

# Missionaries to Muslims League

News and Notes.

Series VI, No. 7.

November, 1917.

## CARRY ON!

To what extent has it been possible to carry on in the matter of producing and circulating Arabic Christian Literature for Muslims during the first three years of the great World-War?

In answering that question, an immediate difficulty presents itself, *viz.*, that we have no means of communication with Syria to hear how our friends have been faring at the Beirut Mission Press. It is true that Dr. Hoskins is now in the United States, and he tells us that the manager was still in Beirut at the time of writing, but we know no more than that. It will thus be seen that the writer is shut up to Egypt. On the other hand this is not altogether a disadvantage, for it may be to the glory of God to show how much work has been possible in *one* Muhammadan land during war time.

The Rev. Stephen Trowbridge, as the Near East representative of the World's Sunday School Association (and known to us as delegate to Lucknow Conference), has begun publishing work here, and has already not less than ten publications on the list. The two largest of these were issued in partnership with the Nile Mission Press, but in general the outstanding feature of his publishing is the issue of pamphlets designed to teach the teacher how to teach.

The C.M.S. (Egypt) has continued its work, and two of Canon Gairdner's booklets have been published in English by the Christian Literature Society, Madras, and in Arabic by himself in Cairo. These have been reviewed in *The Moslem World*. In addition, he has sent to press a large number of "Portionettes," or extracts from Holy Scripture.

The recent report of the American Literature Society informs us that three books for Muslims have been printed and distributed, during 1916, one of these being *Many Infallible Proofs*, by the late Dr. A. T. Pierson. This society, under its old name of the New York Committee of the Nile Mission Press, had done much before, but hopes to do more yet. It has made grants for literature *production* to the C.M.S., Egypt General Mission, American United P. Mission and ourselves, but we hope it will soon be able to send grants to all the missions for *distribution*.

"The Lord gave the word, great was the company of women-publishers." One could hardly avoid referring to a Russian lady, who, during the time of enforced retirement, has prepared not less than twelve MSS. in the *Sart* language. Most of these are translations from the N.M.P. publications, but one, called by her *Words of Life*, and running to 140 pages of MS., is a Beirut book. Then, again, Miss I. Lilius Trotter, of Algiers, has inaugurated a two-colour series

of tracts for women and children at the Nile Mission Press, Cairo, while Miss Haworth and other helpers have been producing stories and other publications, and the influence of the late Miss Louise Marston, of India, is still spreading through the Arabic translations of her stories. "What shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell" of other ladies who have heard and obeyed the call to preach Christ in this most prolific of all ways—the printed page.

The Nile Mission Press has also been "carrying on." Three years ago we had 130 publications; we now have 230, or an increase of seventy-seven per cent.! Some forty-seven of these were published between April, 1916 and March, 1917, and include adaptations (or originals) of books by Professor Fleming, F.R.S., Dr. Beardslee, Dr. Zwemer, Dr. F. B. Meyer, and—our office-boy! In addition, our committee have thought this to be a fitting moment for "lengthening cords" as well as "strengthening stakes," and have sent us an experienced lady-worker to organize the Children's Department.

As to the existence of any outstanding feature as compared with three years ago, one might say that there is a decided demand for *less controversy* and also a desire for more short portions of the Word of God, called by us "Portionettes."

But now comes the most important of all questions: What is the ratio between production and distribution? We know that here lies the rock on which many literary mission-boats have foundered, but although the Nile Mission Press has had some of its best fields closed to it, yet it is good to report that while in the year before the war 123,000 copies of *Gospel* books (not merely good books) were circulated, mostly by sales, yet during the war, in the twelve months from April, 1915 to March, 1916, 133,000 were distributed, which is an increase of eight per cent. During the next year, ending March, 1917, we increased again, rising to 147,000. Not only so, but we are thankful to have heard of Muslims accepting Christ, some of them as recipients of our literature, and some of them as workers on our staff producing literature. Surely the message of Isaiah 46: 4 has been tested and demonstrated: "I have made and I will bear."

