

the average length of life is 47 years, still enough to make life worth being born. But in Egypt, the health reports do not allow us to say that the average life is more than 25 years. Add to this the high rate of disease, and one cannot help asking 'What is the use? We are born only to run the gauntlet of many diseases and to succumb early to one. There is little rest, there is little future.'

"Why these conditions should exist is difficult to comprehend. That they should not be, all will agree. Protected by deserts on three sides and the ocean on the fourth, with a beneficent climate nowhere surpassed, ever renewed richness of soil, a homogeneous population of potential vigor with a glorious past and a promising future, this valley of the Nile should be a paradise."

Arabia's Greatest Need Today

No foreigners resident in the Near East have a deeper insight into actual conditions among the people and their needs than medical missionaries. Writing in the *Student Volunteer Movement Bulletin*, Dr. Paul W. Harrison describes a visit to Kateef, East Arabia:

"Everything except the affairs of the Kingdom of God seems to be moving fast. We did not go on this trip in a sailboat. We went in a motor launch, and took our Hospital Ford so we might work two towns in one trip. There is now a regular launch service between Bahrain and Kateef, and a company is being formed to connect the different towns for thirty miles up and down the coast by means of an automobile taxi service. Ibn Saoud moves between Riadh and Mecca in motors, covering in two days what used to require as many weeks. A fleet of perhaps a thousand autos carries pilgrims between Jiddah and Mecca. Men are beginning to agitate for modern schools in Hassa. Surely this is the time to preach the Gospel to the Arabs. The idols that sit on the thrones of their souls are changing, changing more profoundly and more rapidly than is easily realized.

"There is nothing difficult to understand in this situation for the pastor or layman who is burning himself out for Christ at home. The Arabs are bound by the same sins that bind men the world over. Pride shuts God out of their lives just as it does in America. Indeed, the sins of Arabia are coming to wear the same clothes as at home, and even to use the same vocabulary. But there is this difference—the impact of prayer sufficient to break men away from their environment and set their feet in the path of salvation must come from ten thousand miles away. The Arabian Mission needs money. We need better missionaries even more. But neither of these is our deepest need. We need an outpouring of God's miraculous power. Nothing else will set men free in Arabia. The Arabs are interested in education at last, and governments are providing it. They are interested in every Western luxury and convenience, and their merchants are providing them. But what they need is Eternal Life! Only Christ can provide that and He only through us."

Physical Movements in Moslem Prayer

Those who have watched a Moslem at prayer realize that it is difficult to describe all his genuflections and prostrations, nor is it an easy matter to trace the origin of these practices. A letter recently appeared in one of our Indian exchanges attempting an explanation; it was written by a Moslem of the Old School:

"DEAR SIR,—Sometimes the non-Moslems criticise the physical movements made by the Moslems in their prayers. The critics say that prayer requires concentration of mind towards God and such movements detract human attention from the real object—God. I do not claim full knowledge as to the *why* of this question, but nevertheless I will try to offer an explanation.

"Undoubtedly, man is 'the best of the creation' who dominates and lords it over the world. Secondly, he is the representative (*Khaleefa*) of God on earth. Thirdly, it must be borne in mind that only the best of the lot shall always represent the lowest in his devotions. The whole creation consists of three kinds: Firstly, that which stands or walks erect, such as man, trees, etc. Secondly, those that remain bent, such as goats, horses, etc. Thirdly, those that creep on earth—snakes and other such like reptiles.

"When a man stands erect (*Qiam*) before the Almighty, he represents the first kind of creation. When he bends on his knees (*Ruku*) he represents the second lot. Finally, when he prostrates on earth (*Sijda*), he represents the third one.

"So in this way the 'lord of the earth' represents every section of the creation in prayers and shows his obedience and loyalty to the creator as the *Khaleefa*."

In Turkey, on the other hand, there is a different explanation; a missionary writes: "To catch the ear of a young man in Turkey speak of 'Progress.' To win the heart of an old man, speak of the 'Revolt of youth.' In a city of twenty thousand people I know only one young man who keeps conscientiously all the forms of prayer and the other rites, day by day. Not long ago he said to me, 'Mohammed was a clever man.' 'Why?' I asked. 'He invented the "*Daily Dozen*"' was his reply. Judge the depth of his religion. Obviously the decay of the old, and the fact that Islam has lost its hold on the youth of Turkey has left a great vacuum in its place."

