

Missionaries to Muslims League

News and Notes.

Series VII, No. 4.

AUGUST, 1918.

HOW SHALL WE STRENGTHEN OUR CAUSE IN INDIA?

It will not be the fault of "a member in Bombay" if within a short period we do not link up all Indian Missioneries to Muslims in a strong body possessing a voice and influence that will tell upon every mission board having interests in the welfare of the land and people. His letter in the June issue has stirred not a few and we are glad to print below the opinions of some of our members—

The Rev. Canon Goldsmith, who has been a member of the League Committee from its formation, writes:—

I expect I was one of those who gave a disheartening reply to our enthusiastic Bombay member, and up to the present moment I feel the difficulties of distance and time to spare for any All-India Central Committee. Our "Missionaries to Moslems League," to my mind, is the best agency we can have under present circumstances for any united action. The recently published List of Members is most encouraging and might be very useful. Surely all special needs, whenever they occur, can be advertised by our hard-working Secretary in the monthly *News and Notes*. By all means let us be ready in hope and faith for great developments at any moment. M. G. G.

The Rev. E. M. Wherry, D.D., also a member of the League Committee, writes:—

The "Member from Bombay" raises an important question as to the need of some special Indian organisation for the more active extension of Muslim Evangelisation. He seems to think that at least two organisations have failed to do anything worth while. One of these is the Lucknow 1911 Continuation Committee and the other is the Missionaries to Muslims League. What were these bodies organised for? As I understand the Continuation Committee had reference entirely to the *perpetuity* of the World's Conference on Islam. *Ad interim* it might undertake to carry out any duty assigned to it, but so far as I

know it was not expected to inaugurate any special work of evangelisation. That work was left to the various missionary societies whom representatives in Conference were expected to report to their respective societies or missions. The principal addresses and resolutions of Conference were published for the benefit of the societies and the public in general. The proper work of continuation has been accomplished by *the missions represented*. Hence we have seen the opening of new mission stations in Muslim lands, the setting aside, for special work among Muslims, of men qualified in many mission stations; and the effort to increase efficiency by encouraging workers to acquire the Arabic language and to study Muslim theological literature. *This is being done, and much more*, because of the conferences in Cairo and Lucknow.

The Missionaries to Muslims League was organised, as an outcome of Lucknow 1911, for purposes "inspirational and informative," which is most important. It has undoubtedly done much to instruct and encourage all missionaries in their work for Muslim evangelisation.

We do not need new organisations to do the proper work of the Churches. The splendid work already organised in India, Persia, Egypt and North Africa and elsewhere might be strengthened by Interdenominational Federation, but until the Federation of the Protestant Churches can be brought about, Interdenominational Missions cannot be organised. If we continue to work and unite in prayer continually, each member building the wall in front of his own mission house and aiding everyone as he can, we shall have done the best we can to *unify the missionary bodies* in the Lord's work for Muslims and so hasten the day when we may be able to present a united front to the powers of Islám.

E. M. WHERRY,
Mussoorie.

The Rev. H. Sutton, M.A., of Mymensingh, Bengal, writes—

As we have understood it, the purpose of the League has been to provide a stimulus to prayer, to offer facilities for an interchange of information, and to establish a fellowship of encouragement, and all this primarily among workers on the field, and only secondarily and indirectly among missionary leaders at the home base. That it has been effective on the field we cannot doubt: as to the home base we cannot speak with the same confidence.

Can the effectiveness of the League be increased either in its intensity or in its range? Two points seem abundantly clear. Firstly, we must set a limit to the increase of organisation. We deprecate the institution of new committees or conferences. Rather let existing bodies be employed. For this reason we question the wisdom or the practicability of forming an All-India Missions to Muslims League. Secondly, due recognition must be made of the vital fact that the Field Councils or Committees of the various Missions that look beyond

India for their support are the natural and proper channel through which representations regarding the occupation of any new field or the acceptance, equipment and placing of mission agents should be made to the home authorities. The field cannot usurp the functions of the home base.

On the one hand, then, we have the Committee of the League, on the other the Field Councils or Committees. Can the League Committee be so strengthened and its range of work so widened that it may be able, by correspondence rather than by meetings regularly convened, to collect information and formulate tentative suggestions calculated to stimulate workers on the field, and at the same time to provide material with which convincing representations can be made to the home authorities? Can the Secretary give the time and energy necessary for this work? Can the members of the League Committee promise their support? Everything hinges on the answer to these questions. If the League Committee can take on this wider work, then, using the province as the unit, it might be possible, as the Editor suggests, to link up in some way with the Provincial Councils and thus gain added weight for any representations that the League Committee may be able to make.

