

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN EAST ARABIA

In biology the nature, the limitations, and the probable future development of an organ or an animal are studied by comparing them with similar organs or animals less well, or differently developed. That particular section of biology is usually termed Comparative Anatomy. Why might we not expect results of importance from a study of Comparative Economics? Society in Europe and America may well represent the apex of social evolution thus far, but we hope at least that it is not the ultimate goal. In marking out paths for future progress, it may prove possible to get valuable guidance from a study of the social organisms of primitive peoples, and those whose civilization has developed along lines different from our own.

Arabia offers some very interesting material for such a study. It is necessary to understand Arabic, and to have a position which insures close contact with the people, but with that much equipment provided, many of the problems which in America are covered with a confusing mass of detail, stand out in astonishingly naked relief.

FIRST.—Leaders of Arab life and thought are whole-hearted defenders of the *status quo*. They have the best minds in Arabia, and along Arab lines their minds are well trained. Religious leaders may spend twenty years in study before settling down to a life work. Commercial genius in Arabia develops much the same sort of keen business mind as it does in America. Individually many of these men are very benevolent and as a class they average well. In the early days of the war, the Political Agent in Bahrein anticipated famine, because of the complete demoralization of the pearl market. Arrangements were made with India for relief funds, and for the construction

of certain public works in their administration. There was no call for the money; the rich helped the poor and the crisis passed, not without distress, but at least without starvation.

In spite of a keenness of mind which commands the warmest admiration, and in spite of a benevolence often beyond praise, an institution like slavery is defended with great warmth, not to say heat. To sit in the reception room of Sheikh Hamadan, of Abu Thubbi, and express Western views on this subject, is to produce exactly the same horrified dismay and anger, as preaching Socialism might elicit at a Riverside Drive banquet in New York. Many of the slaves of Arabia are Beloochees from the Mikron coast, and they are frequently the equals or the superiors of their masters. In the pearl diving districts of the Pirate Coast, they are very badly treated, poorly fed, worse clothed, worked like dogs, and punished without mercy. In short, the institution presents an appeal to any humane individual quite beyond words. None the less it is one of the foundation stones of the present order, and the leaders are intensely, pathetically, in earnest and sincere in its defense. Their religion endorses it, their prosperity depends upon it, the welfare of the slaves themselves seems to require it. That defense is no parlor debate. The man who preaches emancipation preaches treason, and may expect the treatment that such a crime deserves.

In Arabia half the population, namely the women, are utterly degraded. They can be divorced at will, and married in quantity. Many of them are legally slaves, and can be bought and sold. In practice they are without legal rights, except as brothers and husbands may protect them. Such conditions ought to awaken a feeling of discontent and protest in any person of the least mental discernment, or with the most meager endowment of human sympathy. Of course they do not. The leaders of Arabia would preach a holy war if any modification of the system were threatened.

On the other hand, if these matters are discussed with the fishermen, or the pearl divers, the date gardeners or the Bedouin shepherds of the desert, a very different response is forthcoming. Such men see the outrageous injustice of slavery on the Pirate Coast, and they sincerely hope that it will soon disappear. The present condition of women they recognize, and they mourn over it. They see no way out, and are in no condition of acute protest, but their conscience rings true, and their judgment is far more accurate than that of the men higher up, who are the system's beneficiaries.

SECOND.—The form of political institutions is a matter of trifling importance. The normal governmental system in Arabia is the unlimited monarchy. No legislature or parliament restrains an Arab sheikh. No court interprets his decisions. He is at once legislature, judiciary and executive. The functions of government are simple. Public order is to be preserved. The poor are to be protected from the rapacity of the rich. Relations with neighboring tribes are to be maintained. Other things are left to private initiative.

It is certainly a one man government, but the world contains no purer democracy. A sheikh who fails to maintain public order, who does not protect his subjects from extortion, who allows the tribal territory to be overrun, is soon very unpopular. A faction of discontent arises around some leader, and soon the sheikh is assassinated and the new ruler takes his place. An Arab sheikh is extraordinarily sensitive to public opinion. His power and even his life depend upon his subjects. He knows this, and so do they.

This system of undivided responsibility is beautifully suited to the Arab mind, and to Arab life. Rulers are developed by it, whose abilities any king in Europe might well envy. In the speed of his judicial processes, and in his absolute impartiality between the powerful and the weak, the Arab ruler has much to teach us.