Reforms in Al Azhar

Another attempt is being made to introduce reforms in the University of Al Azhar and to bring it more into line with modern developments. Various efforts have been made in the past, but, except for what the great Mohamed Abdu was able to do some thirty years ago, little change has taken place in that world-famous institution, which remains an "Eastern Oxford of the Middle Ages." Everyone, however, except certain *ulama*, is agreed that Al Azhar is hopelessly behind the times and that, if it is to play its proper part in the intellectual and social development of the country and to continue to exert its old influence on the outside Moslem world, it must be brought up-to-date and put in a position where its graduates can go out into the world and hold their own with colleagues from other institutions. There have been considerable complaints of late, moreover, from the side of the inmates of Al Azhar concerning employment on leaving that institution, and it was recently decided that the time had come for a complete investigation into the condition and the possible reforming of the University.

A Commission has been formed, presided over by Ismail Pasha Sidky, who was at one time Minister of Wakfs, and, with Sarwat Pasha, was member of the Commission which studied reforms in Al Azhar in 1910.

His presence at the head of this new Commission affords a guarantee that its work will be thoroughly done, and that the results will not be allowed to languish in the archives of the Government, as has been the fate of previous reports, without some fruitful action being taken to put them into effect. The terms of reference of the Commission are to define the exact object for which these religious educational establishments are being run from the point of view of the Shari law and the Moslem traditions with a view to bringing them all up-to-date, to regulate the relations between these institutions and other educational establishments in the country, to propose the reforms which will infuse life into these religious seminaries, at the same time safeguarding their dignity and enhancing their prestige and giving to the diplomas which they grant a value which will enable the services of their graduates to be utilized in a manner consistent with their qualifications when they leave.—From the *Near East and India*.

Moslem Education in West Africa

The following paragraphs from the *Sunrise*, (Qadian, India) indicate Islamic activity on the West Coast of Africa:

"It was only last year when Mr. West, the district officer Salt Pond, opened the new building of Talim-ul Islam Ahmadiyya School at the above Gold Coast town and was pleased to quote from Inspector of Schools remarks that the School was 'a model in the Cape Coast Province.' It is now again with great pleasure that we learn of the opening of the building of another Talim-ul Islam School on the Coast. The following is the brief summary of news from Nigeria:

"The Director of Education, Mr. S. M. Grier, M. A., performed the ceremony yesterday, the 10th January, of opening the new School which the Ahmadiyya community of Nigeria has recently completed at Eligbata-Marina Lagar.

"Mr. Grier was followed by Henry Carr, M. A., B. C. L., and Doctors Sapon and Savage. Mr. Carr in a long speech described the history of Moslem education and remarked:

"But nothing was done in this direction until the Ahmadiyya section of Moslems by the advice of Maulvi Nayyar established a denominational school in the year 1921, which he had the honor of opening in his capacity as resident of the Colony. The credit therefore belonged to the Ahmadiyya section of being the first to make the sacrifice of establishing a Moslem school in the proper sense of the term in Lagar. They had continued on the lines laid down by Maulvi Nayyar and had now erected the fine and commodious building which was opened that morning." Mr. Carr then congratulated the Ahmadiyya Moslems on their great achievement in the erection of their new School and prayed for the blessings of God on their undertaking."

Modernism and Islam

"Today we are in the throes of a mighty change. Things little dreamt of a few decades ago are solid facts while airy nothings have materialized into realities. We are not referring to the many upheavals brought about by scientific inventions, nor to the geographical changes which have altered the map of the world. We refer only to that great change in the realm of thought which has shaken the world to its very foundation.

"And in this matter also we restrict our remarks to Moslem Asia. Turkey is today a new Turkey with new ideals, new ambitions and a new culture. Persia is on the threshold of another era; her poetry, her music, her entire art symbolize a new vision. And Afghanistan is rapidly undergoing a metamorphosis. A great King is transforming a whole country 'almost semi-civilized' till recently, into 'an ultra-modern Afghanistan,' as if by a magic wand.

"We therefore view with alarm some of the radical changes that have been introduced in their personal affairs as well as in the affairs of the State by those who are guiding the destinies of Afghanistan and Turkey. The latest messages from Angora reveal that it is proposed to extend further the principle of the separation of the State from the Church and though we are not inclined to give the affair half as much importance as some scandal-mongering journals of this country, we cannot refrain from expressing our disapproval of stretching this principle any further. Nor can we help also criticising the action of Her Majesty the Afghan Queen in travelling all over Europe without any regard for observing the Moslem rite of *pardah*."—*The Moslem Outlook* (Lahore).

