

Missionaries to Muslims League

News and Notes.

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NOTES

The whole world just now is interested in Palestine, Mesopotamia, Turkey and the Muslim problem. And Christian workers, other than missionaries to Muslims, are keen to read about and pray for the Muslim world. We would bring them in touch with our League. We would encourage them to join us. We welcome into our membership *Praying-Partners* as well as *Working-Partners*. Pass the word along!

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A Zeal for Islam.—During Christmas week, the All-India Muslim League's annual meetings were held in Calcutta. As the League is almost wholly a political body, we might expect something sensational to happen. At one session, according to *The Statesman*, a strong resolution was about to be moved urging the Indian Government to release two brothers, Messrs. Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, who had been interned, when their old mother was brought on to the platform in the most dramatic fashion, shrouded in a bourkha. This is part of the speech she made:

"Sons of Islâm, my attendance at your meeting, for the first time and perhaps for the last, for I have nearly finished the journey of my life, is not a matter of surprise, though it is a novel thing in the history of Muslim India. . . . Let your energy and enthusiasm last long and be devoted to the service of Islâm. . . . You remember what I said to the Criminal Investigation Department emissary, when he came to speak to my sons on the subject of their release. I said that I would strangle them to death if they should prove traitors to their religion and country. I am living with them in their internment, lest they should waver and lest I lose the chance of setting them right. The crime of which they are accused is that they sympathised with the Turks. Ye children of Islâm, what an insult to our countrymen! No Mussulman should tolerate it. . . . Naturally a Mussulman would have sympathy with his co-religionists in other parts of the world. If this be a crime of which my sons are guilty, then I say that the millions of Mussulmans share in the charge along with my sons. Had not this been the charge levelled against them, I would not have come out here from my seclusion."

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Muslim Hypnotism.—In a report of the Algiers Mission Band there is this extraordinary story. It tells of a blind Muslim lad, named Aissa. "The secret of Aissa's moodiness and refusal to come

to the meetings of late, has been brought to light. He told all about it to-day. 'I did not know what had come to me; I was all the time angry with you all, and I longed with a great longing to go back to my home, and when I started to go to the meetings my feet did not like to move, and a dark cloud seemed to come over me, and when I got there it was as though I heard nothing. At last I told a barber down in the town about it, and he said I was drugged, so I told him about the taleb (some important person in Aissa's tribe), and he asked if he had given me anything to eat or drink. I said nothing but a sfenge (a half-penny butter cake), which he had divided between himself and me and a small boy. But the barber said that explained it.'

"Poor lad; he had felt ill after that sfenge, and, of course, blind as he is, he had no proof that the others had partaken. Behind whatever drug it contained there lies also doubtless the hypnotism in which those Muslims are adepts—the man had *willed* him away from us and from the meetings and off to his own land, and therefore did not trouble himself to force him to go with him. Thank God for the shielding that has been about him, unknown to him and to us, keeping him with us still."

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In our November issue, Mr. Upton made mention of the printing of a special edition of Dr. Pierson's *Many Infallible Proofs* for Muslims. We understand that some time ago one of our members, Miss Harris, of Ludhiana, translated this valuable book into Urdu. It is obtainable at the R.T.S., Lahore.

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With reference to Dr. Weitbrecht Stanton's note in our January issue, regarding the Rev. Ahmad Shah's *Mistahul Qur'an*, the author writes to say that if missionaries desire a copy he will allow them a discount of twenty per cent., but they will need apply to him direct, care S.P.G., Hamirpore, U.P.

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In Miss Fowler's interesting article in our January issue, an unfortunate mistake was made in the fourteenth line. Instead of "forced to settle" it should be "free to settle." Miss Fowler writes: "You will be glad to hear that the two converts I wrote of, are heard of and are well. They are in Gwalior."

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We gather from the newspapers that the Society of Maulvies wrote to the Calcutta University on the desirability of creating a chair of Muslim Theology in the University. In reply, the Registrar stated that the executive will be pleased to consider a scheme for the promotion of Islámic studies, if funds are provided by the Society of Maulvies or by private benefactors.

NOTES OF INTEREST FROM CHINA

BY MR. MARK E. BOTHAM.

I promised, in a somewhat hasty note written a few days ago, to give you some account of what I have learned about the Muslims in Kansu. I think a full-blown paper on the subject would be a bit out of place, so I will now give you such particulars as I can.

