

Confidential.

## News and Notes.

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Members of the Missionaries to Muslims League.

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April 1st = 21st Rajab (7th mo.)

April 10th = 1st Sha'ban, 1339, A.H.

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### The Near-East Tangle.

By Lee Vrooman,

in the Christian Herald, New York.

**I**T was said some months ago of the situation in the Near East that most anything might happen, but probably it wouldn't. That remark can now be amended to say that most anything may happen and that probably it will. The Near East has been the scene of six heart-rending winters, but unless some miracle occurs it is now facing the winter of greatest misery of all.

Why all this? In October 1918, we were told that the Turks had surrendered to the Allies and that the rebuilding of the country would at once begin. Today the last remnants of the Christian races seem threatened with extinction, and the countries of the civilized world either show indifference or admit their inability to aid.

This is because the Turks of Asia Minor have sworn to resist the Allies to the last drop of blood. Facing this the Allies have not been able to unite on any program to crush them. No unity of thought or action has been shown anywhere.

But if one expects to find a consistent picture in the Near East he will be disappointed. In one place we find Greek fighting Turk; in another, Greek merchant boats carrying supplies to the Turks. While the French were fighting the Turks and enlisting thousands of Armenians and Greeks under their flag for that purpose, they were championing the cause of the Turks in the Peace Conference. French and Italian concerns are accused of selling arms to the forces of Mustapha Kemal Pasha.

Even among the native races we find this same lack of uniformity. Hadjin and Marash in Cilicia have recently seen the old sport of Armenian massacre, but in Urfa not many miles to the east the

Armenians and Moslems have never been so friendly in the history of the city. As for the Kurds, in population the second Moslem race of Asia Minor, some are pro-Ally, some are pro-Turk.

Even for the Turks this is theoretically a civil war. The Sultan has signed the Peace Treaty, the forces of Mustapha Kemal Pasha have revolted against him. The government of the Sultan professes to be as anxious for his defeat as are Lloyd George and Millerand.

**B**UT for all practical purposes we must clearly understand that Mustapha with his party is Turkey. Excepting European Turkey and the Mediterranean, Dardanelles, Bosphorous coast line, he controls Turkey. He has sworn he will resist all Allied interference in Turkish affairs; will drive the French out of Cilicia, the Greeks out of Constantinople. All of which he may or may not do.

To place him and his position we ought to try to get a bird's eye view of this troubled and complicated territory, even if we have to hear several discouragingly long names.

Constantinople and the coast lines nearby are controlled by the Sultan and his pro-Ally party. By propaganda he is trying to undermine the Nationalists. But his military strength is nil and he would not last a week were it not for the presence of the Allied armies of occupation.

Syria and Cilicia the French are attempting to control but are having constant warfare with the Turks and Arabs. In Mesopotamia the British fight the Arab and Kurdish tribesmen continually. European Turkey the Greeks captured only a few months ago.

The Caucasus has been crushed by the Bolsheviki and the Turks, who now rule there together. Thus the Bolsheviki have joined forces with the Turks, not because of love, but because they will aid all forces opposed to the Allies. When the Turks and Russians invaded the Caucasus all the Near East Relief workers were given an opportunity to go. Another star was added to America's record when every single worker decided to stay with the job. These Americans at last reports were absolutely cut off from communication with the outside world.

Getting into out-lying but important regions we find the Trans-Caucasus Turcomans and Tartars now free from Russia and quite restless. In fact Enver Pasha is reputed to be with them, still following his Pan-Turanian star. Although Persia and Egypt are under the control of Great Britain they are far from content with their lot.

**O**F all these elements of discord and mutual hatreds, the strongest Moslem force is Turkey. And the task to which the Turkish leader, Mustapha Kemal Pasha, has set himself is the task of welding all these diverse races from the Sahara to Thibet into a great anti-foreign movement held together by the Moslem religion. His propaganda agents are in all Mohammedan countries pressing his claims, going to the length of setting up the Amir of Afghanistan as the new

head of the Moslem religion in the place of the Allied-controlled leader in Constantinople.

All these Moslem races met at Baku some weeks ago, with the Bolsheviki to talk over plans for Pan-Islam and Bolshevik expansion. The Moslems are working for Pan-Islam, and that only, no matter how much they may camouflage by using Bolshevik titles. These two forces will work together as long as faced by common enemies in Western Europe, but no longer.