Moslem Women Cooperating with Near East Relief

A committee of Moslem women in Tabriz, Persia, has been secured to cooperate with a Near East Relief worker and a physician whose services are loaned by the Presbyterian Mission, in an effort to reduce the number of cases of tuberculosis among children in that city. The governor of the Province, Sardar-i-Fatell, the local Council of Physicians and the newly established Census Bureau are lending their aid to secure the registration of every known case of tuberculosis among the Moslem children under twelve years of age in the district in which the work is being undertaken. A clinic has been established, and mothers of tubercular children are being formed into clubs in which they are taught the care of their children, diet, etc.

One club composed of fifteen Moslem girls has also selected as the subject for their study and discussion the prevention and cure of tuberculosis. Persia has more deaths from this disease than from any other.

Bringing children back to health has been of primary concern to Near East Relief workers. Plain but good food restored to normalcy the emaciated bodies of their orphan charges; then with a few years of education and training for trades or for helping in the home, these charges have been sent out to make their own way, but what of the new environment into which they were forced to go? It is impossible for the children for whom America has cared during the past years to remain well when all about them disease is rife.

The Nineteen Angels Who Guard Hell

The following question and answer appear in *The Sunrise* (Qadian) for June 7th, 1927:

Q.—The Holy Koran mentions nineteen angels as the wardens of Hell. What does it mean? Why should Hell need angels as wardens? Why should it be nineteen?

A.—A study of the Holy Koran reveals the fact that the inmates of Hell will feel a strong inclination to escape. Hence the necessity of watch and ward. The mere fact that God can act without these means does not eliminate their presence. Even here in this world of ours He has all the powers attributed to Him yet in spite of this He is working through these means. In point of fact such a misconception generally arises from our imperfect knowledge of the working of divine attributes. We should always approach such questions from the human point of view. Man does always stand in need of material agency to help him on in his gradual course of progression. Now it is the material means that have an indefinable angelic connection. It is to fulfil this evolutionary side of human nature that God has provided these physical means that function under angelic supervision. For instance you cannot slake your thirst with fire or burn a thing with water. That is why there is divine provision of hope and fear. Life here on this earth needs material means for our material bodies, but in the life to come our make up shall be of the ethereal or spiritual kind; hence there shall be a direct connection with the angels who are spiritual beings.

In regard to the specific *nineteen*, let us bear in mind that some sort of number is indispensable, no matter what that be. For instance nine months is the period before childbirth. We have no right to question the validity of it. It is because *it is*. Our earth takes 365 days to go round the sun and the moon takes a month to go about the earth. We can not say, "Why is it so?" That there is some wisdom in all this we do not deny, but all we say is that such questions lead us nowhere. They are mysteries, no doubt, above our ken. But then our whole life is a strange series of mysteries. So we can well get at the necessity of having these wardens. As to the number, that we can leave to the Maker of this universe, though we can have a little inkling. For instance we know that man is endowed with nine physical senses, corresponding to which we have nine mental or spiritual senses. That makes it eighteen. Add the nineteenth, the collaborating and co-ordinating sense and the number becomes *nineteen*. Hence man needs nineteen angels to correspond to his nineteen senses.

That the angels will serve in Hell does not make their life hellish. Jail wardens are not jail-birds. A man's progress depends upon the proper functioning of all these faculties, hence the need of these faculties in charges. You would please bear in mind the fact that the Islamic idea of hell is a place of treatment whence a person is discharged after a successful treatment. It is a reformatory and not a dungeon. Man will be put there to reform and undergo a curative treatment and what better arrangement than to have nurses who are angels in the real sense of the word.

Broadcasting from Constantinople

Constantinople is the latest addition to broadcasting stations, and listeners should be on the alert for concerts of Turkish music. In the course of the day's programme from four to midnight there are usually three or four sections devoted to Turkish music. The programme further includes concerts of European classical music and of dance music.

The company employs its own Turkish orchestra and its perform-

ances have already evoked tributes from a number of foreign hearers. Letters of appreciation have been received from places as scattered as Poland and Algeria, Monaco and Germany.

