

Missionaries to Muslims League

News and Notes.

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THE WORD OF THE CROSS

The one great underlying truth of all our preaching and teaching is Christ crucified, and the constant problem with the average missionary is how to so present it that his hearers will understand its message and meaning. To the average Muslim it is more than a stumbling-block or foolishness; it is a falsehood combated by the Qur'an; it is characterised as the great deception of Dajjal. Knowing this, how are we to preach it? Our thoughts turn towards some theory or explanation; but which are we to choose? The keenest and devoutest intellects have employed their finest powers in trying to state in clear terms what the Cross means to God and man, but no single theory satisfies.

If we fall back on Dr. Dale's advice to his assistant, to drop the theories and preach clearly the *fact*, the problem still stands. How are we to preach Christ crucified to the average crowd in simple, attractive, illuminating speech, stripped of all our usual theological terms, so that the imagination, conscience and will of the hearers may be stirred? Because it is hard, do we not too often fall back on the parables and miracles in our preaching? But there is no scene more entrancing, no truth more sublime, and none more ennobling to the soul of man than that of Calvary, but at the same time none which needs more prayer and preparation for presentation to the Muhammadan mind.

The Power of the Cross: In *The Record of Christian Work*, the Rev. H. A. Walter tells the striking story of Samuel Bakkal, the first and only convert, to date, in Mr. Biscoe's famous school in Kashmir. Bakkal was born in Srinagar in 1891. His parents were Muhammadans who, desiring that their son should be well educated, sent him to the Mission school. "At that time, he states, that his idea of Christians, absorbed from the atmosphere of home and school, was:

"1. That they were unholy people, who ate unholy things, and should be objects of detestation to all true Muslims.

"2. That the preachers were ridiculous individuals, whose beliefs and efforts should be laughed at and opposed.

"3. That the Christian's good works were done for the sake of appearances and of making converts to Christianity.

"The beginning of a change occurred one winter afternoon, when Bakkal, with some of the other boys in the school, went to the assistance

of Rev. F. E. Lucey, of the school faculty, whose house-boat was sinking, in order to help him remove his belongings to the shore. Among the articles taken on land was a beautiful picture of Christ on the Cross, with this device:

*"This have I done
for thee*



*"What hast thou done
for ME?"*

"Underneath was the prayer, which Bakkal has never forgotten though he has not since seen either picture or prayer.

"O Saviour of the world, who by Thy Cross and precious blood hast redeemed us, save us and help us, we humbly beseech Thee, O Lord. Amen."

"That night he did not sleep, and the next day he made for himself a picture like the one he had seen, and he determined to find out the meaning of the words: 'This have I done for thee.' The picture was soon confiscated by his parents, who learned of it from a Hindu fellow student of Bakkal's.

"The boy desired to ask many questions of Mr. Biscoe, but dared not seek him out of school hours, as he knew that would mean persecution on the part of family and friends and State officials—persecution in which the school might be involved, as his family was an important one. How to find out more about the 'Saviour of the world' was his problem, and the first source of information of which he could avail himself was the Qur'án. In an Urdu translation he read the Qur'anic story of Christ—His virgin birth, His miracles, His sinless character and His Ascension into Heaven. Then he secured from the school library, through a friend, a simple 'Life of Christ,' written by a Christian, by which the imperfect Qur'anic version was corrected and completed. Here he read more about the Cross, of which the Qur'án could tell him nothing, and he began to glimpse something of its pathos and its power. In the evenings he told the fascinating story of Christ to the women of the household—grandmother, mother, and sister—and they listened eagerly and kept the secret from the father's ears."

This was followed by earnestness and boldness on the boy's part, which led to bitter persecution by his people and townfolk. In 1907 he was transferred to a Christian school in the Punjab, where two years later he was baptized. He has taken his B. A. degree, and by his Christian life and courage is wearing down all opposition.

Ignorance of the Muhammadan Problem

One of our members, now on furlough in England, writes:—"Nearly everywhere I hear the same thing—'We have never heard anything like this before.' Indeed the bare idea of definite work among Muslims seems to be far from the minds of most people I meet, whether clergy or laity."

“AS FOR ISHMAEL, I HAVE HEARD THEE”

(GEN. XVII, 20.)