Cairo.

ARTHUR T. UPSON,  
Honorary Secretary,  
Lucknow Conference Literature Committee.

**The Enlightened Begum.**—We have referred before to the very progressive Begum of Bhopal. The *Express* says, "All advocates of temperance must have welcomed with the greatest pleasure the announcement that H. H. the Begum of Bhopal has proclaimed in her territory, that any Muhammadan found in a state of intoxication, or carrying liquor in his hand or sitting in a liquor shop, should be arrested and prosecuted and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, if found guilty. It is a pity that Her Highness has excluded her Hindu subjects from the operation of the measure."

## PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE CHRIST AND THEIR FULFILMENT

TO THE EDITOR, *News and Notes.*

DEAR SIR,

I am grateful for Mr. Hasler's kind appreciation and criticism of my little book, *Prophecies Concerning the Christ*. It was obviously not primarily controversial, and intended chiefly for the use of "the intelligent Indian workers" to whom Mr. Hasler refers.

The plan of going straight through the Old Testament in order to make the book easy for reference did not lend itself to discrimination between the more obvious and direct, and the less obvious and indirect references to the Messiah.

I am sorry if I have given any quotations that are misleading. It would seem that I am erring in good company, that is, with "some of the New Testament writers!" One of these, St. Matthew, was among the little company who heard that wonderful discourse of our Lord on the Messianic prophecies in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets and in the Psalms, for the comprehension of which they needed and received a special opening of their understanding, and presumably were thereafter competent to quote, in spite of modern critics! In the Oxford *Helps to the Study of the Bible*, to which I am largely indebted for my selection, the learned author makes the following remarks on the Messianic prophecies in the Psalms: "Men's minds had to be prepared not only for a triumphant, but a suffering King, and the Spirit of God made use of the *varied experiences* of the Son of Jesse to shadow forth the mysterious sufferings of the coming King. Hence we have not merely Royal but Passion Psalms. We have in the 22nd Psalm a marvellous anticipation of One for whom suffering shall be the path to victory. Thus the Psalm is charged with a deeper meaning than that which appears upon the surface. The character of the *personal suffering* there described was *providentially moulded to be a type, and the record of it by the Holy Spirit to be a prophecy, of the sufferings of Christ.*"

It needed the *fulfilment* to make the prophecy clear. "As it is written" was only fully recognized *after the event*. "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him." "These (Scriptures of the Old Testament) are they which testify of me," "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

We, who are looking for the fulfilment of the promises of the "latter days," shall be much wiser about the predictions *after the event*.

Meanwhile, if my little book should prove useful to the Indian student of prophecy, I shall be very thankful.

Yours sincerely,

M. ROSE GREENFIELD.

## FROM FAR AND NEAR

**Wanted, Enthusiasm.**—The Rev. L. Bevan Jones, of Dacca, who spent six months studying Arabic in Cairo, writes: "I am in Edinburgh with my wife, spending a couple of months of sheer holiday.

"The great enterprise is always in my thoughts, and we uphold you all in our prayers. We came across the enclosed the other day in re-reading Bulwer Lytton's *The Last Days of Pompeii*, and so I am sending it for *News and Notes*, should you deem it worth a place. My wife and I left Egypt at the end of May, after six months' stay there, and, being shipwrecked off the coast of Italy, saw Naples, Vesuvius and ancient Pompeii—hence our renewed interest in the great novel."

*The Quotation.*—"The Nazarene was one of those hardy, vigorous, and enthusiastic men, by whom God in all times has worked the revolutions of earth, and those, above all, in the establishment and in the reformation of His own religion;—men who were formed to convert, because formed to endure. It is men of this mould whom nothing discourages, nothing dismays; in the fervour of belief they are inspired and they inspire. Their reason first kindles their passion, but the passion is the instrument they use; they force themselves into men's hearts, while they appear only to appeal to their judgment. Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm; it is the real allegory of the 'Tale of Orpheus'—it moves stones, it charms brutes. Enthusiasm is the genius of sincerity, and truth accomplishes no victories without it."