Broadcasting is shortly to be brought into effect at Angora also, and the company at Constantinople intends to relay programmes from European stations. The enterprise is still in its infancy, but English listeners must now be prepared for the announcement from their loud speakers: "*Hallo! Istambul telsiz telefon! Hello! Constantinople radio!*"

An Invitation from Islam to Cooperate in Winning Pagans

We have received a letter from a member of the Islam community in South London. This community does not merely exist for the purpose of providing Moslems in England with opportunities of worship in accordance with their beliefs, but is also engaged in propaganda, as publications enclosed with the letter plainly declares. The letter was written in a friendly spirit. The writer deplored the rivalry between Christianity and Islam, and suggested the possibility of Christians joining hands with Moslems for the conversion of heathen and pagan folk and leaving each other alone. It is highly significant that such a proposal should be made, but it is very difficult to see how it can be carried into effect, say, in Africa. Where there is a Christian church and a Moslem mosque in one village, both existing for the purposes of propaganda among the heathen, how can collision be avoided? And our ideas of God and His purpose for mankind being what they are, so very, very different, how can it be consistent with the Christian or the Moslem conscience to be silent when the Christian asserts the divinity of Christ and the Moslem denies it. Nevertheless, we can welcome the proposal as at the least a sign of a better feeling which conceivably in the long run may lead to good results.—*Central Africa.*

Is the Paris Mosque for Tourists or for Worship?

A vigorous protest was made by Ghulam Farid Malik in an open letter to a London paper regarding the proposal to build a third "Mosque-de-luxe" in London. His letter deserves attention. Moslems should have freedom of worship everywhere but their religion should not be exploited for political purposes or as an attraction for tourists. He wrote as follows:

"Sir:—I am sure every Mussulman will feel much humiliated to know that the mosque in Paris 'has become the home rather of feasting and bargaining, than of worship, and its main purpose has been subordinated to making it a sensation for tourists,' and that it 'is being used as a restaurant, in which instead of plain Oriental fare, elaborate menus are provided.'

"Perhaps the custodians of the mosque are not more to blame than those Mussulmans who visit it not as a place of worship but merely as one of the sights of Paris. It is no wonder that the mosque is being used for want of worshippers for other than its intended purposes. In *The Times* Mr. Ameer Ali has issued an appeal for funds to erect a mosque in London on a scale like that of the Paris mosque, befitting the position of Islam as a world religion. I am afraid the number of regular worshippers here does not justify the erection of such a mosque. It

requires no exceptional acumen to foresee that, judged from the present state of affairs, if a mosque were built on the grand scale contemplated by Mr. Ameer Ali, the London correspondent of a journal in Persia or India some day would have to tell the same tale about this mosque, as, to our great sorrow and humiliation, the Paris correspondent of the *Morning Post* has told about the Paris mosque.

"Excuse me, Sir, for not agreeing with you that 'for a certain section of Mussulmans who reside permanently or occasionally in England these places of worship (mosques at Southfields and at Woking) appear, however, to be insufficient.' The mosque at Southfields is more than sufficient for the spiritual needs of the Mussulmans in England and can hold more people than there are Moslems in London who can get time or care to go to a mosque for the five daily prayers. It proved to have room enough and to spare on the day of its opening ceremony, when, in addition to a huge crowd attracted from all parts of London, Moslems came from places as far as Manchester, Edinburgh and Dundee to attend the ceremony."

A Service at Woking Mosque

The Islamic Review recently published two photographs of a special service in London and comments as follows:

"Marking the close of Ramadán, the month of fasting, the Moslem festival of 'Eid-ul-Fitr' was celebrated at the Mosque, Woking, on Monday, April 4th, 1927, in wonderfully dry but cloudy weather. The spectacle of Moslem worshippers from all parts of the world, of every nation and rank in life, to the number of *three hundred or more*, assembled on the close-cropped pine-fringed lawn in front of the Memorial House, facing towards Mecca—the house dedicated to the worship of God, the Almighty, by the Patriarch Abraham, the father of Jews, Christians, and Moslems—symbolized the all-embracing spirit of Islam.

"There were Indians, Afghans, Persians, Kurds, Turks, Syrians, Arabs, Egyptians and Javanese, together with Indian and Iraq cadet officers from Sandhurst and British Moslems who covered long distances to participate in the happy occasion. A small Mecca, so to say, was represented in a beautiful country resort of Surrey."

The photographs show that *one hundred and forty-seven* were present of whom at least fifty were non-Moslem visitors.