

Confidential.

## News and Notes.

A Monthly Paper printed for the private use of the  
Members of the Missionaries to Muslims League.

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June 1st—13th Ramzan, (9th mo.).

June 18th—1st Shawwal, 1358, A.H.

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### A Muhammadan Convert.

**I**N this district (Bijnor, N. India) there are about 300,000 Muhammadans, among whom, because of the paucity of workers, very little work is being done. Since to get a Muhammadan converted is "to get the proudest man in the world to take the thing he hates from the hand he despises," every one such conversion is worthy of record. During the year a certain Muhammadan was convinced of the truth of Jesus' claims and, with his family, was baptized.

What a furore it caused! How the sons of the false prophet fumed and stormed! Bedlam broke loose. Why not? Had not one of their number been baptized, and did he not boldly confess his allegiance to Jesus?

The baptism over, they sent a delegation to interview the Jesus-man. Suppressing the volcano within, they calmly asked why he had become a Christian. "I am not afraid to tell you," was his reply, "but as sure as I do, you will get fighting-mad. Why do you come now? When for the past year I did not go to the mosque, why did you not protest then? When you saw me reading the Bible and praying to Jesus, why did you not dissuade me then? Now that all the bridges are burned, why do you come? You are too late. I am Jesus' man, and He is my Saviour and Keeper."

Hereupon followed the calm that presages the storm. Suddenly it broke forth. "Muhammad came after Jesus and is therefore greater than Jesus! Muhammad was the latest and therefore the greatest of all prophets. Fool, how can you deny this? What is the Bible compared with this Holy Koran.....Every word and letter of it was written by God Himself. Infidel, dare you claim that the Christian's book is on a par with the Holy Koran? Speak!"

Quick as lightning came the reply: "Muhammad was only a man, a sinner like you and me, and he can save no one; Jesus is the God-man, the Spotless Lamb of God who died to save us all. The Bible is God's revelation to man, while the Koran is a man-made book, which Muhammad largely stole from the Old Testament and adapted to his own purposes. The Bible....."

But he got no further. "*Káfir* (Infidel)! What blasphemy! To the sword with such a degenerate!" Blinded with rage they rushed on him. Murder was in their hearts; but ere a blow was struck, their leader arrested them: "Stop! He deserved death, but he is a servant of the *Sirkár* (English Government). If we kill him the *Sirkár* will hear of it, and then woe betide us."

For a few moments they consulted one another and then their leader made this glittering offer. "It was not our intention to kill you, but merely to frighten you. Our love for you compelled us to do so. As a Christian you will go to *Jahannam* (Gehenna) and we would save you. Here are Rs. 500, (\$ 167) which are yours, if you will deny Jesus and swear allegiance to Muhammad: "Lá iláha illá 'lláhu, Muhammad rasúlu 'lláh." (There is no deity but God and Muhammad is the Apostle of God).

What a temptation! For our Jesus-man earned only \$ 2 : 00 a month, and here at one stroke he was offered eighty-three times this amount. To him it was a fabulous sum, enabling him to live like a prince the rest of his days. Jesus and poverty or Muhammad and riches?

"Gentlemen, I have counted the cost. Five hundred rupees without Jesus spells poverty to me; six rupees a month with Jesus is riches untold. Having Jesus, I have everything; without Jesus, everything is nothing. I have decided. Go!" And they went.

(*The Indian Witness.*)

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## Are Denominational Differences a Hindrance?

To

THE EDITOR OF "NEWS AND NOTES."

*Mussoorie, 15 April, 1920.*

Dear Mr. Editor,

What do you think of starting a symposium on the following question?

It is constantly stated, though more (I think) in the Homelands than in India, that denominational differences are the greatest hindrance to missionary work. But is this so? I assume that we all think

it would be a splendid thing for the Church of Christ to be as one in organization as it was in the first few centuries; but that is not the question before us. I would like to know whether any of your readers have found the differences among Christian denominations to be a real, and also great stumbling block to those who otherwise might become Christians. In only one instance have I ever found it to be so, during a somewhat prolonged period of missionary service. That exception is the Church of Rome, which is accused of encouraging idolatry. Otherwise, I have never found that the (by comparison) infinitesimally small differences among Christian Churches has any deterrent effect on those who come in contact with missionaries as inquirers, or even only hearers. But the experience of others may be different.