Mr. Marshal Bromhall has estimated that the Kansu Province of China "possesses nearly half of the total (Muslim) population of the Empire, if Sinkiang be excluded." Whether this is so or not, it is certain that no one can travel far in Kansu without meeting numbers of Muhammadans. The Muhammadan sign-board is constantly seen hanging in front of inns and eating-shops along most of the main roads. Most of the towns have mosques, and on their streets Muhammadan merchants, labourers and gentry are to be met with in varying numbers. The raftsmen on the Yellow River are nearly all Muhammadans. The beef and mutton butchers and the milkmen are Muslims.

But there are districts in the province which are almost entirely Muhammadan, or in which are Muhammadan towns and throughout which Muhammadan influence is particularly strong.

I have been able to pay three more or less prolonged visits to such districts. Towards the end of last year I travelled to Sining, six days' journey west of the capital city of the province, where the chief military official was a Muhammadan, and his influence was felt throughout the prefecture. Within the last few years he has built a splendid mosque in the city, and himself attends the mid-day service on Fridays. In itinerations through different parts of the prefecture, it was remarkable to see and hear what an increase has taken place in the Muslim population during the past few years. New mosques and schools have been *and are being opened in several smaller towns*. I also met Muslims living among Tibetans in entirely Tibetan style.

In the south-east of Kansu is another Muhammadan district (Chang Chia Ch'uan). It is 10 or 11 days' journey from the capital, and three days' from a mission station. It is visited by native colporteurs, but the antipathy that exists between Chinese and Muslims makes it difficult for much work to be done by native Christians. A good many Arabic and Chinese Scriptures have, however, been sold. The central town and surrounding country for perhaps a day's journey from east to west is entirely Muhammadan, and Muhammadan influence extends a long way in every direction. The religious head of the Muhammadanism of all south-east Kansu is a certain Ma Shan Ren. His influence extends far beyond this district, too, for pilgrims come from Yunnan and even Sinkiang (two or three months' journey) to pay respects to him. This influence has a unifying effect upon his followers, and the "New Sect" has prospered among them. Indeed, Ahongs who went over to such a sect a short time ago had perforce to flee to

Sinkiang. When I was there we were quite politely received for the most part, although there was a good deal of argument, and we were able to preach in the market several times. One could not but feel that anyone who should dare to confess faith in Christ Jesus would have to face hard persecution.

During July of this year, I visited Hochow, a city two days' journey (70 miles) west of the capital. This is the largest and most important Muslim centre in Kansu, it is far more *varied* than Chang Chia Ch'uan. From the T'ao river, 35 miles east of the city, and from a good deal further in the south, the country population is Muhammadan. To the west lies the country inhabited by the Salars-Turki-speaking Muhammadans. When one crosses the T'ao, one comes to a market town inhabited by Chinese who were "converted" to Islám by the sword within the memory of living man. They are quite good Muslims now, and have three mosques. From here one passes over mountains among which live the "Tonghsiang Huei Huei" (East Country—of Hochow—Muhammadans). They are probably the descendants of converted Mongols, and still talk a patois said to resemble Mongolian. They are fairly good Muslims and terrible highway robbers! The town of Hochow is an extraordinary one. The city walls enclose a meagre population of Chinese, and outside, to the south and west, are the crowded Muhammadan suburbs, where there is far more business done than inside the city. I should estimate that of the total population, the Muslim is double the Chinese; fuller investigation may prove the proportion of Muslim to be even larger.

There are 12 mosques in the suburbs. I visited eight of these, and had conversation with the Ahongs and students in several of them. They seem to be very fond of argument, and have often proved a nuisance to the native pastor who is in charge of the missionary out-station that is inside the city, as they sometimes come to the street chapel on purpose to argue. They seemed quite friendly to me in a personal way, but were evidently prepared beforehand with a set of stock arguments against Christian doctrine. I was able to leave Arabic and Chinese Gospels and Tracts in most of the mosques.

There are numerous sects among the Muslims of this district. The "Old Sect," "New Sect," "New New Sect," and one they speak of as the "Heterodox Sect," whose present leader claims to be Jesus! There are also what are called "Men Huan," which appear to be sects of some sort, each of which has its patron saint (so to say). West of the city there are magnificent tombs of leaders of these sects. The Ahong of one of these "Men Huan" (a Men Huan which has communities of its adherents in the provinces of Shensi and Szech'uan as well as in Hochow) told me that in his sect they dedicate each of the five daily prayers to a particular prophet, *viz.*—Adam, Abraham, Jesus, Moses and Muhammad! Will this craving for a mediator, indicated by these things, form a much-needed point of contact?