At one of our days of prayer last spring we were led to cry to God for Arabia, for Mecca, where Muhammad was born, and for Madina, where he lies buried, for the Arab in his darkness and need, and that the political changes taking place in Arabia might tend to the opening of doors there and the furtherance of the Gospel. “O that Ishmael might live before Thee!” was the desire of our hearts. We pleaded specially that as Mecca and Madina were fast closed to Christian effort, God would Himself raise up witnesses in these cities from amongst the inhabitants who would fearlessly confess Christ.

A few weeks ago the news came of an interesting convert, who had turned up at one of our stations. A wonderful story his of suffering for the sake of the Name, and deliverance from the hands of his enemies. “He has suffered more than any converts from Islam I have heard of, and if ever we can publish his story, you will agree that it is almost like a chapter out of the Acts of the Apostles.” He is wonderfully bold in his confession of Christ, and fear does not seem to enter into his composition.

Well, this convert is a *native of Madina*. He was a pearl merchant, and went to Bahrein, on the Persian Gulf, to buy pearls at the fisheries, and there he found the Pearl of Great Price. The instrument in his conversion being another Arab convert, who used to come to our conferences at Zeitoun, and is now working as an evangelist with the Arabian Mission at Bahrein. The new convert returned to Madina to get his wife and family, but persecution broke out, and he only just escaped with his life. He had been sentenced to death, but his mother, who was loyal to him, provided him with money and helped him to get away. He turned up at our station quite destitute, and although he has evidently been a man of good position, he is content to work as sweeper and door-keeper of the girls' school. Wherever he goes in the village he bears fearless testimony, and much opposition and persecution has resulted. Many have been praying for him, and that the enemy is really alarmed is evident from the fact that our compound was broken into, and a determined attempt made to take his life. It was on a Sunday evening, when our workers were busy with a meeting for our British soldiers, that the murderous attack was made, and when he was found he was lying on the ground in a terrible condition. His mouth had been filled with mud, there were marks of attempted strangling on his neck, and his ribs had been badly battered. When he was restored to consciousness, he said two men had attacked him; they have since been captured, and the government inspector is determined that nothing of the sort shall happen again. All through the affair this Arab convert has shown the most loving and forgiving spirit towards his persecutors.

Pray for him, that he may be kept for Jesus Christ; that wisdom may be given in all our dealings with him, that he may be filled with

the Holy Ghost and become spiritual and able to stand against all the awful temptations that assail the convert from Islám. Pray, too, for Arabia and its need; that soon the doors may open, and that this man and many like him may enter in as ambassadors for Christ.—*Egypt General Mission News.*

DEPUTATION ADDRESS OUTLINE

THE CHALLENGE OF ISLAM TO-DAY

(Before a Church Men's Club)

1. *The Fact of Islám.* Brief account of Muhammad's life, and early spread of Islám. The five essentials:—Witness, Prayers, Fasting, Alms, Pilgrimage.

Some strong points:—(1) Emphasis on Unity and Majesty of God. (2) Brotherhood. (3) Simplicity. (4) Recognition of Christ.

Weakness of above in contrast to Christianity:—(1) Doctrine of God far below Old Testament and wholly omits Fatherhood. (2) Brotherhood of war not of the Spirit. (3) Simplicity, as shown in five essentials, admits no moral imperatives. Danger of external, formal religion of the Pharisees. (4) *'Isa* of Muslims, a colourless peg, on which a few titles are hung. Real character and dignity lacking.

Other weaknesses:—Immorality in literature and life, position of women, slavery, attitude to outside world, etc.; all rooted in words and example (real and fancied) of Muhammad.

2. *The Spirit of Islám to-day.* (1) *Pan Islám:* Centering in late Sultan of Turkey. Attempted defiance of Western civilization. Its historic basis in relation to Khalifate.

Doomed by—(a) Religious divisions within Islám as Shiah's, Senussis, etc.

(b) Growing spirit of political nationalism—as in Turkey, Persia, Egypt, etc.

(c) Loss of Islám's temporal power and Turkey's prestige; shown in present war—failure of *Jihád* and rebellion of Arabia.

(2) *The New Islám.* Attempted accommodation to Western civilization. Syed Ahmad Khan and his principles of religious toleration and abstention from political strife. Recent growth of religious bigotry and political agitation in India. (Muslim League; Ahmadiyahs, etc.)