**Changes in Busrah.**—We saw a letter the other day written by one of our members (the Rev. Jno. Van Ess, of Busrah), which throws light upon the attitude of the British and their encouragement of missionaries in the newly-acquired territory bordering the Persian Gulf. He says—"During the last days of the Turkish régime I fairly haunted the Serai, trying to get the Turkish Director of Education to release my school teachers from the army; in fact, I all but kissed his hand in my supplication. Then came the British, and the Director of Education, with others, fled northward to Amara. After the capture of Amara a number of prisoners were brought back, and one fair day I boarded the prison ship to interview some of my erstwhile friends. Among them was the Director of Education, barcheaded and barefooted, and with scarcely enough to cover him. This time he actually kissed my hand, and begged for a rupee. "*E pur si muove*," said Galileo—the world does move. I will not insist that it was a privilege to have my hand kissed by the Director of Education, for I am not an aristocrat. I only mean to say that the problem has been eliminated.

"The local Government has given the school a very substantial grant, to enable us to equip and conduct the work along lines which shall to some extent suffice. Further, the authorities have requested us to open normal classes in which are to be trained the Government school teachers of the future. With all of this, no restriction whatever is placed on the missionary activities of the school. The Bible is taught to those who are being trained for their positions as teachers in

the Government primary schools, and the missionaries have been requested to superintend and direct these."

**A Madina Man Baptised.**—A missionary of the Egypt General Mission writes from Belbeis to his mission paper:—

"Concerning our Arabian friend, Hanna: He is a pure Arab from Madina, one of the sacred cities of Islám, a place in which it is, humanly speaking, impossible for a Christian to live. He was brought to the Lord through another convert from Islám in a town on the Persian Gulf. On returning to Madina to fetch his wife and children he was terribly ill-treated, and sentenced to be hanged by the Muslim Court. In the mercy of God he escaped and came to Egypt. After a long search for work he turned up in Belbeis, and we found something for him to do in our compound. Since coming to us he has been set upon twice, the first time being found unconscious on the ground. He is possessed of a bulldog obstinacy, which makes him rather difficult to deal with at times, and he is quite fearless, and is ready to suffer further if need be. But with all his faults he is very sensitive to the Spirit's working, and one can watch him getting victory. We had the joy last November of seeing him confess Christ in baptism—perhaps the first man from Madina who has ever taken this step. He is longing to become an evangelist, and is seeking to prepare himself with all his heart for this work. So we pray for him that the obstinacy and fearlessness of his natural character may, under the power of the Holy Ghost, be mellowed into strong resolution and wise tactfulness until he becomes a mighty firebrand for God."

## ILLUSTRATIONS FROM MUSLIM SOURCES

One of the most spiritual of the Muslim writers was Jalaluddin Rumi, who was born in Balkh in the year 1207 A.D., but lived most of his life in the Iconium of St. Paul, in Asia Minor, hence the title "Rumi" (Roman) given him by the Muslim world.

Two of his books are famous. One, the *Diwan-i-Shams-i-Tabriz*, was written to commemorate a great friend, and the *Masnavi*, which in India is classed by the Muhammadans as second only to the Qur'an and Traditional books. The *Masnavi* contains upwards of 26,000 couplets. It is intensely spiritual in parts. For that reason we should draw from it as much as possible. One writer has said, "Briefly speaking, the subject of the *Masnavi* may be said to be the love of the soul for God as its Origin, to Whom it longs to return; not the submission of the ordinary pious Muslim to the iron despotism of Allah. The thesis is illustrated with an extraordinary wealth of imagery and apologue throughout the six books composing the work." As will be seen from the quotations, Rumi had a great reverence for Jesus.