HEDLEY SUTTON.

The Rev. H. A. Walter, M.A., Member of the League Committee, writes--

I am very glad to note that the "Member in Bombay" has rejoined the League. No one of us would be found to contend that it is accomplishing all that it might, but it is the only league of its kind in India and the Far East, containing now within its membership probably a majority of the workers among Muslims in India, so that it would seem as though any enthusiastic labourer in this field (as I personally know our Bombay friend to be) can surely help the cause, as well as the League, more from the inside than by working alone outside or endeavouring to form a new organisation which might be more in line with his ideas. I think, too, that it is easy for us to belittle the work which the present League has done. I said to Mr. Rhodes, at Chefoo, last September that I supposed that, now the interest in Islám in China was increasing so rapidly, missionaries in China would soon be having a league of their own. He said he did not think so, at least for a long time, as the need would continue for the workers among Muslims in India and in China to share their experience and mutually help each other; and he went on to pay a tribute to what the League has meant to the little band of workers in China. A number of the "How Christ Won My Heart" experiences, published in *News and Notes*, have been translated into Mandarin (as well as other languages) and are being used of God in the work there. Testimonies have reached me from Arabia, and from America, as well of the value of our League and its periodical, not to mention the test many of us in India could bring regarding its usefulness to us; so that I do not think we need to feel discouraged.

Now as to our friend's criticism and his comparison of the situation in India and in China. It seems to me that he considers the China Continuation Committee and the Lucknow Continuation Committee to be kindred bodies. The China Continuation Committee is analogous to our Representative Council of Missions, an outgrowth and continuation of the Edinburgh Conference. I was very deeply impressed, while in China, with the aggressive, constructive, extensive work being done by this interdenominational body from its headquarters building in Shanghai. With a number of full-time European and Chinese secretaries, under the presidency of Bishop L. H. Roots, the Committee is actively at the disposal of the Churches and Missions for all forms of co-operative activity. It was almost inevitable that the new interest in and plans for work for Muslims should be linked up with and promoted by that body, working out through individual leaders like Messrs. Rhodes and Ogilvie.

Here in India our situation is quite different. I am in no position to criticise the National Missionary Council as I have never been a member, but from what I have seen of one of the provincial councils, of which I was for a time a member, I should say that we are proceeding on much more cautious, less courageously constructive and widely useful, lines. This may be due to such a difference in conditions in China and in India as has made inevitable a divergence in the development of the two organisations; I do not know. In any case I agree with the League Secretary's feeling, expressed in his "Note," that our present League Committee might well be enlarged and strengthened,—notably by the addition of some of our Indian brothers—and that it would be worth while endeavouring to secure a larger measure of Muhammadan work on the part of the Representative Council of Missions, representing as it does all of the important missionary bodies in India. It hardly seems as though there is a sphere of work for the Lucknow Continuation Committee, and I should say that as far as local work in India is concerned it might as well be allowed to die a natural death. Distances in India are indeed great, and financial problems always loom large, but I wish we might soon achieve a conference on Muslim work of as many of those interested as could be assembled in some central place, to discuss all of these questions of organisation, as well as the larger opportunities opening up through the war, of which our Bombay friend writes. Would such a gathering be possible and worth while?

H. A. W.

While in Darjeeling recently, I took the opportunity of meeting the Metropolitan and discussing with him the whole question raised by a member in Bombay. He has always been a most sympathetic member of the League. He gave me his carefully considered opinion. He said the League should remain as it is and what it is—something "inspirational and informative." He thought it would not be possible to

elect certain members to sit on the Representative Mission Councils in the different provinces, but he did think that if we applied to the National Missionary Council (of which he is the President) and asked that body to elect a sub-committee on Muhammadan work that our application would be sympathetically considered. If such a sub-committee were formed in the National Council, provincial representation would in time be almost certain.

J. T.

The Metropolitan advised corresponding with the Rev. H. Anderson, Secretary of the Council, on the matter, who writes—

“ We have already fourteen Standing Committees connected with the Council, and it is only in the few cases where the conveners and members are absolutely keen that really successful and progressive work is accomplished. Personally I consider the work among the Muslims of India important enough to have everything possible done to keep it up to a high level of efficiency, but whether linking your League on to the National Missionary Council would accomplish much depends entirely upon the members of the Council who will be appointed to deal with that subject. I should agree with the Bishop in the opinion that the League should remain what it is. We have an executive meeting of the Council on the 24th July next, at which committee meeting the date and place of the annual council meeting is decided. It will be in the United Provinces some time at the end of October or beginning of November. I think the members of your League might be approached by you to see whether they would approve the appointment of the Committee, and it would be sufficient, if they did, that the recommendation should be sent to the Council through the Bishop of Calcutta or some other member of the League who is also a member of the Council. I doubt if there would be any opposition on the part of the Council members.”