Yours Sincerely,

W. HOOPER.

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The foregoing letter from our veteran, Dr. Hooper, affords us the opportunity we desire of thanking him on behalf of members of the League for the valuable contribution he made to NEWS AND NOTES in his article on "Muslim Retrogression" in the April number. (We are only sorry that the compositor, in error, used bourgeois type in setting it up!) Not often we fancy have these pages been favoured with an article like his, at once the result of mature judgment and ripe scholarship, and at the same time so manifestly useful to many of us who, with not half his length of service, are most anxious to come to something of the measure of his understanding of, and sympathy with the Muslims around us.

The question he then raised cuts both ways. While it is highly desirable that our Muslim friend should bring himself to study the Bible, yet, if he is to do so with profit when reading it with us, *we* on our part must know his Qur'an, and that by diligent study. Facilities are at hand for accomplishing this. Dr. Weitbrecht-Stanton's new book on the teaching of the Qur'an should prove invaluable in this connection. (v. NEWS AND NOTES, December 1919, pp. 57-58.) Add to that Rodwell's translation of the Qur'an (Everyman's Library, ed.) Canon Sell's Historical Development of the Qur'an, C. L. S., Madras, and for a useful commentary, Dr. Wherry's new edition of his "Commentary on the Qur'an." (v. NEWS AND NOTES, April 1919, p. 92.)

## Disobedient to the Heavenly Vision.

IN 1883 my father as a young man met another Muhammadan young man who was very angry on account of his (my father's) conversion from Islám. He tried his best to see that my father renounced Christianity and became a Muhammadan again. This man shewed himself a bitter opponent of Christianity, but at the same time shewed himself a great student of religions. This bitterness towards Christianity led him to study the Bible more and more closely to find out passages here and there which he imagined were prophecies in reference to Muhammad. Up till just about a year ago, he retained his reputation as an anti-Christian, but underneath it all have been the Everlasting Arms, until he reached a point which prepared him for a great change that was to take place in his heart. At this juncture he saw a vision. He says he wasn't asleep, so it wasn't a dream. He could see people around him and knew them, but all the same he was in a different frame of mind which caused him to see Christ seated upon a throne with His disciples busy at work for the salvation of souls. Jesus beckoning to him gave him a piercing look as much as to say, "Will you still persecute Me? Can't you yet see the truth I shew you?" Soon after he came to his senses and noticed a change in his heart the possibility of which he never dreamed of in his life. He felt himself submissive and offered himself entirely at the feet of the Master, determined to follow Christ in whatever way He would wish him to follow Him.

I am sorry to say he is not yet right. He has not seen the force of the word of Christ, "Whosoever shall deny me before men him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven." He is highly connected and belonged to the line of Jágírdárs (=feoffees). He wishes first to take possession of his jágírs before he is baptized. Please pray for him. I shall be glad to correspond personally about the work here with any of your readers who are interested.

*Ahmednagar, India.*

Yours in His Service,  
SUMITRABAI BAWA.

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The Indian lady who contributes the above has expressed her desire to join the M. M. League as she herself is working chiefly amongst Muhammadans, whom she speaks of as 'my own brethren.'

She reports that since the work was started there an Afghan has been baptized and they have a few inquirers. It is concerning one of the latter that she has written this month. She asks for our united prayers for this man. We shall not only welcome her into membership, but count it a privilege to remember her request in our prayers.

## Notes on the Muslim Calendar.

BY REV. AHMAD SHAH.

Ramzán.

(Concluded.)