1. *Although a Sufi, with decided pantheistic views, yet he taught the frailty and sinfulness of man and the personality of the Devil. He says:—*

"Many a net the Devil spreads, weaving snare on snare,  
We, like foolish birds, are caught captive unaware;  
From one net no sooner free, straightway in another  
We are tangled, fresh defcats aspirations smother;  
Till upon the ground we lie, helpless as a stone,  
We, who might have gained the sky, we, who might have flown.

When we seek to house our grain, pile a goodly store,  
Pride, a hidden mouse, is there, nibbling evermore;  
Till upon the harvest day, lo, no golden heap,  
But a mildewed mass of chaff maggots over creep.

Many a brilliant spark is born where the hammers ply,  
But a lurking thief is there; prompt, with finger sly,  
Spark on spark he puts them out, sparks which might have soared,  
Perish underneath his touch. Help us then, O Lord!  
What with gin and trap and snare, pitfall and device,  
How shall we poor sinners reach Thy fair Paradise?"

2. *Rumi likens the body of the sensualist to an ass.*

"You deserted Jesus, a mere ass to feed,  
In a crowd of asses you would take the lead;  
Those who follow Jesus, win to wisdom's ranks;  
Those who fatten asses get a kick for thanks.  
Pity keep for Jesus, pity not the ass,  
Let not fleshly impulse intellect surpass;  
If an ass could somewhat catch of Jesus' mind,  
Classed among the sages he himself would find;  
Though because of Jesus you may suffer woe,  
Still from Him comes healing, never let Him go."

Field's translation, *Masnavi*, Bk. II—Story VIII.

3. *Rumi finds the Christ spirit to be the ideal one in man, but the tongue does endless mischief.*

"In each human spirit is a Christ concealed,  
To be helped or hindered, to be hurt or healed;  
If from any human soul you lift the veil  
You will find a Christ there hidden without fail;  
Woe, then, to blind tyrants whose vindictive ire,  
Venting words of fury, sets the world on fire."

4. *Rumi's Warnings to the sinner.* He says:—

"God calls Himself\* 'Seeing,' to the end that  
His eye may every moment scare you from sinning.  
God calls Himself† 'Hearing,' to the end that  
You may close your lips against foul discourse  
God calls Himself‡ 'Knowing,' to the end that  
You may be afraid to plot evil.  
These names are not mere accidental names of God,  
They are names derived from God's essential attributes."

*Masnavi*, Bk. IV—Story I.

5. *Perseverance in Preaching.*

"Noah repeated his call for nine hundred years.  
But his people only increased in rebellion.  
Never did he draw back from admonishing them,  
Never did he retire into the cave of silence.

---

NOTE.—Most of the quotations are from the English Translation of *Masnavi Ma'Navi*, by E. H. Whinfield, M.A.

\* *Al-Atim*. † *As-Sami*. ‡ *Al-Basir*.

He said, 'At the barking and howling of the dogs  
 No caravan ever turned back in its road.  
 Nor does the full moon on a bright night cease shining  
 Because of the howling of dogs on earth.'

*Masnavi*, Bk. VI—Prologue.

6. *Rumi lays emphasis on the necessity for change and culture of the heart, as opposed to what he calls "the yoke of custom."*

"You who seek no more of Him than to name His name,  
 What do His name and fame suggest? The idea of Him.  
 And the idea of Him guides you to union with Him.  
 Know you a guide without something to which it guides?  
 Were there no roads there would be no ghouls.  
 Know you a name without a thing answering to it?  
 Have you ever plucked a rose (*Gul*) from *Gûf* and *Lâm*?  
 You name His name; go, seek the reality named by it?"

*Masnavi*, Bk. I—Story XIV.

He finds it necessary, in emphasising heart culture, to spiritualise many of the rites of Islâm. In his *Diwan-i-Shams-i-Tabriz* he deals with the Mecca pilgrim's act of encircling the Kaaba.