Ten years ago, under the Turks, the province of Hassa

was in a condition of practical anarchy. The province is the richest in Eastern Arabia, and the people were plundered by the Bedouins from the desert, on the one hand, and by the garrison from Constantinople on the other. They were torn by factional wars as well. Bin Saoud, the great sheikh of the Wahabees, drove the Turks out about nine years ago. He left as local ruler, his cousin, Bin Jelouee. Now, the revenue is sent inland on camels, tens of thousands of rupees at a time, with no guard and no inspector. A Bedouin is hired to carry it in to Riadh, the capital, a journey of six to ten days through the empty and unguarded desert. When the Bedouin arrives he delivers the money with the accompanying letter. No one, except the Western visitor, is even surprised at such an arrangement.

In the speed and accuracy of judicial processes, in heavy handed punishment for evil doers, and in the atmosphere of untroubled freedom prevailing the community, not a city in Europe or America would compare with this scene of utter political chaos ten years ago.

In the coast cities of the Persian Gulf, British political agents reside, and all foreign subjects are under their jurisdiction. Thus many Western laws regarding property, and regarding court procedure have been introduced. The government is no longer a one-man affair. Responsibility is divided, and the opportunity for corruption increases. The mills of justice grind out a much inferior product.

Still it is not possible to see that the happiness or the progress of the community is much affected one way or the other. The people are given a share in their own government. Mixed courts are introduced. There is usually an effort to create a sort of local cabinet. A municipality may be formed. The intention is to create some sense of public responsibility on the part of the people. The motive is good, although it is doubtful whether the genius of the Arab race lies along that line of development. Bribery increases, and individual miscarriages of

justice are numerous. The people, however, are little affected by the change of form. Public order can be well maintained under either system. Neighborhood relations can be fostered. The interests of the poor can be protected. Good men rule well under either system, and bad men rule badly.

THIRD.—Economic arrangements are matters of the greatest importance. Bahrein is a city of bondage and oppression. The way the people are ground down is pitiful. It is not the heel of any political ruler that does it, however. Pearl diving is the only industry of the place, and theoretically the system under which the men work is a very good one. The *Nochatha*, or captain, collects his men and they dive the season through in a rented diving boat. Each boat carries food and water for perhaps twenty days, and with visits to the mainland for fresh supplies, they dive steadily through the four or five warm summer months. A man's work remains the same throughout the season. Every diver has an assistant who pulls him up with a long rope at the end of each dive, and arranges his apparatus for the next descent.

When the season is over, the *Nochatha* sells the season's catch, and the proceeds are divided. A fifth goes to the owner of the diving boat. The season's expenses for food, etc., are next deducted, and the remainder is shared on the basis of a full share to each diver and two-thirds of a share to each assistant. The *Nochatha*, who has done no hard work, but has supervised the season's campaign, receives a diver's share. There is usually a cook on board, who shares as an assistant.

On paper it is a good system, but actual conditions are past describing. Nine out of ten of the divers live and die hopelessly in their *Nochatha's* debt. These debts are to a certain degree based on real loans, but the *Nochatha* resorts to false entries, crooked bookkeeping and all sorts of trickery and fraud to get the divers into his debt, and to keep them from getting out. A man in debt may not change his employer, nor may he leave town except

under bonds to return. The general poverty is pitiful. A successful season helps only a little. The Nochatha sells the pearls, and whatever be the results he reports. It is a rare thing for anybody to "escape from the account book" as the Arab says. The courts are in the hands of the Nochathas. The divers cannot read nor write, and have no way of proving the falsity of entries against them. In debt they are, and in debt they stay, for the whole of their lives.

It is interesting to compare the standards of life and comfort (or discomfort) in Bahrein and Dubai. The pearl banks near Bahrein produce pearls amounting to many times the value of those brought up in the region of Dubai. The Bahrein banks also have the reputation of being much richer, and affording better returns for the same amount of work. Bahrein as a whole has three rupees to Dubai's one, and more. This difference, however, finds no reflection in the lives of the divers. The standards of life in the two places are more or less the same. The difference is that Bahrein has very much richer merchants than Dubai. The same thing is shown by the varying seasons. A bad season depresses the standards of life a little. Not very much, for the margin is narrow. A good season elevates the standard a trifle. The fluctuation is the merest fraction of the fluctuation in the value of the crop harvested.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the divers feel themselves in prison, and show the apathy of hopelessness. They consign the Nochathas to everlasting fire, but see no way out for themselves. To talk of the boon of political liberty to such people is to talk foolishness. The form which governments take is a matter of pure indifference. Happiness and progress depend on some alleviation of economic conditions.

