped, once for all. It is, certainly, a matter of jest, but as our Hindu and European contemporaries must realise that it has an irreverent reference to our religion, it cannot be pleasant to many of our brethren in faith.”



The following letter from Dr. Zwemer, regarding *The Moslem World*, which has been received by one of our members, will be of interest to all :—

“ *The Moslem World* quarterly reaches you regularly, I believe, but the number of subscribers in the country you represent on the mission field is not at all large compared with those who should subscribe if they are at all interested in Moslem evangelization. This war will mean the opening of new doors, possibly also a change of method, and surely a deeper sense of responsibility for Moslems everywhere.”

We would add, on our own behalf, that it seems to us that this paper is simply indispensable in the library of every earnest worker among Muslims. It is not enough that we should have access to current copies in some common library or through a friendly loan. We should ourselves secure and bind the volumes, year by year, in order that we may have them always at hand for reference, as we ought also to have *The International Review of Missions*, dealing with the broader aspects of missionary work.

The Moslem World can be secured in India from the U.L.S., Madras. Attention is called to the fact that the Cairo address, and the address of Dr. Zwerner personally, has been changed to 5, *Sharia Imad id-Din, Cairo*.

PRAISE AND PRAYER

“Dominant impression of my recent visit to Levant was that a new day of unparalleled openings for work among Moslems has dawned. We must attempt great things, meeting present opportunity and arousing Western Christendom to neglected task. Prayer has disintegrated stolid indifference of Islam. Time has come for aggressive action. No agency can penetrate Islam so deeply, abide so persistently, witness so daringly, and influence so irresistibly, as the PRINTED PAGE. May we set up new standards of prayer, faith and effort for the winning of the Moslem World to Christ.”

—Telegram from Dr. Chas. R. Watson after his latest visit to the Near East.

Sujanpur: Our big girls who left us have returned to our Sujanpur School, but we have not secured a Bible teacher.

C. E. W.

Mardan, N.-W.F.P.: You will be interested to know that we have been able to secure a house in a Pathan village some 30 miles east of Mardan, i.e. Swabi, which is only 5 miles from the Buner Frontier. We are opening a Station there and I am hoping to go out to begin work in a day or two.

C. A. H.

Brahmanbaria: *Pray* for a Muhammadan here who read with Mr. Takle for many years and is now reading with Mr. White. He knows the truth but is not prepared for the sacrifice confession involves. There are others also here who are well acquainted with Christ so far as head knowledge goes. May their hearts be touched by the Holy Spirit's power.

Pray also for two small village schools for Muhammadan girls, and for other pupils—zenanas and villages homes. The ignorance among the women of this district is overwhelming.

S. B.

Mr. Takle: The members of the League will surely find cause for united rejoicing in the following note which we clip from *The Indian Witness* :—

His many friends in India will be glad to hear of the improvement in Mr. Takle's health. In a recent letter he says: “I have improved much since leaving India. I have still to be careful with my diet, but can eat certain things which I could not look at in India. I have no work; I am to rest until I am quite ‘fit’ again. We are in a house of our own with our family about us, and we are enjoying the Auckland climate.”

Laheria Serai: Our Laheria Serai School for Muhammadan girls was reopened with a new Teacher under Miss Brearley's superintendence last December and is attended by 18 girls with an average of 13 daily, and a marked improvement is visible in their attendance and industry.

F. C.

HOW CHRIST WON MY HEART.

I. KHALIL-UR-RAHMAN OF BANKIPUR.

(Translated by Rev. J. Ireland Hasler.)

When I began to read the New Testament, I found its teachings exerted a greater attraction and influence than those of the Qurán. Accordingly I carefully studied it, giving much time to the consideration of some of its truths, with the result that my mind came to prefer them to the fundamental doctrines of the Qurán and Hadis. For instance, there was Christ's saying:—"Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you," which clearly showed that it was Christ's desire to promote peace and goodwill amongst all mankind and to establish harmony, sympathy and love. I noted too that Christ Himself acted as He had taught; He did not take revenge on His enemies but forgave their offences and acted tyrannically towards no one.