"Beats there a heart within that breast of thine,  
 Then compass reverently its sacred shrine:  
 For the essential Kaaba is the heart,  
 And no proud pile of perishable art.

When God ordained the pilgrim rite, that sign  
 Was meant to lead thy thoughts to things divine;  
 A thousand times *he* treads that round in vain,  
 Who gives one human heart a needless pain.

Leave wealth behind; bring God thy heart, Whose light  
 Will guide thy footsteps through the gloomiest night.  
 God spurns the riches of a thousand coffers,  
 And says, the saint is he his heart who offers;  
 Nor gold nor silver seek I, but above  
 All gifts the heart, and buy it with my love;  
 Yea, one sad contrite heart when men despise  
 More than my throne and fixed decree I prize;  
 The meanest heart that ever man has spurned  
 Is a clear glass where God may be discerned."

In a parable of Moses and the Shepherd, Rumi shows that if the heart is right it matters little how a man expresses himself in prayer. He says, "Moses once heard a shepherd praying as follows: 'O God, show me where Thou art, that I may become Thy servant. I will clean Thy shoes, and comb Thy hair, and sew Thy clothes, and fetch Thee milk!' When Moses heard him praying in this senseless manner, he rebuked him, saying, 'O foolish one, though your father was a Muslim you have become an infidel! God is a spirit, and needs not such gross ministrations as in your ignorance you suppose.' The shepherd was abashed at the Prophet's rebuke, he tore his clothes and fled away into the desert."

A voice came from God to Moses,  
 Why hast thou sent My servant away?  
 Thou hast come to draw men to union with Me,  
 Not to drive them far away from Me....  
 I regard not the outside and the words,  
 I regard the inside and the state of the heart....

How long wilt thou dwell on words and superficialities?  
 A burning heart is what I want; consort with burning!  
 O Moses! the lovers of fair rites are one class,  
 They whose hearts and souls burn with love are another "

*Masnavi*, Bk. II—Story VII.

7. *Rumi teaches the necessity for the present influence of Jesus for heart purity.* In at least four places he speaks of "the Breath of Jesus" as something extraordinary in its healing and regenerative power. The first quotation is historical. He says:—

"The house of 'Isa was the banquet of men of heart,  
 Ho! afflicted one, quit not this door!  
 From all sides the people ever thronged,  
 Many blind and lame, and halt and afflicted,  
 To the door of the house of 'Isa at dawn,  
 That with his breath he might heal their ailments."

*Masnavi*, Bk. III—Story II.

In another place Rumi says that the spirit of man is exceedingly poor without something to strengthen it, and among other influences

"This breath of Jesus is not like every ordinary breath."

*Masnavi*, Bk. V—Story VI.

He goes further: he says religious emotions are uncertain, "sometimes excessive, sometimes deficient," but the "pure," the true spiritual soul, is above all these.

"The pure one is regenerated by the breath of Jesus."

*Masnavi*, Bk. III—Story VI.

But the most striking of all is when he says:—

"Spring may come, but on granite will grow no green thing;  
 It was barren in winter, 'tis barren in spring;  
 And granite man's heart is, till grace intervene,  
 And, crushing it, clothe the long barren with green.  
 When the fresh Breath of Jesus shall touch the heart's core,  
 It will live, it will breathe, it will blossom once more."

## NEW MEMBERS

234.	MISS FOWLER,	Friends Mission,	Bhopal, C. I.
235.	MISS SALMOND,	New Zealand Presbyterian Mission,	Jagadhri, Panjab.
236.	MISS MACKINTOSH,	Ch. of Scot. Mission,	Gujrat, Panjab.
237.	MISS K. OGBORN,	Meth. Episcopal,	Wuha, China.
238.	MR. E. S. ARNDT,	Independent,	Hankow, China.

*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.*