Comparison with the Bedouin of the inland desert is instructive. A life barren of material comforts is not the only nor the main evil result of the Bahrein system. The Bedouin is a poorer man and has a lower standard of life

than the Bahrein pearl diver. His poverty is extreme. Even India can scarcely surpass it. For weeks, perhaps months, he sees no food except camel's milk and a few dates. If he has a tattered tent for a home, clothes which will hide his nakedness, and food enough to keep body and soul together, he does well. His poverty, however, is due to the meager resources of the country. He is out of debt, and in spite of everything he is a cheerful citizen with a sense of untroubled freedom. Apparently he does not find his extreme poverty especially galling. He looks down on the miserable pearl diver of the towns, with a lofty and scornful pity.

FOURTH.—Economic improvements depend on a change in the people themselves. Pearl divers in Bahrein suffer from a very extreme form of economic bondage. It requires, however, no extraordinary qualities of thrift and initiative to avoid being tied up. The diving season lasts little more than five months at the longest, and anyone who is willing to work the remaining seven will have little need for borrowing money. Extraordinary efforts are made to induce the beginner to borrow. Once on the Nochatha's books, false entries are possible and every sort of fraud can be practiced against him. Till he accepts his first loan he is safe. Of course in the long run the Nochatha will see to it that his loans do not total more than the season's catch. Once the sum on the books is sufficient, whether by fair means or foul, the Nochatha does not waste his money, and the diver's hopes of a seven months' vacation are quite visionary except for the first year or two.

The diver knows all this, but he yields to the temptation. The crowd all goes that way. It is the path of least resistance. It is an exhilarating experience to have a pocket full of ready money, and the city swarms with places to spend it.

The difference between the Arab in debt and one out of debt is very striking. As the Arab tersely tells you, "The debtor is a slave." Men out of debt in Bahrein are

very rare. On the Pirate Coast, in Dubai and Abu Thubbi, conditions are just as bad. Kuttar on the contrary is a diving community of Nejdees, a very different type of Arabs, and there three-fourths or more are out of debt. Standards of living are higher, and the sense of being free men is a refreshing contrast to the atmosphere of Bahrein.

Every season many Nejdees come to Bahrein to dive, and they show the same characteristics. I met such a crew once in Dareen, just a little way from Bahrein. These men come every summer from Central Arabia, and rent a Bahrein diving boat for the season. One of them serves as Nochatha. I asked one of the men what he had made the previous season. He had done quite well. His share was five hundred rupees. None of the crew were in debt. I inquired somewhat jocosely whether they were certain that the Nochatha reported correctly as to prices and receipts. "The Nochatha lie?" said one Bedouin with a most engaging grin. "No, indeed, he tells no lies. If he tells us a lie, Ha!" and with an even broader grin he drew the edge of his palm across his own throat in a gesture the meaning of which could not be misunderstood. That threat was worth exactly a hundred cents on the dollar too—as every one knows who has had dealings with the inland Bedouin.

The Bahreinee is a peculiar type of Arab. Probably he has a certain amount of Persian blood in his veins, and to teach him the lessons of thrift and independence will not be easy. However, there will be little permanent improvement in his economic condition till he learns at least the rudiments of that lesson. As he is now, rescuing him from the hands of one exploiter merely prepares him to fall into the hands of another.

FIFTH.—The Arab especially needs an increased ability to cooperate. The pearl diver lives a life and dies a death of utter poverty. His Nochatha and his pearl merchant become rich, often enormously so. There are millionaires among them, even when money is counted in American

dollars. There is, however, no artificial manipulation of the market, and no boycotting of independent dealers. Pearl merchants from Paris spend the season in Bahrein, and all who come may have the best price that the world affords.

The question arises at once, "Why do the divers submit to the extortions of the Nochathas and the pearl merchants?" Why indeed? Nothing would be easier than for a dozen divers, granted that they are out of debt, or just beginning their career, to club together, rent a boat, elect one of their number Nochatha, and dive the season. They could sell their catch to any one they wished. No one would try to boycott them. The buyers from Paris are as ready to buy from them as from anyone else. The capital required would be most moderate, say a quarter of one season's earnings all round. Later they might buy the boat if they desired, adding twenty per cent to each season's possibilities. Eventually their remuneration would probably be twice what it is now.