Further, I felt the attraction of the teaching which Christ gave about abstinence from worldly covetousness and ambition. It seemed novel and strange to me (e.g. St. Matt. vi. 19-34). Christ gave no undue consideration to wealth and display, nor did He desire worldly ease. And yet had He so desired He had the power of acquiring it in fullest measure for Himself and of obtaining for his own use all the good things that the rich enjoy. He Who could command the winds and waves and raise the dead had certainly power over everything, but He despised worldly things and did not set His heart upon them.

The Qurán and Hadis teach that man's salvation is based on his meritorious acts, on his personal efforts and human power and exertion—that there is in man's heart sufficient ability to enable him to turn with loathing from worldly inclinations, vain thoughts and sin and direct his mind to the higher world and help him in the performance of good deeds and in attaining nearness to God; such is not obtainable from God. In the religion of Islam I did not find any evidence of God's free gifts of grace, whereas my own experience proved to me that man cannot by his own personal power and effort become righteous and acceptable to God. His heart is too much inclined to worldliness for that.

Then there was the teaching of the Hadis regarding mediation, viz. that on the day of Judgment Muhammad would intercede for his followers, and God out of kindness and consideration for him would grant forgiveness to sinners. Such intercession however contravened one's ideas of God's justice and righteousness, and I could not accept it as true, while I found on the other hand that the teaching of the N. T. attracted my belief and conduced to my advancement. Further study of the N. T. clearly showed me that through Christ there are obtainable from God various spiritual gifts and blessings, and in consequence I was led to accept Christianity.

The special blessings to man which came through Christ are as follows:—

1. *Forgiveness of Sins.*—John the Baptist pointed out Christ to his followers as “the Lamb of God who taketh away Sin,” i.e. if a sinful man trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ he obtains salvation from sin’s punishment, because Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for sinners, and endured the sufferings of death on the cross, so taking upon Himself sin’s punishment that He might save sinners.

2. *Regeneration*, i.e. the change of heart that comes to a believer on Christ. Instead of there being in him inclination to sin as previously there is aversion felt to it and his thoughts turn towards goodness and approximation to God. His desires become spiritual and himself serious-minded.

3. *The Gift of the Holy Spirit.*—That Holy Power which is both with and in God, and which is from everlasting to everlasting obtainable by man, and the Holy Spirit confers on man the grace and ability to continue firm in excellency of conduct and righteousness of character, incites his thoughts to seek heavenly wealth and joy and helps in the attainment of Divine fellowship.

4. *Freedom.*—Christ said to the Jews,—“If you believe on Me; you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” Such freedom includes (a) *freedom from sin*; (b) *freedom from the carnal, vain and extravagant practices and beliefs of a false religion, which are the source of so much anxiety and toil and loss to man.* (In Christ’s time, for instance, there were many such prevalent amongst the Jews, which were not part of the law of Moses); (c) *freedom from worldly care and despondency.* The teaching of Christ affords such consolation to man’s heart that under all circumstances man can remain grateful to God and can ever be assured of the help of Christ and of the obtaining of eternal happiness with Christ in the world to come.

THE INDIAN CHURCH AND ISLAM.

It was decided by the Lucknow General Conference on Missions to Moslems (January 1911) that the problem of the conversion of Moslems in India is one-fifth of the problem of the conversion of India. To translate this into other thoughts and words, the problem of the conversion of India will be *delayed* one decade out of every five by the resistance, opposition or inertness of Islam. In the next century close on one-fourth of the century’s work will be abrogated or delayed from this cause.

This presupposes that the work of conversion will go forward on its evangelistic side evenly; only leaving outside certain tracts of the field where opposition or inertness make advance impossible, just as in the ploughing of a certain piece of land or in cutting the crop upon it, the ploughman or reaper must leave out large patches here and there where *unt kalare* (nettles and thistles), *kante* (thorns), *pathrili zamin* (stony ground) intervene. But there is another possibility. The poor zamindar knows full well that even in his crop on the *achchhi zamin* (fruitful land) there are destructive elements. The grain rots from *namu* (over-damp); the Karvi dana (tares, etc.) penetrate among the “achchha dana” and destroy a large portion of his good crop. To apply the parable, the conversion of India will be seriously hindered by (1) The spread of the spirit of Muhammadanism among converts; (2) Moral lapses and refusal of Church discipline or order by Christians which lead into Muhammadanism as a safe and easy refuge; (3) Perversion by their former co-religionists of souls patiently and slowly led out from Islam into Christianity; (4) Con-