- (7) **A** HALE and hearty person is not exempted from fasting by offering a ransom. Similarly for a sick man, so long as there is hope of his recovery, to trust in ransom is a non-observance of fast. (8) 'Ransom' means the giving of a *seer and three-quarters* (about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  lbs) of wheat to the needy, for each fast. (9) If a man happen to die without observing the fast, then it behoves the heirs to distribute *one seer and three-quarters* of wheat for every fast. (10) If for some reasons the fast cannot be kept, then when the hindrance is removed it should be observed. (11) It is forbidden to make very young children keep fast merely to satisfy their whims and fancies. (12) It is blasphemous to indulge in jocular words about the fast. (13) No importance is attached in law to the over-anxiety or extra preparation for the observance of the *middle fast*. (14) If for some reason no fast can be kept in Ramzán, then it is necessary to pass the whole day of some other month as a fast. (15) To rely upon incorrect observances for the times of fast and prayers is wrong. (16) Generally the guns are not fired at the right time. The sun dial is supposed to be accurate. Watches should be set by the telegrams received at 4 p.m. at the Railway and Telegraph Offices. (17) To be extravagant in breaking the fast, to eat indiscriminately, is unlawful and sinful. (18) To have such a strong pull of the *hugqa* (Indian pipe) so that it acts as a narcotic, is at all times unlawful, but is still more so in Ramzán. (19) The fast is not desecrated on account of eating or drinking by mistake, or by the involuntary intake of dust, flies, gnats, flour etc., down the throat; by involuntarily vomiting or its retention, by the rubbing of the teeth with the fibres of a twig, by smelling perfume, by applying oil to the head, and antimony to the eyes; by dropping medicine or water into the eyes, by the expulsion of phlegm. (20) But the fast is desecrated by dropping medicine in the ear or nostrils—by intentionally vomiting when the mouth is full of it—by the intake of water down the throat while gargling, by misapprehension about the setting of the sun; by these the fast is broken, but no ransom is needed. (21) The fast if broken by eating or drinking intentionally is both a violation of the fast and is subject to ransom. The ransom required is that the fast should be observed for 60 days or, in lieu of it, 60 poor people must be fed both times.

### THE READING OF THE QUR'AN.

The reading of the 20 Rukoos in Ramzán after the obligatory and optional evening prayers sanctioned by the Tradition is not present in the law, but is *Sunnat*. If a Háfiz is available, he should, without remuneration, complete the reading of the Qurán by the end of Ramzán. It is sacriligious to read the Qurán to such an extent as to tax the patience of the audience. An Imám who reads with ease is far better than the Háfiz who reads the Qurán so hurriedly as to swallow certain letters, and it is equally wrong to read so slowly as to tire the audience. It is not incumbent (as is generally done) to distribute sweets or to decorate and illuminate the mosques after finishing the recital of the Qurán.

## The Government of India's Statement on the Turkish Peace Terms.

**A**S we go to press the papers contain the long-looked-for publication of the Turkish Peace terms. In view of the widespread anxiety among the Muslims of India, and the certainty that the final decisions will cause many of them acute distress, the Government of India has issued a very clear and comprehensive statement of the main facts that have led up to these decisions, together with an appeal to all high-minded Muslims and a warning to the reckless.

We quote the following clauses from the Government statement as likely to interest many of our readers in other lands:—

“It is well-known that there was a great and strong body of public opinion both in England and America which favoured the removal of the Turkish Capital to Asia Minor and that such counsels did not prevail is in no small measure due to the knowledge how keenly Indian Moslem opinion was opposed to this step.”

The Government of India while repudiating any suggestion that it desires to interfere in the matter of the Khilafat yet “cannot acquiesce in the statement which is now made that the Khilafat of the Ottoman Sultan has remained unchanged in its temporal attributes for thirteen centuries, or that it implies any temporal allegiance on the part of Indian Moslems. These are propositions which are contrary to history.”

There is strong repudiation of the outcry raised in India that the war was a religious war or that the terms of peace have been in any way influenced by religious considerations.

After speaking of the scrupulous care taken by the British troops in Jerusalem and Iraq to observe the strict sanctity of places sacred to Islām, we read ‘The British forces have conducted no operations whatever in the Hedjaz, and any reports (*as have been made in India*, Ed.) that Mecca or Medina have been entered by British troops are utterly without foundation. These places are entirely under Arab control.’

The Governor-in-Council recognises that, in spite of all explanations the Government of India may make, “the terms of the peace settlements with Turkey are such as must cause pain to the Mahomedans of India. Muslims must brace themselves to bear with patience and resignation the misfortunes of their Turkish co-religionists. The situation is one which calls for clear vision and a resolve to build a better future on the wreck of the past. Above all the world needs peace and goodwill.”