Why is it not done that way? Simply because the Arab is not capable of that much cooperation. The experiment is tried occasionally. No one forbids it. No one boycotts the men. The sea and the market are free to all comers. But they never keep it up. I have never heard of its being continued for a second season. The men go back to the common system, and sign up with some Nochatha who plans to fleece them out of half they earn, and they know it. Inasmuch as he will not cooperate, the Arab must have his industry organized by some one else, and it is as inevitable as the law of gravitation that he will be exploited to the limit of the organizer's ability. The path of progress for the Arab is as plain as a pikestaff. Lawless individualism condemns him to a life of poverty and bondage. His salvation lies along the line of cooperation.

Bahrein, Arabia.

PAUL W. HARRISON.

CURRENT TOPICS

The Coptic Church and Islam

Writing in *East and West* concerning the religious life in Egypt, the Reverend W. Wilson Cash states that from 300 to 1,000 Copts go over to Islam annually. In analyzing the reasons for this startling fact, he mentions, among other things, the wave of Nationalism—a bridge by which it was easy to cross over. “This brings us to the heart of the problem facing the Church to-day. We have a strong Islam, with nothing but contempt for the Christian, and an old historic Church in danger of decay through lack of spiritual vitality, whilst more Christians join the ranks of Islam annually than Moslems become Christians.

“Political propaganda has destroyed the witness of the Church, and the Crescent still triumphs over the Cross. Hardly a priest in the Church would now have the moral courage to baptize a Moslem if asked to do so. Most priests would prefer that he should remain a Moslem lest his baptism should offend the Moslems and interfere with his political alliance. At the same time, the Coptic Church sits by and sees the Moslem take over man after man to Islam.

“How is the Church to find again its soul, its witness, and its power? Spiritual life is needed in the Church. It is at the moment driven beneath the surface by the storm, but the very life of the Church depends on its coming up to the top again and finding expression in new growth and development.

“The danger is not imaginary, but is very real. Here and there one meets Copts deeply concerned for the state of the Church, but the great mass of the people are content to slumber on and to allow things to drift. The very Nationalism that has brought this danger to the Church has also made foreign help and assistance to the Copts almost an impossibility. Anything foreign is looked upon with grave suspicion, and any Anglican help in the present condition of affairs would be resented.”

The Solidarity of Islam

An editorial in the magazine called *Peace*, published in Dacca, India, speaks of Islamic solidarity in terms that would appear an exaggeration were it not that we find on the same page a list of nineteen Moslem magazines, exchanges which the editor receives. These magazines are published not only in India, but in Cape Town, Chicago, Java, France, and England.

“The response which we have received from far and near makes us firmer in the belief that Islam is not dead, that she is as ever alive and aglow with divine fire, and it is yet in her destiny once more to illumine the whole world with her light. One beauty of her which arrests the attention of a casual observer is that it is actively alive among its followers. Every other religion has become trite, dull and irresponsible among its followers and has turned into a fashion and a matter of

course thing. But what charm Islam has for her followers! How often have we looked wistfully at the brother Moslems saying their prayers just when the prayer time is come in the road side or in the field, on the green carpet of earth and under the blue canopy of heaven, bending in devout humbleness before the Lord of all the worlds! From Sierra Leone on one side and from Borneo on the other, earnest Moslems have sent us enquiries to know more about the beauty of Islam. From Lahore to Singapore, from Cape Town to Java we have received the response of Moslem brethren. We do not want to say it is our success which has elicited so much response. We are working towards making our enterprise a success and we are far away from it now. What we want to write here about is the wonderful magnetic communion and strong solidarity that still exist among the Moslems of the world, and we live and work with a golden hope for a bright future of Islam."

Le roi du Hedjaz et la mosquée de Paris

Le roi du Hedjaz, désireux de manifester l'intérêt qu'il prend à la fondation à Paris d'un institut musulman et d'une mosquée, a décidé de faire don à la mosquée d'un morceau d'une des anciennes housses recouvrant la Kaabah. Cette housse, qui provient de la collection personnelle du roi, et qui mesure environ deux mètres, porte brodés en lettres d'or deux versets du Coran. Le roi Hussein et son ministre des affaires étrangères attachent une très grande importance à ce cadeau, gage des sentiments de Sa Majesté à l'égard de la France.