version by Islam of large bodies of low-caste Hindus whom the Church might have won; and (5) lastly and saddest of all, the lapse, as in Eastern Bengal and the baptized Tartar tribes in Russian Turkistan, of large masses of well disposed and docile baptized people who have been neglected and unshepherded by the Christian Church. All these causes definitely now and in the past and increasingly in the futuro subtract from the Christian population and add to the Moslem. Perhaps the census is not far distant when some column will contain startling figures under this head.

We may now again resort to parables to help explain our meaning. The great menace to the peace and commerce of England is the existence of a formidable German fleet of fighting vessels. Even now supposing the Christian forces in this land had so bottled up the Muhammadan propaganda that we held it and checked its power, it would still remain there, a constant menace to the conversion of the Hindus and aboriginal tribes and an unconquered and opposing force to the Faith of our Lord. India would not be converted and the danger of raids by this fierce and hardly controlled force would incessantly menace the peace and well-being of the Church. Only recently there appeared at a meeting for friendly discussion with Mussalmans in a hall in Byculla (Bombay) a fierce and fluent Moslem speaker who attacked the Christian speakers violently as the meeting was breaking up. Careful enquiry about the man revealed the fact that his work is "Missionary," that he represents a hostile section of Muhammadans in India whose object it is to start a rival Islamic Mission in all places where Christian Missions are at work, not only to oppose their work of conversion of Hindus or Muhammadans but also to strike at the Christian Church and seek to gain adherents from it.

Is it impossible that the miasma of Muhammadanism will create a definite heresy in the Church, as there are certain indications that Hinduism is doing now?

But what is the hope of stemming the advance of Islam in the land,—for, advancing it is? What is the hope of doing more than adding numerically so many Hindus annually to the Church, while the conversion of India and its regeneration into a Christian country waits on the conversion of one-fifth of its peoples, when the Lucknow Conference declared that we are unable (as things are at present) to convert?

Look back on the last ten years, has a single Mussalman convert of note stood out as a champion of Christ against his former co-religionists? What is now our position against Islam? Scarcely one out of the 5,000 Missionaries in India is engaged solely in work among Moslems. Those who study Islam find themselves engrossed in petty Mission affairs, monetary matters, school management or even pastoral work among converts largely drawn from Hinduism.

Our schools contain scarcely a Mussalman pupil, our Lecture Halls are empty or unused; great Missions which formerly led the van against Islam in North India have now not one worker in that field. No Missionary paper obtains circulation among them, and the race of convert catechists and evangelists who did such noble work among their former Mussalman co-religionists is dying out.

The Indian Church exhibits no interest in this matter; here and there a noble man or woman labours on, but he is like a single deodar in a forest of kikar trees. But the spirit of Islam lives, grows and advances, it strides among the inert and sleeping forms of a race of second generation of Christians sunk in spiritual lethargy, or grossly materialized and rouses them to its merits and its attractions. The triumphant shout of "Jai Jai Yesu Masih" is silent; the distant and approaching echoes of "Fath, Fath, Hazrat Muhammad" are sounding louder, and men read census reports and speak of the conversion of India. Conversion to what?!!!

Now I am going to add to this, already too long, article some simple thoughts.

Remember the noble words of the great Missionary to Moslems in the fourteenth century: "The conquest of [Islam] ought not to be attempted except in the way in which Thou and Thine Apostles conquered [the world], viz., by love and prayers and the pouring out of tears and blood."

Remember that the Dutch in Java have snatched nearly 40,000 converts from Islam.

Remember that the Russian Church has rescued some 40,000 Christians who lapsed to Islam in Tartary.

Remember that in early ages from the time of Muhammad to to-day Mussalmans have been converted to Christ.

Remember that Islam advances because every Muhammadan is a missionary of his religion, be he oil-seller, or zamindar, or clerk, or beopari.