From the remarks of the Bishop of Calcutta and Mr. Anderson's letter we have been led to think that possibly Christian work among Muslims in India might benefit considerably if a sub-committee of the National Missionary Council be formed. As Mr. Anderson says, the members appointed would have to be “ absolutely keen.” Certainly such a sub-committee would have more authority and influence with the different mission boards than a League which exists only for prayer, inspiration and information. We are strengthening the League Committee, who will be asked to consider the Bishop's proposal.

MUSLIM CONVERTS' TESTIMONIES

In our February issue we printed a request from China for testimonies of Muslim converts. We print below a story from Persia.

The late Hadji Ali

A few years ago Hadji Ali went on pilgrimage to Mecca. He and some other Persians were fellow-travellers with a Mujtahid, who is still alive and is living in Isfahan. The following is Hadji Ali's own narrative.

When we started on our pilgrimage, there were about twelve of us who travelled together with ——— and had the same quarters. During our journey the Agha used to pitch a tent, and sometimes in the daytime, and often when it was quite dark, he used to say his prayers with such a loud voice that he did not allow us to have any rest or sleep, and this act of his produced the impression on me and my companions that he must be a man of great zeal and have for his religion the "Prophet" and God. Moreover, we also were thinking of imitating him in order to gain the praise of man and the approval of our Creator. Providentially we were delivered from this fatal hypocrisy, when one day the Agha invited us to his tent, and after the preliminary and usual civilities asked each one of us whether we had any money and how much, till he came to me and asked me, "How much money have you got?" I said, twenty-eight liras. Then he said, "It is not safe for you to carry so much money with you; you had better hand it over to me." And as you know one naturally under the circumstances will gladly get rid of the thing which probably would endanger his life, I quite sincerely trusted him and handed the money over to him, that on our arrival at our destination I might receive what I had entrusted to him. This was what actually happened: for the first night all of us dined together, but from the second day each of us got about 20 misquls (about 3½ oz.) of a very coarse kind of bread which the Arabs used to have, and after a few days that also was stopped. I had a private talk with one of my fellow-travellers concerning the manner of the treatment we received; instantly he answered me and said, "Do not talk about it, the Agha is a great hypocrite and all our Mujtahids are the same: if you mention anything against him, you will endanger your life." So quite in a despondent mood, I went on my journey till I reached Madina and Mecca and several other places, and I am very much grieved to say that in all those sacred places, so-called, I never met a man who had the fear of God in his heart. Then suddenly this thought struck me, that perhaps the followers of Muhammad have not the spirit of the "Prophet" and have degenerated; so I will think of the Qur'an and the "Prophet." To tell you the truth, after long agony of mind and distress of soul I came to the firm conviction that I must give up all hope of receiving any spiritual help from man who is sinful, weak, and mortal. Providentially, as I was musing on religion, and spirit, death, sin and eternity, I came to the (C.M.S.) Hospital and tried to find out what comfort the Christian religion has to give. In this state, as I was a Kulah-duz (a maker of hats and worker in skins), one day Dr. Carr showed me an overcoat and wanted me to line it with lamb-skins, and as it was in the afternoon, I had to work till 9 p.m., and so he allowed me to sleep in the passage of his house. About midnight I was wakened by the sound of the footsteps of a man going up the staircase into an upper room. When I opened my eyes, I could make out that it was the Doctor, and I perceived that he was going to pray in a room where there was no one to see him or hear him pray except the all-seeing God. Then I began to think and I had vivid recollection of the Agha who used to shout out his prayers aloud. And I began to compare the Doctor, who is a Christian, with Agha who is a Muhammadan. The Christian prays to Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, He who came down from Heaven, became man, and His whole life was blameless, and by His sacrifices and through His death and Resurrection He conquered death, abolished sin and vanquished Satan, and He is always present, willing and able to save them who believe in His Name.