(3) *The Coming Victory of Christ.* Conversions in Java and India. Growing recognition of the importance of this field at home base. Increased literature. Cairo and Lucknow Conferences. Leagues and prayer fellowships at home and abroad. Greater openness to Christian effort likely after the war, resulting from Islámic political disintegration.

Every Church member's intelligent sympathy, charity, and prayer needed to help win Christianity's greatest battle.

H. A. WALTER,

AMONG THE HAUSAS

A missionary, writing to a magazine published in England, says—
 “The attitude of the Colonial Government (in W. Africa) with regard to Muhammadanism is unfavourable to Christianity. The avowed policy may be impartiality, but in practice it does not work out so. The mind of the African cannot understand impartiality. He argues in something like this fashion: ‘The Government has interfered with me in my religion in putting down such and such ancient customs. The Muhammadans are left alone in their observances; they are even employed in increasing numbers as officials. Therefore, the Government must be on the side of Islám.’ This attitude of mind, we may be sure, is not neglected for want of cultivation by the Muhammadans themselves. Thus, clearly, there is before the Church a long period of struggle and testing, though it be only in patient waiting and watchful toil.”

A sidelight on the Government attitude we find in a communication from Miss Wakefield, one of our members who is at present studying in Cairo to further fit herself for work among the Muslim Hausas. She quotes the following letters from a missionary in the Hausa district:—

“Samuila Inusa left us (not as Mission Agent) for his home on March 10th, 1916. His brother and friend came to Idda and got him. They got on all right till they reached the French border. (I believe they were turned out of a Filani town because of Samuila's faith.) At the border they were stopped by a policeman and his loads examined. He was told he should go to the nearest Resident's place. He went, and the Resident, or whoever he was, gave him a scolding and sent him with a guard to his town. The head Resident was not in when he got there, but the man in charge told him not to sell books or preach while there, and to await the head Resident's return. He did, and went visiting among his people. One Mallam, he said, spent a lot of time with him reading Genesis, the Mallam using the Arabic text and S. the Hausa text. He returned from his visit and found the head Resident back. He went to see him, and the Resident told him that he must return to Minna. He was given a policeman to take him to the English border. We had told him we might write him to Kebbi, so he went to Bernin Kebbi. He got in late in the afternoon. He was told that all strangers must go to the Resident's place, so next morning he went, and the Resident became very angry when he found he had Arabic and Hausa Scriptures. He told S. that he must go to Sokoto and go right away. If he slept in the town he must sleep in prison. That day under a guard he went a few miles on his journey. He arrived at Sokoto, and the Resident went after him in Jeffery fashion. He was given a policeman again, and had to leave Sokoto late, in a storm, and arrived at a village some distance away very late. He was escorted to the Sokoto border and let go. I do not think that the French or the English Residents had any right to do what

they did according to law. It is just high-handedness. It is not religious liberty. I just tell you this without any comments.

"X. also told me of Inusa (Kagi's husband) having been seized by the Sokoto authorities for the 'crime' of showing an Arabic Testament as he was travelling, and he has been taken to Zungeru for trial. I expect you have heard of it. X. wrote indignantly of it, and she also said that if she speaks to any woman in Sokoto of Christ, they tell her she will be arrested."

NOTES

We should be glad if members will please pay subscriptions now due. The League Year closes on April 30th, and we wish to clear off the deficit.

The Rev. W. Goldsack

The Indian Secretary of the English B.M.S. writes, in his *Monthly News Letter*, a note which will be of special interest to our readers:—

"All of us will, I know, unite in a word of hearty congratulation to our fellow-worker, Rev. W. Goldsack, of Jessore, who completed a few days ago his *Bengali Translation of the Qur'an with Commentary*. The whole work has taken some years, and is published in thirty separate parts, most of which have already appeared. Those competent to speak upon this fine accomplishment have reviewed his labours with great commendation, and I am sure that those of us working among Bengali Muslims and anxious to know the Qur'an well, will take advantage of Mr. Goldsack's specialising on this piece of literary effort. Mr. Goldsack has obtained a passport for a short residence in Egypt for further Islâmic studies, and will be going home on furlough to Australia with his wife in a few weeks' time, before proceeding to the West."

We would urge all workers in Bengal to do more to make this valuable translation better known. It is interlined with Arabic, and has very helpful footnotes. Twenty-five *Siparas* have been published to date, and may be obtained at the C. L. S. Depot, Calcutta.

