

Missionaries to Muslims League

News and Notes.

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AHMADIYAS DECLARED TO BE MUHAMMADANS

RULING OF THE PATNA HIGH COURT, 21st DECEMBER, 1916.

HAKIM KHALIL AHMAD V. MALIK ISRAFI, AND MALIK ISRAFI V.
HAKIM KHALIL AHMAD.

The facts of the case were as follows:—

The plaintiff alleged that they were Muhammadans and followers of Hazrat Mirza Gulam Ahmad; that they used to offer up their prayer with other followers of their own sect in a mosque in Dillawarpur, Monghyr; that they did so up to the 2nd December, 1911, when they were illegally and maliciously interfered with and prevented from entering the mosque by the defendants' 1st party, at the instigation of defendants' 2nd party. The plaintiffs sued for declaration that they had a right to offer prayers in the said mosque with the people of their own sect, and that the defendants had no right to prevent them from doing so, and that the defendants be permanently restrained from interfering with right of the plaintiffs to offer prayers in the said mosque, collectively and individually. The Court of first instance held that the plaintiffs were Muhammadans, and that they were entitled to offer prayers individually behind the Hanifi Imam of the mosque, but that they were not entitled to form a separate congregation for prayer in the mosque. The suit was dismissed. An appeal to the District Judge was dismissed, but he ordered it to be declared that the plaintiffs are at liberty to worship in the disputed mosque behind the recognised Imam of the mosque, in the same congregation with the defendants and other Sunnis. Both sides appealed to the High Court.

Chamier, C. J.—These are cross appeals against a decree of the District Judge of Monghyr modifying a decree of the Subordinate Judge of Monghyr, which dismissed the plaintiff's suit.

The plaintiffs are professed followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Khadian in the Punjab, who acquired considerable notoriety as a preacher about 35 years ago, and attracted a considerable following in the Punjab and elsewhere. The followers of Ghulam Ahmad are known generally as Ahmadis or Khadianis. The plaintiffs' case was that, though dissenters from what is generally regarded as the orthodox Muhammadan faith, they are true Muhammadans. They say that till December, 1911, they were in the habit of offering up their prayers,

both individually and as a congregation, in a certain mosque in Mahalla Dillawarpur, in the town of Monghyr, but were prevented by the defendants from doing so. They claimed a declaration of their right to offer prayers in the mosque, both individually and as a congregation, and also an injunction restraining the defendants from interfering with them. The defendants resisted the suit on various grounds, and *inter alia* pleaded that the plaintiffs were not Muhammadans at all. The Subordinate Judge held that the plaintiffs were Muhammadans, but were not entitled to form a separate congregation for prayer in the mosque. He held that they were entitled to offer prayers individually behind the Hanifi Imam of the mosque, but as they did not desire to do so he dismissed the suit. On appeal, the District Judge agreed that the plaintiffs must be regarded as Muhammadans, and that they could not be allowed to form a separate congregation for prayers in the mosque, but gave them a declaration that they were entitled to worship in the mosque behind the recognized Imam, and in the same congregation as the defendants.

In this second appeal the plaintiffs contend that their claim should have been decreed as laid, and the defendants contend that the suit should have been dismissed altogether.

Some attempt was made on behalf of the defendants to controvert the concurrent findings of the Courts below that the plaintiffs were Muhammadans, but it was not seriously pressed. The Courts below have given convincing reasons for holding that the plaintiffs are Muhammadans, notwithstanding their pronounced dissent from orthodox opinion on several important articles of the faith. The plaintiffs as Muhammadans, appear to be entitled to enter the mosque if they please, and to offer up prayers with the regular congregation behind the recognised Imam, but as they profess to regard 'orthodox' Muhammadans as infidels it is unlikely that they will take advantage of the decree made by the District Judge.

The important question in the case is, whether the plaintiffs are entitled to pray as a separate congregation in the mosque, *i.e.*, behind an Imam of their own. The claim is an extravagant one, and there can be little doubt that if it is allowed there will be serious trouble in the mosque. The plaintiffs contend that every mosque is dedicated to the worship of God, and is open to any Muhammadan, to whatever sect he may belong, who chooses to pray in it. The cases of *Queen-Empress v. Ramzan* (1), *Ata-ullah v. Azim ullah* (2), and *Jnagu v. Ahmad-ullah* (3), and other authorities on which the plaintiffs rely, certainly support this contention, but they lend no support to the further contention advanced by the plaintiffs, namely, that the members of any and every sect are entitled to pray in every mosque as a separate congregation behind an Imam chosen by themselves. The mosque in question has been in existence for about 200 years, and appears to have been used all along by orthodox Sunni Muhammadans. In all probability it was established for the benefit of Sunni Muhammadans, although it may be that other Muhammadans are entitled to pray in it