“It is a matter of supreme necessity for all men to work towards this end, and those who at this critical time arouse religious passions are enemies not only of India but of mankind.”

## A Muslim Predicament.

**W**ANTED, a *fatwá* REGARDING THE NEXT *Hajj*.—A recent correspondent to "The Mussulman Weekly," Calcutta, states that "thousands of intending pilgrims are impatiently awaiting" the ruling of the great *Ulamas* of India on the following points:—

1. Will the coming *Hajj* be lawful according to the *Shari'at* under the prevailing circumstances of the disorder of the connection, secular and spiritual, between the Sharif of Mecca and the Khalifa of Islám? Can the Sharif conduct and control the pilgrimage without any authority from the Khalifa?
2. Whereas the Sharif of Mecca has been declared a rebel and hence a Kafir, is the *Khutba* of the *Hajj*, to be conducted by him, lawful according to the *Shari'at*?
3. Can the Sharif expect any authority from the Khalifa to conduct the pilgrimage, and can he be given any such authority according to the dictates of the *Shari'at*?
4. Will it not be to indirectly help the enemies of the *Khilafat* and Islám to undertake the pilgrimage under the present conditions of the *Khilafat*?
5. What should the intending pilgrims do, in case the *Hajj* be not lawful according to the *fatwá* of the *Ulamas*, so that they may be saved from the sin accruing from breach of *niyat* (vow)?

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### NOTES.

**D**R. HOOPER'S SUGGESTION, (p. 110f.). Dr. Hooper has suggested that we start a symposium in N. and N. on the question raised in his letter. It would be exceedingly interesting to learn what our members have found to be their experience in this matter and we hope replies will be forthcoming. But we do not seem very good at contributing to a symposium or answering questions! Why is it? We stand for mutual helpfulness, and in so far as questions put by members anxious for enlightenment remain unanswered, to that extent we are failing in part of our pledge as members.

The following questions, raised during 1919-20, have, so far as we know, gone unanswered:

- 'How can we secure more Indian workers among Muslims?'—May, 1919.
- 'How to run a bookshop and reading room for Muslims in the city.'—August, 1919.
- 'Whether Missionaries may partake with Muslim friends of the *Id* at the close of *Ramzán*.'—Nov. 1919.
- 'How to run a Hostel for Muslim schoolboys.'—Nov. 1919.
- 'As to whether we can help the Editors to circulate "Orient and Occident" in India.' March 1920.

Ladies and gentlemen, please!

**SOCIAL SERVICE FOR MUSLIMS.**—There would seem to be a splendid opening for a missionary to muslims along the lines of Social Service. Are any of our members already so engaged? Once more we hear that high note in the course of a political proclamation—the world needs ‘peace and goodwill’ above all else just now, and this in India from the Viceroy. Should not we missionaries bestir ourselves to be among the first to render these services to the Muslims around us? No one who has direct knowledge of Muslims will deny that there is ample scope for Social Service among them. Take the drink question. Only the other day a Muslim said to us that in this city, of the increasing number of those who are taking to drink, ‘one anna are Hindus and fifteen annas are Muslims.’ Even when allowance is made for very considerable exaggeration in this statement, it indicates a serious state of things. It may be that some of us in these difficult days are finding ordinary doors of approach to Muslims closed, while this one is left open. Then let us press in. ‘God never closes a door,’ says a Spanish proverb, ‘but He opens a window.’

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### Requests for Prayer.

OUR prayers are asked by a member in Batala, Punjab, for a whole family there that has recently apostatized; for a Muslim family interested in the Gospel, regularly visited; and for herself in view of both the difficulties and possibilities.

Prayer is asked for the man at Ahmadnagar (p. 112), and for the Afghan recently baptized and for several enquirers there.

Prayer is asked for a Muslim family in Hoshiarpur in which one of our members is interested, and for two Muslim girls there that they may be guided about their baptism.

Special prayer is asked for the Muslims in the Punjab at the present time.

REV. L. B. J.

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*The annual subscription to the League is Rs. 2-8-0 (about 5s. English). News and requests for prayer should be sent by the tenth of each month to the Hon. Secretary:*

**Rev. L. Bevan Jones,**  
*Baptist Mission,*  
*Dacca, Bengal.*