Aussi le roi a-t-il décidé de faire parvenir la housse à Paris par un courrier spécial.—*From a French Magazine.*

Mohammedans in Natal

Mr. N. C. Tomlinson, of the South Africa General Mission, furnishes us with the following information: "In 1915 a spark of interest was kindled in the hearts of a few Christians for the Mohammedans in this land. The mission societies already engaged in work among the natives and Indians did not feel drawn or led to take up work among these people. Prayer seemed the only avenue of service to the few who were interested. God saw fit to answer prayer in His own way. A European converted to Islam commenced aggressive work in 1922. The South African Islamic Mission was formed for the propagation of this faith to the natives, Europeans and Indians of South Africa. A mission station was established in Natal, and, I believe, one in the Transvaal. This act on the part of the Mohammedans was brought to the notice of ministers and missionaries, which came as a shock to all.

The Executives of the Natal Missionary Conference became interested. A missionary was asked to address their Conference, held last July, on "Mohammedan Propaganda Among the Natives." Interest and prayer was quickened. Indian Christian workers of the South Africa General Mission, realizing the need for some one to work among these people, agreed at their conference, held in September, 1921, to give the tenth of their monthly wages to the support of a Mohammedan evangelist. Funds are in hand, but it is very difficult to get a worker. Prayer continues to be made by these workers. One of the greatest needs, if not the greatest, is to carry the Gospel to the Mohammedans of South Africa.

There are 18,000 in Natal, and 10,000 in the Transvaal, and not a worker nor a convert among them.

We believe, however, that we can truthfully say that prayer is being answered. For there is interest aroused among mission societies and ministers to try to do something for these people, and there is also a willingness on the part of Mohammedans to read God's Word. One man who bought and read a New Testament in Urdu asked the missionary to bring him the Old Testament also. More Gospels and Bibles and New Testaments have been bought by Mohammedans within the past ten months than there have been for the past ten years.

Cast Down But Not Destroyed

The work of the American Board in Turkey has not been destroyed, although it has met with disaster.

The work of Jesus Christ was not terminated when He had been betrayed by one of His disciples, denied by another, forsaken by all, and crucified by Roman soldiers.

The early Church was not destroyed when the powerful emperors of Rome in close succession arrayed against the infant Church all the forces of the Empire, backed by enraged jealousy and implacable hatred.

The Christian Church in the island of Madagascar was not destroyed when the hostile queen brought against the Church and all Christians the imperial persecuting forces apparently so successful that no visible indication remained of a vestige of Christianity. At the death of the persecuting queen, it was found that the church membership had doubled during the period of persecution and martyrdoms.

Christianity in China was not destroyed and the efforts of a century of Christian missions wiped out when the Empress Dowager essayed with the agencies of government under her control to eliminate from the Empire all foreigners, and especially the foreign religion. Hundreds of missionaries and missionaries' children and tens of thousands of Christian Chinese were put to death. Subsequent history shows that this was but the beginning of the Christian conquest of China.

In all history persecutions have scattered believers who went into exile preaching the Gospel. Apparent physical defeat has again and again proven but the beginning of a new era of spiritual advance. Barriers to Christian progress have repeatedly been burned away by the fires of persecution. New doors of opportunity have been opened by the shock of the forces of evil in their destructive onslaught. By the blood of martyrdoms the Church of Jesus Christ has risen from the ashes of its destruction into a new physical and spiritual resurrection.

The work in Turkey has been swept as with a besom of destruction, but we can even now see tokens of new life and power and of possible opportunities not before realized. We do not attempt to explain the providences that have produced present physical conditions; they are beyond the reach of the human mind.

We turn to history for our encouragement, to the promises for our assurance, to the God of missions for our spiritual equipment, and to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ for our marching orders.

That which is seen is temporal, but that which is unseen is eternal.

—*The Missionary Herald.*

Railway Progress in Siam and the Malay Peninsula

The progress of missions in unoccupied territory is closely connected with the establishment of new railway communications. We are glad to learn, therefore, from a correspondent in the *Geographical Journal* (London) that the railway to the important centre of Chieng-mai in the Siamese Shan States, has for some months been open to traffic, and that an accelerated service of through trains has lately been inaugurated, enabling passengers who leave Bangkok in the evening of one day to reach Chieng-mai twenty-four hours later. The train is provided with a sleeping and dining car, and makes the journey twice a week each way. In the Malay Peninsula railways have made considerable progress within recent years. Penang and Patani have both been in through communication with Bangkok for some years, and an East Coast railway is in course of construction from Singapore, to join the existing line at Haat-Yai, which has been spoken of as likely to become in time the chief commercial centre of the peninsula. It is thought however that Tungsong, where the branch line to Trang leaves the main line from Bangkok to Penang, may become more important, as it is the natural distributing centre for rich tin-mining and cattle-breeding districts.