When Hadji Ali was asked about his courage as regards confessing Jesus Christ before men, he said, "I am ready to die for my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." A few days ago, (Tuesday, 17th, April, 1918,) —, one of the converts, came to — and told him that Hadji Ali yesterday sent for him, and when he and a friend went to see him, Hadji Ali said to him, "Get a Prayer-Book, and read out of it the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments." And when we were reading from the Prayer-Book, he quite audibly repeated what was read, and said, "Amen" after what was read. After we had finished the Ten Commandments, he himself wished us to read the Burial Service; and when this was finished, he said, "Now I am departing this life," and, as it was mid-day, we left his house and went home. In about two hours after we were informed that he was dead. He was not baptized, although he had asked for it, as we wished to give him further instruction first. But we are quite sure that he died in the Lord, and this gives us the full assurance that there are a great many such cases in Persia, and the day of the Lord will reveal it. Therefore, let us be encouraged and be more active in the service of our dear Saviour, Jesus Christ.

W. A. RICE.

NOTES

The Rev. Canon Goldsmith is never weary of the work of helping along Missions to Muslims. He has just been to Ceylon, where an evangelist amongst Tamil Muhammadans is needed and he was asked to visit the field. He writes—

"Our C.M.S. missionaries here report 63 Christian converts from Islam in Ceylon, viz., 54 to be members of the Roman Catholic Church, 7 to the Church of England, 1 to the Wesleyans and 1 to the Congregationalists. In the Island (according to last census),

Christians number ..	409,168
Muhammadans ..	283,631

Miss Ledward (member of our League) and other missionaries beg us to try and supply them with an evangelist, but I have not yet found one to send."

Mr. Upson, writing from Cairo, says—

"The following may interest readers of *News and Notes* as a small para:

"In No. 147 of *Al-Qibla*, published at Mecca on the 4th of Rabi ut-Thani, appears a Royal Proclamation by King of Hijaz notifying that the name of the Sultan of Turkey is now to be omitted from the Friday Khutba, and explaining that this had not been done before, (a) out of respect to past Sultans before these 'Turanians' ran away with the Government, (b) in hopes that the Turkish people would have arisen and overthrown the Turanians before now. Anyhow it was to be enforced from first Friday after date of notice."

P.S.—He does not say "*in the Hijaz*" but we presume that.

In our last issue we published an English translation of an Urdu tract dealing with proofs from the Qur'an concerning the superiority of Christ over Muhammad. We ordered 250 copies of the Urdu and sent out a dozen or so to the leading Maulvies by post. Two days later Muslims in the bazaars and villages were clamouring for copies, so we decided to sell them at one pice each. One Maulvie came himself to our house and bought 25 copies. The sale continues and the people are strangely stirred. In case our members in India have not seen this Urdu tract we are sending each a copy with this issue. Dr. Wherry writes, point-

ing out two errors in the article he wrote. On page 5, line 6, it should be "Defence of his mother." The other is on page 6, line 20 from the bottom, the Lahore paper is the "*Poigham-i-Sullah*."

There is very much to be said for the following resolution adopted at the last annual meeting of the United Provinces Council of Missions:—"Resolved that we recommend to the National Missionary Council's Committee on Public Questions that in the case of a Muhammadan couple becoming Christian, it is desirable, in view of the Muhammadan tradition that apostacy dissolves the Muhammadan marriage tie, that they be remarried according to the Christian Marriage Act, but we suggest that each Church adapt its ceremony so as to give recognition to the former state of marriage."

Miss Brearley, of Laberia Serai, writing of Miss Catt's death, says, "She died from cholera at Patna and was ill only for 24 hours." Referring to the school for Muslim girls, started by Miss Catt in Patna, she says, "We began with six children, but now have 29 on the roll. There has been great opposition, especially from the women who teach the Qur'an. One of these came to the school during my absence and railed at the teacher for teaching the children to pray in the name of Jesus. Later on, when the teacher was looking up absentees, the woman threatened to beat her if she went that way again."

Opposition was tried in many different ways. At one time a Muhammadan school was started. On another occasion the building the missionaries occupied was secured by the Muslims for a boys' orphanage, but now through the aid of the judge a good building has been secured.

"I was surprised one morning in a zenana to hear that Muhammadan women are meeting together in prayer. A woman conducts the service, and they stand together as the men do. A woman of the old school was visiting them, and, when she heard that a woman conducted the meeting, she ominously shook her head and said 'Never, never'.... In regard to the reason why converts go back: I have often thought there is little in our religion to replace the things which appeal so much to both Hindus and Muslims, namely, their festivals and melas and tamashas. Only those who find their *all* in Christ have any chance of standing, but would it not help them if we encouraged *melas* along Christian lines?" [There is an article on "The Observance of Festivals in the Indian Church" in the February issue of *The Harvest Field*.—Ed.]

NEW MEMBER

258. REV. L. BARBER, Aust. Baptist Mission, Birisiri, Mymensing, Bengal.

*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. Hon. Sec., M.M. League.