The Swanwick Prayer Conference, 1917

We have received word that the Prayer Conference arranged by the Fellowship of Faith for the Muslims will be held at Swanwick from September 24th to September 28th. This early intimation is given in the hope that those of our number who contemplate taking furlough in Great Britain may be able to go, and arrange their plans so as to be present at "The Hayes," Swanwick, on those dates.

The Qur'an in English

We have received specimen pages of *Sura Fataha*, translated, printed and published in English by the Ahmadiyahs. We judge that

its appearance will be attractive, but its comments on the seven short verses of the first chapter are sufficient to prove its sectarian, and therefore biased, spirit. We need do no other than make one quotation in proof of our statement. A footnote to the commentary on verse 7 says:—"The last verse of this chapter embodies a mighty prophecy a promise for the advent of a Messiah whose advent was to be preceded by the ascendancy of the Christian religion. . . . The Messiah referred to in this verse has already appeared, and his name is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (Punjab, India)."

An Interesting Case

Early in December, at the Patna High Court, the Chief Justice heard an appeal relating to the rights of the Ahmadiyas who claim to be Muhammadans, and who had been stopped by certain Hanafi Sunni Muhammadans from praying in the Sunni mosque. In the lower courts the case had been dismissed, the District Judge holding that although they were Muhammadans their ritual was different, and as they held views which were opposed to fundamental principles of the religion of the Sunni sect, they were not entitled to the relief claimed.

The Muslim lawyer for the appellants argued that since it was admitted that his clients were Muhammadans, they were entitled to the relief, while the opposing counsel maintained that, on the strength of the Muslim Scriptures, the Ahmadiyas could not be called Muhammadan.

We shall watch for the decision of the court with interest, for we know Ahmadiyas who have been forbidden by the Government to enter the public mosques.

The Central Islamic Society

The Muslims of London have recently organised a society which is intended to include by affiliation all organised bodies of Muslims throughout the world. The office of this central society is at 158, Fleet Street, London, and the Hon. Secretary is Shaikh M. H. Kidwai, Barrister-at-Law. The annual subscription for members is 5s. 6d., and the rules and regulations which we print below will give the reader some idea of the objects of this new organisation.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

1.—Name and Objects.

1. The Society shall be called the Central Islamic Society.
2. The objects of the Society shall be:—
 - (a) To promote the religious, moral, social, and intellectual advancement of the Muslim world.
 - (b) To promote brotherly feelings between Muslims, and to facilitate intercourse between them.
 - (c) To afford a centre of social union to Muslims from all parts of the world.

(d) To provide facilities for conducting religious ceremonies in non-Muslim countries.

(e) To remove misconceptions prevailing among non-Muslims regarding Islām and Muslims.

(f) To hold debates and lectures, and to read papers likely to further the interests of Islām.

(g) To maintain a library of Islāmic books that may be useful for religious research.

(h) To publish papers, articles, and books likely to further the interests of Islām.

(i) To collect subscriptions from all parts of the world, in order to build a mosque in London, and to endow it; and to extend the burial ground for the Muslims in London.

PRAISE AND PRAYER

"Alas! the divisions of Christendom, spiritual and political, and its corruptions, are the grand and lasting opportunity of the Muslim. A revived Christendom, revived in the true faith of the Crucified, in the true hope of His spiritual and eternal triumph, in renewed confidence in His sacred word, in a new consciousness that Christians exist for Christ, would be the glorious termination of that opportunity."
—The Bishop of Durham.

The Punjab and North India Missions of the American Presbyterian Church have sanctioned the plan of opening a Home for Muslim Converts (young men). This is now under consideration by a special committee. Prayer is asked that great wisdom may be given in selecting the situation and arranging the details. It looks as if there might be a great number of Muhammadan converts very soon. The supreme need is proper shepherding. H. D. GRISWOLD.

Prayer is asked for Indian Muhammadan women, who are so very ignorant and bigoted. A missionary lady in East Bengal once wrote about them: "The jungle is their little world; the narrow, obscure paths winding through it mark the extent of their wanderings. Their graves are in the jungle, and these are specimens of women everywhere in India who, both literally and figuratively, live and die in the jungle."

*The Annual Subscription to the League is Rs. 2-8-0 (3s. 4d.)
Members are requested to send news and requests for prayer to*

Brahmanbaria, Bengal.

JOHN TAKLE,
Hon. Sec., M. M. League.