For finance Kemal claims the Bolsheviki have loaned him some Russian gold and unlimited paper money. He has adopted the habit of paying his officers in wheat, which he collects in lieu of taxes. For munitions he has the ammunition left by the Germans in 1918, some bought recently, and Bolshevik arms.

Mustapha Kemal Pasha is said to be a Salonica Moslem Jew. Little is known of his history. But he has gathered around him the keenest of the Young Turk leadership that served under Enver Pasha during the war. These men give him loyal support. He has driven the Allied armies of occupation from the greater part of Asia Minor during the past year. A man that could do this must be given consideration when he announces that he will still do more.

**WHAT** he considers to be his sources of strength were outlined to me last summer by his cousin, the governor of Harpoot. The chief factor on which he is resting is the lack of unity among the Allies, and their dislike for an extensive military campaign in Asia Minor. An old Turkish proverb says, "While Christian dogs quarrel among themselves, we grow fat." And that seems to be as true now as it has always been.

His huge territory with practically no roads gives him that same advantage for defensive warfare that Russia has. His soldiers are used to mountain warfare, and will fight with bread for food and rags for uniforms. Turks are used to doing what they are told. As an invading army advances against these troops it must bring its supplies over mountain wastes with long lines of communication. The truth is that the Greeks who were given the task of subduing him captured only the fringe of the country.

Finally he holds the remnants of the Armenians, Syrians, and Greeks as hostages. One word from him and they would all be massacred in a day. By using them as pawns he hopes to gain concessions.

But it must not be thought that Mustapha Kemal Pasha has everything his own way.

Of course he lacks the support of his subject Christian races. His chief weakness lies in the war weariness of the population of the whole Near-East. Should a strong Turkish leadership opposed to Mustapha show itself, his whole kingdom might go down as a pack of cards. Besides the difficulty he has drafting troops and raising funds from among the Turks, he has to face the open hostility of Moslem

tribesmen, Kurds and Circassians...All over his territory anarchy is becoming more and more general. Trade is at a standstill. Murder and robbery are common occurrences everywhere. The Government has little control over the primitive villagers. The whole country is disintegrating.

A final cause of weakness is the difficulty of communication with the outlying lands under his control. This makes it hard for him to keep a firm grip over his own people. The Pro-Ally and Pro-Peace Treaty Sultan is thus given opportunity to carry on propaganda opposed to the Nationalist movement.

**R**ECENTLY has come the downfall of Venizelos in Greece, and then the alliance with Bolsheviki. These two things will increase tremendously the prestige of Mustapha Kemal Pasha at home. Difficulties of transportation, however, make it unlikely that many Bolshevist troops actually will fight in Anatolia. But gold and gunpowder, the two essentials, will probably come.

Armenia is crushed. France openly wants to admit defeat and make peace with Mustapha. Greece will not be able to carry on more than a defensive warfare. The United States displays indifference to the whole tragedy. This leaves England as the only force likely actively to oppose the Nationalists. I firmly believe if the English would stick for some time more and carry on, through the Sultan, wise propaganda, the insurgent Turks would eventually go to pieces.

It seems, however, as if some compromise will be attempted by the League of Nations which will scrap the original peace treaty. I doubt if this will succeed, due to the impossible demands the Turks will make. What will be the outcome no one can foretell. But in any case the hopes held by the Christian races in 1918 for their future protection will never be realized.....

The greater part of the missionary effort of the past century has been devoted to the Christian races of the Near-East with wonderful results. But, except along the coast, there will not be any Christian population with which to work as soon as travel reopens. There is about a fifty-fifty chance that all the remaining Christians of the interior will be killed this winter in one final massacre. If they are lucky enough to live till some sort of peace is made they will move. Where? Anywhere—Syria, Constantinople, France, S. America, N. America. The Allies seem to feel that if the Turk promises not to be naughty any more, he will not be. The Armenians, Greeks, and Syrians of Anatolia suffer from no such illusions. I venture to predict that ninety per cent of the surviving Christian peoples of the interior of Turkey will be gone within two years after the roads become passable.

This means the future work of the mission stations must be devoted almost entirely to Moslems. The men and women on the field recognize this. At Cæsarea plans are being laid for work among both the Turks and Circassians. Around Harpoot, Kurds

make up the majority of the population, and for them plans also are being made. The great material equipment, the prestige, and experience gained by 100 years' work will not be abandoned. The adaptable American missionaries will divert them to new peoples, hard to reach before but mellowed now.

The Moslem races can be now reached as never before. The Kurds of Harpoot have asked that missionary work be done amongst them. The Circassians of the Caucasus have also asked for missionaries. Every Turk I ever talked with always came round to the idea that the Turkey of the future would have to be patterned after America if they were to enter the family of nations. Their old supercilious haughtiness is gone. If we can bring to them the best of our Christianity they will accept it.

American missionaries there have a tremendous prestige. Men and women like Mr. Riggs, Miss Graffam, Dr. Shepherd, Miss Cushman, Mr. Beach, and Miss Fenanga are the greatest forces tending for law and order that we find in Turkey today.

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## Mesopotamia.

**T**HE C. M. S. who for so long and so successfully carried on work in Upper Mesopotamia, recently withdrew their workers from that field. It is gratifying to know, however, that members of the Arabian Mission have moved up from stations on the Persian Gulf to fill the gaps. One of the pioneers of the latter Mission, Dr. Cantine, has with Mrs. Cantine, recently moved into residence at 75/195 Abakhana, Bagdad; and Mr. and Mrs. Bilkert are posted to Amara. These friends are members of our League, and in view of the new conditions in that land, have sent in earnest requests that we should remember them and their work in our prayers.

Dr. Cantine writes: "The uncertainty with which one views the sudden impact of Anglo-Saxon law and civilization upon the Arab race; the seeming difficulty in the country's assimilating all the good offered, leads one to wonder how best to take advantage of the present great opportunity to 'lift up' our Saviour and Lord. Mesopotamia needs our devout prayers."

Mr. H. A. Bilkert, recalling the baptisms that have recently rejoiced the hearts of the workers on the Persian Gulf, speaks of the bright spots in what we too often think of as "stony barren Arabia." He reports that "in lower Arabia Dr. Dame of Bahrein recently spent two months in Riadh, the home of Ibn Saud, chief of the fanatical Ikhwan movement. Dr. Dame was unable to take advantage of invitations from cities further in the interior, but Dr. Harrison (a member of the M. M. L.) has gone in for a more extended trip. The prayers of the League are asked for him as he enters these strongholds of the most fanatical of all Moslem sects."

Another member of our League, a lady doctor, Miss Wakefield, is also 'somewhere in the interior.' Her copies of News and Notes are piling up against her return to civilization. *She too needs, expects, and we are sure receives, our prayers.*

## Are there Vital Forces in Islam?

Editor's Notice for the April, 1921, Number of The Moslem World.

**A** CAREFUL perusal of the April Number of The Moslem World Quarterly will enable the reader to answer this question intelligently and with discrimination. On the one hand the war has given Islam a death blow politically, but the vital forces of this great faith are still stongly in evidence.

The fact of modern Education in Persia has been electric in starting its womanhood also in a new intellectual life, but as Clara C. Rice shows in an article on *The New Persian Woman* this intellectual revival is hopeless without the Gospel.

Rev. W. Hooper, D.D., of the Punjab points out the steady retrogression of Islam as a system, while even in Africa, *The influence of Islam on Native Law*, according to Lt.-Col. Braithwaite has been far from favourable. While the yoke of paganism on womanhood is heavy, that of Islam is heavier still. An interesting story entitled "*The Supreme Amulet*" demonstrates that in Egypt dark superstitions still control village life.

Among other articles of special interest, in addition to the usual number of book reviews, the current topics and surveys, we note two on *Islam in Western China* by M. E. Botham and G. E. King, a *Translation of an old Ethiopic M. S. S. on the Philosophy of Za'ra Ya'kob* and an article whose interest must not be judged by its title, *Metaphysics and Cosmography in Persia* by J. Davidson Frame.

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## An Echo of the Eddy meetings in Egypt.

**A** DELIGHTFULLY human incident happened at one of the meetings (in Cairo). Dr. Eddy held up his clenched fist and said, "I have one pound (five dollars) in my hand. I am going to give it away to anyone who will come up front and get it. How many believe I have a pound in my hand?"

Two or three young men got to their feet. To one, a boy of about sixteen, standing in the front, he said, "Do you believe I have a pound in my hand?"