As I have hinted, there is at present no foreign missionary in Hochow, but there may be within a few months. There are usually

some Muhammadans present when the street chapel is opened. But no special work is being done for them. In all Kansu there has until lately been no missionary giving whole time to this special work, yet the religious and social gulf between the ordinary Chinese and the Muslims would seem to point to the very real need for such workers. And the Hochow "Tonghsiang Huei Huei" and the Salars, with special languages of their own, surely need workers.

FROM FAR AND NEAR

China.—The Rev. H. Walter, writing to *The Young Men of India*, says, "Islám in China is not a live force, as it is in India. The Muslims are so thoroughly merged in the general population that it is not easy to distinguish them. Abhorrence of pork is one of the few uniform signs of their religion, but even the rite of circumcision is far from universally observed. There are mosques in the various Muslim centres, scattered through all provinces of China, but there are not many Muslim worshippers at the Friday assemblies, and in all China, out of the ten million or more Muslims, there are only some scores living who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca. The Muhammadans are generally looked down upon by their Confucian neighbours, as being, the Confucianists believe, less scrupulous morally than themselves, and this has tended to make them more humble and more open to influences from without than is the case with Muslims in other countries. A few deputations of Muslim leaders from Turkey and Egypt have made the rounds of the leading Muslim centres in China, and probably more may be expected after the war, but on the whole the Muslims of China are not in very close touch with the great centres of their faith in the Near East. Those Chinese Muslim leaders who are commenting at all on the present world situation, have declared themselves emphatically on the side of the Allies and opposed to Turkey's alliance with Germany."

Persian Gulf.—Dr. C. Stanley G. Mylrea, writing to *The Star in the East*, says:

"With the disappearance of the Turk from authority in Mesopotamia, all opposition to our work ceases in that part of our field. It will be interesting to see how much difference the new state of things will make in the actual results in our work.

"Bahrein, too, has felt the influence of the war. The large Persian element there, with its anti-Russian sentiment, is more or less pro-German. These Persians, being also for the most part Shiah, are consequently fanatical to a high degree, and have worked against us religiously with all their might. They succeeded in well-nigh emptying our school, and at the present time a large number of our pupils are still afraid to come to us.

“In my own station, Kuwait, we have had in some ways a remarkable year. The political situation seems to have made no difference in the accessibility of the people, and our evangelistic services, held on Sundays in a native house in the centre of the town, have been extraordinarily well attended. In fact, the figures, I fancy, constitute a record for our Mission. An average of quite sixty Muslims was present each Sunday, and this year it looks as if these figures will be exceeded. The situation here differed from that in Bahrein. There they had a missionary and no doctor, while here the position was reversed. Some of the preaching was done by myself, and the colporteurs took turns in giving the message; and very well they did, too. Just lately we have had some opposition in the shape of anti-Christian sermons preached by fanatical Mullahs in the principal mosques of the town, but while we have felt its effects in our school attendance, and in other ways, it does not seem to keep people away from the Sunday services.

“Out in the desert behind the town are always large numbers of Bedouin living in tents. Last year our men could hardly gain admittance to a tent, but this year they are welcome everywhere. On one occasion the colporteur was asked about prayer, so he simply stood up and prayed so that he might show them how Christians pray. His prayer was approved, and surprise expressed at the goodness of the Christian religion. The tribes in camp around Kuwait last year were various, and included the mysterious Suleib. This tribe is held in the greatest contempt by all other Arabs, because of its reputed Christian origin. It has proved to have at least one very interesting custom. On two occasions, in connection with circumcision rites, the colporteur has seen in the door of a Suleibi tent a small cross decorated with brightly coloured ribbons. This custom, they say, has been handed down to them from their forefathers. One theory of their origin is that they sprang from the followers of the Crusading armies who did not return to Europe.”

The Rev. E. E. Calverley, also working at Kuwait, in his annual report says—

“The succession of rulers at the beginning of the year brought the loss of a favourable attitude toward our work, but it meant for us that our dependence was to be more entirely placed upon Christ. The opposition that developed took many boys from under our care, but brought us into more frequent and intimate contact with a select few. Furthermore, the methods of the opponents were so typically Muslim and unscrupulous, that they only emphasized the contrast between that religion and ours. The Holy Spirit used this contact to teach the boys the chief principles and doctrines of Christianity. In the case of two of them, God has followed up the work of teaching with the gift of faith. It was an occasion for praise and glory to God when, on the 17th of August, while taking a walk along the beach at sunset, they

simultaneously confessed Christ as their Saviour and asked me to pray with them. The following week a third young man, who had found incomplete intellectual satisfaction and no power for good in Islám, joined us and also accepted Christ. Their growth in grace and knowledge has been slow, and on the whole satisfactory. Our confidence is in Christ, the Author of their faith, that He will also perfect it."