Remember that as the great armies of Europe are organized scientifically to fight and supplied fully with men, means and materials; so the Indian Church must organize its army to fight for it against this great and "zabardast dushman" (powerful enemy) and destroy it by winning it into our army.

REV. A. J. P. FRENCH,

in *Punjab Mission News*,

January, 1915.

[We should be glad to publish any helpful comments on this vigorous article which may be suggested to the minds of our readers.—*Editor.*]

BOOK REVIEW.

"Leaves from Three Ancient Quráns."

Few books will have a deeper interest for Missionaries to Muslims than the recently published "Leaves from Three Ancient Quráns," which has just issued from the Cambridge University Press. This unique publication, which has enjoyed the joint editorship of the Rev. Alphonse Mingana, D.D., late Professor of Semitic Languages and Literature in the Syro-Chaldean Seminary at Mosul, and Agnes Lewis Smith, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D., Ph.D., places before the public the text of some ancient palimpsest MSS. of the Qurán, which, the editors believe, must have been written previous to the famous recension of the Khalifa Othmán.

The upper script of this interesting palimpsest, which was bought from a commercial antiquary in Egypt, consists of a series of closely-written Homilies in Arabic by early Christian Fathers such as Theodosius, Chrysostom and Mar Jacob, written in a style which competent authorities assign to the end of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century of our era. Beneath this, however, was discovered two other anterior writings, crossing each other: one of them in Syriac, and the other, the earliest of all, in Cufic Arabic. With the aid of chemicals this latter was brought up and deciphered with much care and patience, and proved to be nothing less than portions of the Qurán written in a style which left no doubt as to their great antiquity. More important than all, a comparison of these ancient MSS. with the current text of the Qurán revealed many and important variations and omissions.

It seems impossible to believe that after the famous edict of Othmán calling in all copies of the Qurán, and legalizing only his own recension, anyone would have attempted the useless task of writing out a text which differs so materially from Othmán's. The only alternative theory is that the Muslim owner of the precious sheets of vellum satisfied his conscience by rubbing out with pumice-stone or some other substance the Arabic text of the Qurán, and then sold, what in those days was of considerable value, to some Christian monks, who, later, covered the vellum with choice extracts from the Fathers of the Church.

The books, as now issued to the public, contains a carefully-written introduction in which Othmán's recension is discussed, the question of various readings in the Quránic text touched upon, some criticism of the style of the current text indulged in, and the newly-discovered MSS. described and its special characteristics noticed. Amongst the marks of antiquity noticed by the editors may be mentioned the total absence of vowel pointing, and of nearly all diacritical signs,—even the dots now used to distinguish the letters *ta* from *tha*, *'ain* from *ghain*, *sád* from *dád*, etc., being absent—the use of archaic spellings and forms of letters, and the total absence of hamza and of the ordinary marks of intonation such as *shadda* and *wasla*. The introduction closes with a long list of variants placed side by side with the word or words as found in the current text.

The last and major portion of the book contains a reprint of the text of the newly-discovered MSS. with the current text exhibited on the opposite pages, and the interest of the whole is heightened by three splendidly-executed photographic reproductions of portions of the new MSS. The book is well printed, but one may be pardoned for expecting a more durable binding in a book of 120 pages which sells at ten shillings and six pence.

It is not too much to say that when the facts connected with this important discovery become known amongst intelligent Muslims something like consternation will prevail, and the much-vaunted claims for the divine protection of the Qurán will fall to the ground.

WILLIAM GOLDSACK.

NEW MEMBERS

158. Rev. F. J. Barny	Maskat, Arabia.
159. Rev. H. E. Clark	P.R.B. Society, Lahore.
160. Miss Brearley	Z.B. and M.M., Lakeria Serai.

(*Erratum*—In March issue, No. 155, should read Prof. S. T. Ghaus; Queen Mary's College, Lahore).

Annual Subscription to the League is Rs. 2 (2s. 8d.). Members are requested to send news and requests for prayer to

Y.M.C.A., Lahore, India.

H. A. WALTER,
Hon. Sec. M.M. League.