The boy answered, "Yes."

"Do you believe that I am going to give it to you?" "Yes."

"Alright, come up and get it."

A round of applause followed as the boy took the money. "Now," said Dr. Eddy addressing the crowd, "Why didn't you get that money? There are 3 reasons: Some of you didn't believe I had any money in my hand. Some of you believed, but you were ashamed to come forward in front of all this crowd to get it. The rest of you were just ready to come for the money but you hesitated"

Then with terrific directness he applied the illustration to the men who were failing to take God's free gift of salvation. And the lesson went home to these Egyptian young men with the same force as it does to you who are reading this.

From "Blessed be Egypt."

## Notes.

**THE NEAR EAST TANGLE.**—While all of us are following with unabated interest the proposals and counter proposals regarding The Near East Problem at the Conference with the Greek and Turkish delegates at St. James's Palace, London, we feel sure no apology need be offered for reproducing, almost in its entirety, the striking article by Lee Vrooman. It is packed with information and will be read with great interest by missionaries working in lands far from Turkey. As we go to press the 'tangle' still remains to be unravelled.

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**WE BID OUR PRESIDENT FAREWELL.**—Dr. Wherry writes to say that he and Mrs. Wherry are due to sail for America from Calcutta by the American and Indian Line, S. S. City of York on or about April 16th. His address in America will be: c/o Wm. Buchanan Wherry, M.D., 759 Ridgway Avenue, Avondale, Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A. Since this number of N. & N. will be in his hands before the date of sailing, we in India would take the opportunity thus afforded to offer him and Mrs. Wherry our affectionate farewell. We are all of us proud of their great record, and inspired by their noble example. The work that Dr. Wherry has done in the field in which the League is more especially interested, is of the kind that will abide. Dr. Wherry! we, the members of the League which you honoured when you became its President, thank you for all the help and inspiration you have been to us in this great enterprise; and as you and Mrs. Wherry leave dear India's shores we wish you 'God-speed,' and assure you that our thoughts and prayers will follow you as you make your way to your next *mansil*.

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**SIRAT-UL-MUSTAQIM.**—We stated last month that Dr. Wherry's Urdu translation of this book is not yet printed. As a matter of fact it is now in form in Ajmere, and should soon be on sale at 8 as. at the Ludhiana Christian Book Store. The English edition costs, or did formerly, 4 as. Dr. Wherry mentions another interesting new book;—*Takhliq* (Creation) by the late Mr. John Qalandar. It is now in the press at Allahabad and will be soon on sale for 8 as. at Ludhiana. 'It compares the Muslim and Hindu Vedic teaching with Christian doctrine. It is a good book written in a fine spirit.'

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## Pray for Mesopotamia.

*"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest."*

FOR THE GOVERNMENT:

*That it may be truly Christian. That it recognize the enlightening, elevating influence of Missionary effort, and encourage its development.*

FOR THE MISSIONARIES:

*That they may be Christlike in their life. That with wisdom and spiritual power they may unceasingly present the message. That they may be given strength and vigor of mind and body sufficient for their daily need.*

## FOR THE HELPERS:

*That they may be one with us in high ideals, blameless living, and consecrated service.*

## FOR ENQUIRERS AND CONVERTS:

*That they may patiently endure persecution, faithfully witness to the truth in word and life, and seek to lead others to Christ.*

## FOR THE PEOPLE:

*That they may see their great sinfulness, and that only Christ can save them. That those who read the Gospel, and those who repeatedly hear it, may accept Him as their personal Saviour.*

PRAYER is asked by a member in the Deccan who has gone home on furlough, that both she and the work she is obliged to leave in the old city, may be blessed of God.

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**NEW MEMBERS.**

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|------|------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 111. | Rev. E. Stanley Jones, | Meth. Miss.   | Sitapur, U.P. India. |
| 114. | Canon D. L. Joshi,     | C.M.S.        | Bombay.              |
| 127. | Prof. Muhammad Ismail, | F.C. College, | Lahore.              |

(New members are at present being given numbers left vacant through resignations, etc.)

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*The annual subscription to the League is now only Rs. 2-0-0. The Secretary will be glad to send spare copies to addresses mentioned by members with a view to securing new subscribers. News and requests for prayer will always be welcome and should be sent early in the month to the Hon. Secretary:—*

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