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The Rev. J. Pengwern Jones, writing to *The Remembrancer*, says—
 "Probably more Muhammadans were baptized the past year in India than ever before, not only among the lower classes, but even from the most highly educated. The spirit of enquiry is abroad among them; hundreds of Muhammadan students are studying the Bible and comparing it with the Qur'án. We believe that the Muhammadan community ere long will change its whole attitude towards Christ, and possibly will endeavour so to change the Qur'án that it will be more in line with the Bible."

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We have received from the C.I.S., Madras—*Graded Bible Lessons*, by Clayton; *The Lord's Day*, by Boggs; *Christianity Tested by Reason*, by Hume. Dr. Hume's little book is suitable for Muslims as well as Hindus. His chapter on "The God of Christianity" is very fine. *Bible Studies in Evangelism* is another booklet sent us. It is by A. A. Scott. We intend giving a copy to each of our evangelists who knows English. *The Senior Essay Writer*, by Oakley (Re. 1-12-0), is just the book that missionaries have been looking for. Students often ask us to recommend something worthy, as so many "Keys" to the study of English and the writing of essays are such trash.

A WARNING

One of our members in the Panjab has sent the following letter—

"I feel that I ought to tell you the following story, to put you on your guard against your paper getting into wrong hands. There are two Muslim boys whom I have known for many months (Abdul and Hafiz, I will call them). These two have been coming to me constantly, and we have discussed Islám and Christianity by the hour together. They are both antagonistic towards Christianity, and were constantly bringing what they conceived to be new arguments against the faith.

"One day when they came to see me they happened to see lying on my table a copy of the League confidential papers, and also your letter saying something about the 'good work' (!) I am doing among Muslims. I pointed out to them that 'confidential' meant 'private,' and that they must not read my private papers.

"One day, however, when I was out they came here, rummaged amongst my things and collected some seven or eight of these confidential papers. These they sent to a Maulvie (who is a Qadiani leader and a most bitter opponent of Christianity), with a letter as follows:—

“ ‘In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

“ ‘Dear Sir,

“ ‘We have taken these papers out of the room of You will see how dangerous he is to Islām, and how he is fighting against our religion. Are we going to do nothing,’ etc., etc.

“ ‘If he comes to you please tell him lies,’ etc. (I need not point out the obvious kink in their morality, which enables them ‘in the name of God’ to steal and ask a Maulvie to tell lies).

“ The Maulvie came straight to me, and shewed me the papers and the letter, and asked me what he should do. I suggested that he should call the boys, point out their mistake to them, and tell them to bring the papers to me and to apologize to me for what they had done.

“ The Maulvie called the boys, but failed (or did not intend) to make them bring the papers back to me. So the next day I went to the Maulvie and asked for the papers. He gave them to me, and when I got back here I saw on the back of the envelope in which they were enclosed a note written by him in Urdu to another Maulvie, asking him to read the enclosed papers as they were very important and to return them at once.

“ This means, of course, that some of the most antagonistic Muslims in the Panjab are now aware of the existence of the League Paper. I am very sorry indeed to have been the unwitting cause of this. The Muslims are practically certain now to try and get copies for themselves. The Maulvie and his friends are quite capable of writing to you under a false name, and saying that they are missionaries.”

Editor’s Note.—The above letter gives me the opportunity of appealing to all our members to guard carefully the papers and letters of the League. And may I ask that members advise me immediately of any change of address. Six times last year I received back through the Dead Letter Office six envelopes sent to different addresses, marked “Not known” or “Left.” On making enquiries I learnt that the members had either gone on furlough or taken a trip to the hills. But the point I wish to emphasise is this: *the envelopes came back, but not a single copy of the paper they contained.* Did they fall into the hands of the Muslims?

NEW MEMBERS

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|------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 252. | REV. C. L. OGILVIE, | Amer. Pres. Mission, | Peking, China. |
| 253. | MISS F. A. CHESHIRE, | Lady Kinnaird Hospital, | Lucknow. |
| 254. | MISS HARGROVE, | Nazarene M., | Kishorganj,
Bengal. |
| 255. | REV. J. J. LUCAS, D.D., | Amer. Pres. M., | Allahabad. |

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

JOHN TAKLE,
Brahmanbaria, Bengal.

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