individually or join in the congregational worship which is conducted there. No authority whatever has been cited for the proposition that half a dozen members of a new sect (it is said that there are only so many Ahmadis in Monghyr) are entitled to thrust themselves into a mosque which has been used by orthodox Sunni Muhammadans for generations, form a separate congregation there, and disturb the old standing arrangements for the conduct of worship in the mosque. It is suggested that certain times might be allotted to the plaintiffs for congregational worship with their own Imam. Such an arrangement appears to be unknown to the Muhammadan law. It would curtail the time available for the orthodox Sunnis who have used the mosque for so many years. As already stated the plaintiffs regard orthodox Sunnis as infidels. The orthodox Sunnis, in their turn, regard the Ahmadis as infidels, and have, we are told, formally denounced them as such. There would almost inevitably be serious trouble in the mosque. It appears that what the plaintiffs wish to do is like to cause acute friction (if nothing worse), if they actually disturbed the orthodox in their prayers in the mosque. As there is no authority for the contention advanced by the plaintiffs, and it is clear that the rights enjoyed by the orthodox for generations would be seriously impaired by the intrusion of the plaintiffs as a separate congregation, and it is certain that admission of their claim would result in unseemly conflicts in the mosque, I am of opinion that their claim should be rejected.

I would dismiss both appeals with costs.

Roe, J.—I agree that this appeal should be dismissed, the sole object of the case is to secure a decree that the appellants are entitled to deliberately abstain from joining in the ordinary worship of the mosque, and to appoint an Imam of their own to read prayers for them after the ordinary worship has been concluded. The learned Subordinate Judge, who tried the case, is himself a Muhammadan gentleman, and he quotes it in his judgment as a well known rule of worship, that where people deliberately come late to prayers they will not be allowed to have a second service of their own. This seems to me to be in accordance with an extract from B—7 and B—13 of volume of the chapter relating to Azan of Zadul Maad, which runs: "Even if he waits for the Imam of his own sect, having removed himself from the midst of the men of different sect, while offering up prayers with the congregation, this act of his will not be considered as his turning away from the congregation with abhorrence when it is known that he is waiting for a congregation which is most perfect." This seems to imply that if he does turn away from the regular prayers with abhorrence he cannot be allowed to have a special Imam of his own. In the case before us the plaintiffs state clearly that they will not under any circumstances worship behind an Imam who does not recognize Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Having made that statement of fact, it seems to me clear that they are not permitted to have subsequent services and worship under an Imam of their own. I agree, therefore, that the appeals should be dismissed with costs,

The Rev. G. J. Dann, of Bankipore, in forwarding this copy of the ruling says:—"It was lent me by one of my orthodox Muhammadan friends, who is disappointed at the three Courts finding that the Ahmadiyas are Muhammadans, as he disputes their claim to this status, because Ahmad made allegations about Christ contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an, and also because Ahmad made the claim to be a prophet, and to receive revelations from God and to publish them as a prophet. As Muhammad was KHATIMA-UL-MURSALIN, any man coming after him must be an impostor, as how can that be re-opened which God has sealed for ever."

HOW THE PADRE SCORED

In Manucci's *Storia do Mogor*, which may be obtained in four large volumes of an English translation, published by Murray, there are many interesting details of Christian work done among Muslims in the times of the Mughals. Manucci appears to have been very interested in the Christian-Muhammadan controversy.

In vol. iv, pages 120-122, we find the following incident related:—"In the city of Isfahan there was a Capuchin Father, whose name was Friar Raphael, a man much esteemed by the king and all the Court, who delighted in his conversation, he being both learned and sensible. One day, when he was in conversation with the greatest doctors of the Court, they said to him, 'You are a sensible man; how can you say that the prophet Masih (for they so styled him) is God?' The judicious Capuchin saw that an answer to this question required time if he were to deal with it satisfactorily, and expound the truth properly in a matter of such importance.

"Next day the friar presented himself, when there was a still greater crowd of learned men than before. He was received courteously, and all were anxious to hear the promised answer. They interrogated him upon the subject. His reply was that in due time he would state his opinion. Meanwhile, it was more urgent to consider a business of some importance to him, and that completed he would talk of the other. So saying, he produced a document, which he handed to the leading man then present, making a claim for justice to be done. He demanded payment of a large sum of money, as detailed in that paper. As he spoke he indicated as the debtor one of the persons present. This man repudiated the debt by saying he had never had any dealings with him, and thus could owe nothing. Then all of the onlookers began to examine the acknowledgment, and saw that it was written by the self-same father, witnessed by him, and signed by him. Upon discovering these facts, they all said that in no court of justice and by no means of law could such a document be valid.

"The father replied: 'If this acknowledgment is held not to be valid, from being signed and witnessed in my handwriting, credit being refused to it in the absence of persons who certify the debt, how can

faith be accorded to the Qur'an of Muhammad? It was given to the world without any witnesses to certify that it was a true and holy doctrine. In that case, why is not my document accepted? Posing for solution the above question as to how the Messiah is the son of God and the only true God, I reply that the answer is to be obtained from the whole of the Prophets and from different parts of the Sacred Writings, both of the Old Testament, where the promises can be seen, and of the New, where is found the fulfilment of those promises by the coming of that same Messiah, certified and testified to by the mouth of many apostles—men who were illuminated by the Divine Wisdom!

“As the Muhammadan doctors listened they looked at one another in shame, for there was no answer to give. They turned the conversation and put the father off the track, and, with a smile on their lips, depreciated him as mad and wanting in common sense; then declared that he did not know what he was talking about. The padre withdrew, and as he took his leave of them, he declared that what he had said was ascertained doctrine, accepted among all reasonable men and those learned in the true law of God.”

NOTES

There is a scene in one of Goethe's books in which the great Adversary opposes the soldiers of the King of kings. Each man reverses his sword, holding it up as a cross. The Evil One departs.

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The following is culled from an advertisement in *The Statesman*. It is an interesting sidelight on developments in Arabia:—

“*Stamps*.—Mecca stamps, Provisionals of Sherifan Government, full set, three values, Rs. 1-4. Stamp Exchange, Pallow Road, Bombay.”

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Ahmadiys Zeal: We have received a letter from Mufti Muhammad-Sadiq, M.R.A.S., Editor, *Sadiq*, Qadian, in which he says:—“I am now ready to go to England to deliver lectures there.” He desires “a letter of introduction to some friend.” We wrote suggesting that he call upon Dr. Weitbrecht.

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In these days of backward Muhammadan States we are glad to hear of the progressiveness of the Begum of Bhopal. Recently she held a Durbar in connection with her 17th anniversary of accession and 60th anniversary of her birthday. In a speech she said:—“It is an article of faith with me that no country or community can aspire to a respectful place in the scheme of things unless education filters down to the masses. I have, therefore, resolved to introduce free and compulsory education in the State at as early a date as possible.” From all we have read of this lady, we can imagine that the education will be modern.

In a previous issue we drew attention to the *Times* report of a court case in which Lord Headley, the now famous Muslim convert, was fined for being drunk and disorderly. Now the *Daily Chronicle* tells the story of his appeal against the conviction. The evidence of two constables showed that at Waterloo station he was drunk, and in Waterloo road he "began to shout and sing, and put his arms round a woman, who ran away." The appeal was dismissed with costs.

Dr. Weitbrecht writes:—"The *Islamic Review*, notwithstanding this exposure, still advertises in its last issue a book by Lord Headley, which contains passages such as these:—

"I never heard of a Muhammadan ill-treating his wife St. Paul wrote rubbish about such extremely important matters as sex relationship and duty. . . . The loss of self-control was shown on various occasions by Moses and Christ."

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The Ahmadiya movement is powerful enough not only to issue regular magazines in English and bring out an expensive translation of the Qur'an, but also organises a mission of its own in England. Its missionary, Quazi Abdullah, B.A., who calls himself "a disciple of Ahmad, the messenger of the latter days," and the representative of the "Ahmadia movement, the only true manifestation of Islām of the present day," has been lecturing in London on "Islām as interpreted by a Muslim."

His conception of God is certainly not Muhammadan. Perhaps he remembered that he was speaking to people with Christian upbringing and conceptions. The following quotation will show how these Muslim missionaries in England are trying to make Christian ideas fit in with their Muslim theology:

"*Rahmān* is another name of God. *Rahmān* is derived from the word *Rahm*. With a little change the word *Rahm* means filial love, feeling which springs from blood relation—kindness. From this we have a participial name *Rāhim*, one who is kind. But from the same root is the name of God, '*Rahman*,' the most intensified form of the participial noun '*Rāhim*,' it being a rule in Arabic that by increasing letters in a word its meanings are intensified. So *Rahmān* would mean the most Merciful—*A Being whose feelings towards His creatures are parental*; but they are very much intensified." (The italics are ours.)

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The *Pioneer's* correspondent in Egypt writes that the inhabitants of Madina and neighbourhood have suffered terribly at the hands of the Turks. "So irritated were the people at the measures taken by the latter, according to the Shereefian organ, *Al Kibla*, that Fakhry Pashi, the commandant of Armenian massacre fame, decided to relax his efforts and to release notables he had thrown into prison. This did not please Djemal Pasha, and he gave immediate orders to revert to the old attitude and make a salutary example. Fakhry Pasha, by no means unwilling, hastened to comply with his chief's orders, and a veritable

siege of all the notables' houses was made, the inmates being shot down and subjected to all manner of atrocities. When he heard of this, Djemal wrote to Fakhry a warm letter of congratulation, and informed him that the Sultan had conferred on him the military medal in gold. Since that date a reign of terror has existed in Madina and the surrounding district."

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In Calcutta the Muhammadans have a weekly paper, called *The Mohammadi*. It is published in the interests of the faith. Muhammadan Bengali is usually very crude, but this paper is written in a high-flown style, and displays considerable editorial ability. The paper stands for Wahabi ideals. The editor has been beating the drum again. He is pained at the distressing condition of the Bengal Muslim community. He says it is all very well to boast of the increasing number of men in Government positions, but the few literates have not improved the standard of the vast majority. But even supposing that there has been improvement, he says the community is hopelessly behind in the support of all that Islám stands for. "With the worship of Pirs, which is idolatry, we are no better than the Hindus."

He would rouse them to action—"Wake up, Muslim brothers, and send forth Mulanas and Maulvis who know how to preach in the vernaculars of the people, and who are not so anxious to display their learning in Arabic and Persian, nor to demand large sums for their ministrations."

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Although rather belated, still the following note is full of encouragement.—"During the month of May, 1916, five young men—all of them recent converts—were baptised by the pastor. Amin-ud-Din, a former pupil of Mr. K. L. Rallia Ram, came down from Rawalpindi and was baptized on May 7th, going on to Dharamsala to take up a course of normal training. Three of these young men were baptized at the morning service on the following Sunday. They were Muhammad Nasib, a well-qualified teacher of Persian and Urdu in Khalsa High School; Muhammad Hussain, a student in the Oriental College; and Inayat Ullah, a middle-passed student, who is now teaching in one of the Rang Mahal branch schools. Muhammad Hussain has, we understand, been disinherited because of his conversion to Christianity, and Inayat Ullah has been robbed of a considerable sum of money and most of his clothing, in retaliation, it is believed, for his having become a Christian. Karam-ud-Din, the fifth of the group, was baptized at Sunday school on the 14th May. Besides the five, Maulvi Narsir-ud-Din, who has recently passed the B.A. examination from Forman Christian College, was baptized at Ludhiana recently, and is now teaching in the Ambala Mission School. Our sympathy goes out to these young men, who have had to meet persecution; but we also rejoice with them that they have been found worthy to suffer for Him they serve."—*Naulakha Church Bulletin*.

BOOK REVIEW

The Story of Mohammed, by Edith Holland, is a new book in the series of the "Heroes of All Time." It has 192 pages, and is a story simply told for the average reader who cares little for the inner meaning of the Prophet's life and faith. The author deals less with essentials and more with poetic touches, superstitions and traditions, which gild the frame of an Arabian hero. Where the religion is mentioned, it is from isolated texts of the Qur'an, or some tradition, which show up the better side of the Prophet's character, as, for instance, his advice on sincerity in prayer, his contempt for hypocrites, kindness to the poor and animals, and the details of his sermon on "love." Polygamy, divorce and slavery, perpetuated by Muhammad, and an essential part of the man and his religion, are either ignored or slurred over, thus making the story incomplete.

The illustrations in the book are unique, displaying unusual insight. They include—Mohammed and his nurse, Halimah; Mohammed's Vision; Bilal calling to Prayer; Mohammed pelted and jeered at in the streets; Mohammed at the Battle of Badr; Mohammed destroying the idols of the Kaabah of Mecca; Mohammed preaching his farewell sermon.

The publishers are George G. Harrap and Co., London.

J. T.

Special Note

It will lessen the work of the secretary considerably if the Indian subscriptions to the League be realised by V.P.P. Will those members who pay from May—the beginning of the League Year—be prepared to receive the V.P.P. letter when it arrives. In a few cases the amount of arrears will be added. Please note that the V.P. letter will be sent out by the Press.

PRAISE AND PRAYER

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him."—Psa. 145: 18.

We ask that this month special prayer be made for every member of the League. Some have to face the call of military duty; others are perplexed concerning finance; others are sorrowing over loved ones smitten down in war.

*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.