Heard in a Third-Class Carriage

Mr. A. Y. Steele, of the Egypt General Mission, gives a vivid picture of what third-class railway travel is in the Delta:

"The door at the end of the long third-class carriage was suddenly darkened; on looking up I beheld a portly figure which almost entirely filled the doorway. Well-dressed in flowing robes, shod with bright red slippers, his bull-like head surmounted by a round cap of finely-woven colored straw, surrounded by a white turban. In his left hand he carried a colored handkerchief, held by the corners, from which he took pinches between his right thumb and finger, and without 'by your leave' or any other formality, dosed the nose of each passenger, except mine, right down the carriage, calling out, 'Indian snuff, finest Indian snuff, good for the health!' Immediately the occupants of the seats were rocking in paroxysms of sneezing, with eyes streaming, and expressing their astonishment in various pious and impious exclamations. I kept my head well out of the window till the olfactory explosions had subsided and the air waves assumed their normal placidity.

"Who is this smart, clean, pale-faced individual who carefully picks his way down the crowded carriage, politely handing out circulars as he goes? He wears a long loose coat with wide sleeves, cut somewhat like a clergyman's at the neck; on his breast is a brass badge, engraved with the double triangle, and an Arabic inscription announces that he is a member of the Mohammedan Reform Society. The circulars inform us that he sells eye-drops and various medicines of wonderful efficacy, which he carries in a hand-bag along with booklets, for free distribution, calling upon Mohammedans to pay attention to their religion.

"On passing through the train I met with a certain amount of success in selling Gospels and booklets, until brought up by an educated youth barring the way and excitedly calling to the passengers not to buy the books, saying the Government ought to put a stop to the sale of such literature. I turned to those who had gathered round and said, 'This is

the kind of 'liberty' and 'independence' that this gentleman wishes you to be brought under. Be truly free, and buy what you like. Some ignored his threats and purchased a few booklets.

"Tickets!" And with a rat-rat of his punch on the back of the seats, along comes the guard, peering underneath, and now and then dragging forth, by the leg, a would-be free passenger. On many occasions a little backsheesh would be all the demand of the guard; but today there follows in his wake an all-alive inspector, keen on his duty, who brooks no argument, and the culprit pays 'the uttermost farthing.'

"Yusuf, for that is the inspector's name after completing his work, returns, sits down besides us and says, 'Now I have cleaned the train'—his way of expressing his work on non-ticket passengers—in proof of same he produced a book of receipt counterfoils, silent testimony to the effectiveness of the 'cleaning' process. This is the man who, when a Mohammedan, as guard of the train, cheated the Railway Administration of much money, and who, on his conversion to Christ, confessed his conduct, and made restitution by sending fifty pounds to the Administration. He has now been promoted to be an inspector. It was interesting to listen to the passengers talk about him; some said he must have received a big sum of money to become a Christian. It was quite apparent from the conversation he was faithful in his work and to be feared as an inspector. He witnesses to His Saviour in the trains, and his smiling face tells something of the peace and joy in his heart.

"One day, on passing the door of our dispensary waiting-room, I heard someone praying, and on looking in, found Yusuf alone: he said he just wanted a quiet time, and so had slipped along between trains.

"What is the group over in the far corner of the carriage discussing? If you move over to the seat behind them you will hear one man, who had heard something of the Gospel at the Belbeis market meeting, explaining to the others what he thinks we do about converts. He is saying that when a Mohammedan turns Christian, the missionaries fill a small bottle with blood from his little finger. They keep the bottle and look at it from time to time; if there is any change in the color they know the convert is not behaving rightly, and correct him accordingly. Probably this is an awful confusion of what he had heard about the cleansing power of the Blood."

Indian Moslems and the Hedjaz Treaty

The new treaty between Great Britain and the King of the Hedjaz is met with strong disapproval on the part of Moslems in India, as well as in other parts of the Moslem world. The Cairo Press spoke of this discontent as follows:

"The Grand Association of the Caliphate held a meeting at which all the *ulemas* and the principal mussulman leaders were present to discuss the proposal, and after much discussion the Assembly published the following message:—The Central Indian Association of the Caliphate declares that the Anglo-Arab treaty announced by King Hussein and considered by the Arabian Peninsula and the Arab world is in reality the ruin of this independence, and of all the aspirations of the Arab world, and in fact a veritable betrayal of the holy places of Islam. The Indian Assembly of the Caliphate therefore in the name of all the Moslems of India makes the following declaration: