

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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Series VIII.

No. 15.

July, 1920.

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July 1st = 14th Shawwal (10th mo.).

July 18th = Zu'l-Qadah, 1358, A.H.

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### Why do not Muhammadans become Christians ?

**I**T seems strange that similar questions should so often be asked about Muhammadans and not about the adherents of other great religions such as Judaism or Hinduism.

St. Paul in his Epistles asks no such questions as these either with reference to Judaism or the religions of Greece and Rome. His one aim was to preach the full Gospel of a Crucified and Risen Saviour.

What we should be concerned to do is to make the Gospel message fully and clearly known and to bring its appeal to bear as strongly as possible on every heart. There is no mysterious efficacy hitherto undiscovered which if made known and given free play would secure the universal acceptance of Christianity by the followers of Islám. We believe in "Election in Christ" and the freedom of the Will, and no Muhammadan can become a true Christian unless he hears and is willing to obey the call of God.

The probability of a man changing his religion is in direct proportion to the presence or absence of truth in his religion. Hence work among Muhammadans is more difficult than that among pagans, because the superiority of Christian life and teaching is obvious and the Christian appears by contrast almost to belong to a different order of beings.

The religion of Islám also possesses the strength derived from a historical basis, and the main facts are annually brought to mind by recurring festivals or days of mourning, and thus impressed upon the minds of its followers.

It is not a fact that Muhammadans do not become Christians.

Wherever the necessary conditions are fulfilled and the pure Gospel is faithfully taught by men of devoted, Christlike lives, full of zeal, sympathy and love; mixing freely with the people, knowing them, and being known by them, and laying themselves out for their good in every way, and, moreover, able and qualified to teach and preach by a thorough knowledge of the language of the country where they are working and of the religious beliefs and tenets of their opponents, then Missions to Muhammadans are by no means without success; and it may fairly be asked whether they are not as successful as other Missions in proportion to the efforts put forth.

One of Islâm's strongest points is that it is an "easy" religion for the natural man. Muhammad says in the Qur'an that God wished to make their religion "easy" for the Muhammadans; and the founder has certainly done this.

(a) Islâm does not make the same demands on faith that Christianity does. It does not accept the Trinity nor the Divinity of Jesus Christ.

(b) To be a Muhammadan a man must make verbal profession of faith and perform certain external works. These things do not necessarily involve a change of heart and holy life, the crucifixion of self, and a life-long conflict with the "old man." Islâm combines outward religiousness with the least possible interference with the desires and inclinations of unregenerate human nature.

(c) The teaching of Islâm about sin and guilt is terribly inadequate. Pardon for sin can be had on very easy terms.

No Muhammadan will be finally lost. He may therefore go through life committing all manner of sins and, although he will be punished, he will ultimately be saved.

Muhammadanism, on account of its acceptance of the O. T. Scriptures, its confession of the Unity of the Deity, its minute legal precepts, its belief in angels and prophets, its virtual substitution of Muhammad for the Messiah, together with its proud contempt for all other religions, may with a great deal of truth be regarded as a Jewish sect, although Muhammadans would probably strongly object to such a classification.

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Muhammadans are clever at devising plausible but utterly fallacious arguments to show the superiority of their religion, based upon some of the points mentioned above.

In the above remarks such points as the influence of education and environment, prejudice and national feeling, and the fact that the missionaries are foreigners, have been passed over, as being common to work among adherents of other religious systems besides Islâm.

*Isfahan, Persia.*

W. A. RICE.

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Mr. Rice, when sending the above for these pages, wrote : "I expect to be here until the middle of August, and then retire and start for England ! .....Wishing the M.M.L. ever increasing success and usefulness, yours very sincerely, W. A. RICE."

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## A Union Muslim-Christian Easter Service at Jibin, Central Turkey.

**I**N Christian America not so long ago it was hailed as a great feat when Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, *et alii*, joined together in union services. Jibin, Central Turkey, has the record of an Easter service which united Muhammadans and Christians. A missionary had come over from Aintab to hold the Christian Easter service. It was proposed that the Muslim neighbours be asked to join in an out-door service. They agreed, making as a condition that they should be allowed their "zikr," or chant from the Quran, before the Christian portion of worship.

The setting of the union exercise was a stretch of green grass beneath great trees. Large flat rocks were the pews. The sunlight—flooded vineyards and fig orchards, and, only two miles westward—shades of Xenophon!—was the Euphrates river. There were six hundred or more men, women and children—in festival clothes of gay colours. Two-thirds were Muhammadan, the other one-third Christian.

The Muslim brethren began, making a circle. The young men beat large drums, and the congregation, chanting "Allah, Allah, Allah," swayed violently to the drums' rhythm. A tall chief in the centre in flowing robes was the pace-maker, moving about and chanting in a higher and higher key, with more and more intensity of feeling, until the entire circle was in a frenzy. Finally the ring was broken and the "zikr" was over.

It was now the Christians' turn. Their missionary opened with prayer. The Muslims, as soon as they caught the tune, joined quite readily in 'All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name.' They heard the 20th chapter of St. John and the ensuing Easter Sermon with interest. At the close of the service the missionary asked for funds to establish a school in the village, which had none. Some of the men gave money. The women's gifts were chickens, eggs, raisins—in cloths they had woven themselves. A few gave their rings and bracelets. One man promised the crop of his *pistachio* orchard, and another olives which would be ripe in December. The Muhammadans gave a share, saying that they didn't want their children to be left out if a school was to be built.—*World Outlook*.

## Notes on the Muslim Calendar.

BY REV. AHMAD SHAH.

Shawwál.

**S**HAWWÁL is considered a very blessed month, the Id-fitr being the 1st of the same month. It is unlawful to observe fast on this day; twelve injunctions for the observance of Id-fitr are said to be as follows:—

1. Decorating one's self in keeping with Muslim law.
2. Bathing.
3. Brushing the teeth.
4. Wearing nice dresses in one's possession.
5. Using perfume.
6. Getting up early in the morning.
7. Going to Id-Gáh early.
8. Eating something sweet before going to Id-Gáh.
9. Giving the offering of Fitr before going to Id-Gáh.
10. The Id prayers must not be said in the city, except when necessitated by some unavoidable reason.
11. Going to Id-Gáh on foot and slowly reciting "Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar," "La ilaha illa llahu, Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar" on the way.
12. Returning home by a different way from that by which one went to the Id-Gáh.

There is no ground for the above injunctions in Muslim law; rather the "Sunnat" is, to put on clean clothes, and to eat something sweet prior to the recitation of prayers in the Id-Gáh.

### The Offering of Fitr. (Sadáqat-ul Fitr.)

The offering of Fitr, which is given prior to prayers, is binding on all Muhammadans, who, over and above that required for domestic needs, possess  $52\frac{1}{2}$  tolas of silver or its equivalent weight in rupees, ornaments, property, or commercial commodities; or  $7\frac{1}{2}$  tolas of gold, or its equivalent weight in gold *mohars* or ornaments. If a man has much property, also so heavy a debt that after its payment, neither  $52\frac{1}{2}$  tolas of silver nor the equivalent in goods are left, then the offering of Fitr is not obligatory. Any person possessing the above-mentioned wealth or more still, must offer the alms on behalf of his own self as well as for minor children. The offering of Fitr for a man is wheat to the weight of 175 $\frac{1}{2}$  tolas, or maize to the weight of 251 tolas or the price thereof. The needy and near relatives have a prior claim to the offering of Fitr. It is permissible for the offering of the Fitr of many men to be given to one man, or that one man's offering be distributed amongst many. The offering of the Sadáqat is said to be a highly meritorious act.

The above-named conditions of the Sadáqat-ul-Fitr are equally binding even on the man who reasonably or negligently could not keep fast. The offering must not be given to the Muazzin or the Imám as wages, neither is it lawful to use it in expenditure on the Masjid. During these days many well-to-do Muhammadans, being carried away by the festivities of Id, are not mindful to discharge the offering, and consequently draw upon themselves the reproaches of their poor brethren. Some people give the offering of grain as a present to their servants in recognition of their services. The offering of Fitr is the birthright of the needy and the poor, and it has been instituted with a view to ensure that even the poorest Muslim should not starve on the Id day.

### The Fasts of the Shash Id.

The excellence of keeping six days of "Nafil" (optional) fasts in Shawwál is far superior to other Nafil fasts, and they are termed, "fasts

of Shash Id." These fasts may be observed one day after the Id, or some other day of Shawwál, either on consecutive days or at intervals of two or four days; but under all circumstances, reward from God is promised. Some people include the fasts which they missed in the Ramzán in the fasts of Shash Id, but this is not correct. The merit of Shash Id is forfeited by any intention of making up for fasts previously omitted.

### Zul-qa'dah.

The 11th month of the Muslim year is from 18th July to 15th August. It is included in the *Shahar Harm*, and it is an egregious mistake to consider it unlucky. There is no harm in getting married or doing other business in this month. Zúl Hajjah begins after Zul-qa'dah. Any person intending to make the sacrifice is forbidden to crop his hair in Zúl Hajjah. Cropping the hair, etc., should be attended to in the last day of Zul-qa'dah, in order that the hair and nails may not grow too long by the time of the Bakr Id.

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## Cuttings.

MISS VAN SOMMER, one of our members, in writing of the protest of the Arab population in Palestine to the Zionist movement, states: "One incident which was seen and heard by one of our workers was a striking change to former times. A Moslem put his arm round a Christian and said that henceforth they would be friends. 'We will surround the Cross with texts from the Qu'ran.' Although this is far from our thoughts, yet the kindly feelings which have arisen between Moslem and Christian may lead to better things. As a contrast to this we turn to the Jews and seek to know what they are feeling toward us, and how far a friendly spirit will prevail. At once we are up against a stone wall."

BLESSED BE EGYPT. April, 1920.

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### AN INDIAN MOULVIE AND MAHATAMA GANDHI.

"While travelling the other day from Cambay to Bombay (writes a correspondent) I happened to meet a very interesting personality in an Indian Professor of Arabic of the Deoband Arabic Madrasa. He looked every inch of the old type of Moulvi, with a long flowing grey beard, a green turban, and a white cloak. He had all the Oriental charm and politeness and we soon became very friendly, and I very tactfully introduced the subject of the Khilafat. He smiled and sarcastically remarked: "If a Jain Mahatama has been accepted by the Indian Muslims as their Imám and Peshwá, why should not a Turk be their Khalifa?" It was an admirably pithy remark. Even Abul Newas in the Court of Haroon Rashid could not have said better. The Moulvi Sahib said, "Mahatama Gandhi presides at the 'Khilafat meetings.' He issues Fatwas and they are most piously obeyed by the Indian Muslims. He says, 'Let there be *Hartal* on th: 18th March and there was *Hartal*.' Then again the Mahatama Imám speaks: 'Let there be non-co-operation, and titles and offices are resigned.'" He congratulated the Indian Muslims on having secured a veritable Mahatama in flesh and blood as their Imám and Peshwá, and also Mahatama Gandhi on attaining the high spiritual position of Imamul Mominin and Peshwai Musalmin 'Hind.'"—*Statesman*, June, 1920.

INDIA, THE LAST HOPE OF ISLAM.—A contributor to the Calcutta weekly 'The Mussulman,' writing on the Khiláfat agitation stated recently that: 'The future of the Khiláfat is committed we believe to the charge of India. If India attains her rightful place first in the Empire, as an equal among equals with the other members of it, Great Britain herself included, and next in the Council of the World Powers or in the future League of Nations which will be a real and an honest League of Nations and not a limited liability concern of the Big Powers for the joint exploitation of the weak and dependent countries, as it practically is now, it is then, and only then, that the Khiláfat will come again to its own. The fate and the future of the Khiláfat and those of India are thus bound up together.'

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### "Are the Gospels Inspired?"

Canon Goldsmith of Madras sends us the following note:—

In the "Islamic Review" for March 1920 (published at the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England) there is a long article with the above title by Maulvi Sadruddin, B.A.

Quoting largely from such Christian Commentaries as Dummelow's, the writer professes to agree with the general teaching of Christians regarding inspiration, except that he omits all reference to the Holy Spirit. Considering the meagreness of Muhammadan knowledge about the Holy Spirit, this is not remarkable. But what is notable is that he practically renounces the Qurán teaching (whether by Muhammad or by "God") about the "descent" of the New Testament. This "descent" is everywhere maintained in the Qurán; cp. Baqr. ii. 4.

The Qurán also holds the inspiration of the Twelve Apostles:—cp. Maidá v. 111. "When I revealed unto the Apostles".....

And that "those who will not judge by what God hath sent down (*i.e.* the Evangel) are the perverse"

This denial of the "Descent" of the New Testament seems to deny the "Descent" of the Qurán, though both are believed to have taken place in *Ramzán*. Sadruddin is unfortunate in the contemptuous style of his remarks. Several of his statements are incorrect and hardly need a reply for thoughtful Christian believers: and it is instructive to see what pit-falls beset the enemies of God's truth.

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Dr. Zwemer says in a recent letter received from America:—

'My program has been very full, but the opportunities commensurate with the sacrifice of having to be from home constantly. I have spoken on an average six or eight times a week all the way from the Middle West to Baltimore and New York. Results come slowly, as you know, but we can only put in the seed and trust that a deeper prayer spirit and more consecration to this work for Moslems will follow. I agree with you that the whole situation is critical, and yet the crisis may mean a repeated recovery of far larger opportunities than we have hitherto enjoyed. I think it means for *them* disillusionment, and this is often followed by clearer vision. We must mobilize prayer everywhere and not lose faith. In Egypt also we are facing a new day of difficulty, but the seed already sown will have time to germinate, and I cannot help believing that the harvest is nearer than we imagine.'

## NOTES.

**ID-UL-FITR.**—Lack of space last month prevented us from adding to Mr. Ahmad Shah's notes on the Ramzán fast his interesting contribution on the observance of Id-ul-fitr at its close. Many months ago the opinion of members was asked on the wisdom of missionaries partaking of this feast with their Muslim friends. Since Mr. Ahmad Shah himself made no statement at the time on this point, the rest of us perhaps may have felt that our failure to do so should be excused! Nevertheless we have ourselves on more than one occasion partaken of the feast. The circumstances were somewhat exceptional. As warden of a College student's hostel at a time when the bulk of the boarders were Muslims, my wife and I were the guests of the Muslim students in the hostel dining room at their Id dinner. It seemed the most natural thing to accept their invitation. It was a time of good fellowship. As we bowed our heads for the 'grace before meat,' they uttered their 'Bismillah.' The meal was a very happy one and made for a closer bond between the warden and his students. Surely it was a good thing.

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**WHY NOT DOUBLE OUR MEMBERSHIP?**—Our President, Dr. Wherry, raised precisely this question in the December issue of 1917. Our membership has, on the whole, undoubtedly increased since that date, but latterly there has been a slight falling off through deaths and resignations. One of the most heartening features of membership in this League is the constant reminder we receive through the pages of '*News and Notes*' that many others of like mind and purpose are working *and praying* with us in this great enterprise. When then we plead again, as Dr. Wherry did, that 'every member of the League should double himself or herself, by persuading others to join this League,' it is not that we are short of funds, but that we are anxious that many more should gain such benefits as we gain through this union of workers for God and His Christ among Muslims; and further "we need this aid to increase the power and influence of the League in its practical and intercessory work." Dr. Wherry at that time also said, "There is no more popular and effective way to grow in knowledge of 'Islamic work and evangelization than through the *News and Notes*, which are growing in interest every month." We are doing our best, though sadly understaffed in this station, to maintain that high standard month by month, and we trust no one is disappointed. If however, in point of fact, the paper helps you, is there not some one you know to whom you can honestly commend the League?

The question also presents itself in a slightly modified, but not one whit less important aspect. Can we not do something to gain more *Indian* workers among Muslims to be members? It seems to be the fact that we have *less than ten Indian members* in the League at the present time. Is not this one direction in which individual members can work to increase the efficiency of the League?

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**COVERS FOR A TRACT ON THE PARACLETE.**—(See N. & N. for May, p. 107 f.) We are preparing the text of this tract in English and hope before long to be able to announce that a translation has been made of it in Urdu and Bengali, so that members may send in their orders for the tract complete in the cover advertised.

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**HAVE YOU ANY SUGGESTIONS?**—It has occurred to us that our modest little monthly is worthy a better title than the prosaic '*News and Notes*.'

It has not always had even that! Is there not a word or a phrase which just sums up all that this paper should mean for us? The Secretary will welcome members' suggestions.

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### Prayer.

**M**USLIM leaders of a certain school in India have recently been sitting in solemn conclave, with new-found Hindu sympathizers, to deliberate upon the policy of Muslims in view of the widespread dissatisfaction in India over the Turkish Peace Terms. They claim to commit their cause to Allah, we, to commend their needs to God. He is One. Let us draw near to Him on their behalf and of Muslims everywhere, in the nobler conception of Him, in the surer faith, in the certainty of victory that are our heritage through Jesus Christ our Lord, praying that our Heavenly Father may lead them to know, to love, and to do His will for them.

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### NEW MEMBERS.

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|-----|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 61. | Bawa, Miss Sumitrabai,      | Ahmadnagar.                          |
| 38. | Heinly, Rev. F. W.,         | 37, McLeod St., Calcutta.            |
| 18. | Linton, The Rt. Rev. J. H., | Isfahan, Persia. (Bishop in Persia.) |

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### DEATH OF A MEMBER.

Mrs. W. F. Armstrong, of Rangoon, in Toronto, September, 1919.

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### SPECIAL NOTICE.

**M**EMBERS were notified in our March issue (p. 92) that we have decided to commence the next 'volume' of *News and Notes* with the New Year and to make all subscriptions payable in future in the month of January. It will effect a great saving in time and labour for the Honorary Secretary if the subscriptions of members residing within the India Postal area may be collected by the V. P. P. system.

Several members have already asked us to do this, and it is the plan we propose to adopt. We quite understand, however, that there may be some who dislike this system, and we shall be grateful if any such will kindly acquaint us with their wishes at sometime during the next few months.

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*The annual subscription to the League is Rs. 2-8-0 (about 6s. 3d. 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.

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