

sea-coast to Shiraz to perfect the Persian translation of the New Testament, which he had done in India alongside of the Urdu. His journal mentions almost with a shudder the noisome black streams of naphtha which he passed on the road. To his age they were still objects of horror, like the "slime-pits" of Sodom which helped in the fiery destruction of the Cities of the Plain. Since, these naphtha springs have become the source of untold wealth to Persia through the great enterprise of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, as well as the occasion of friendly coöperation between East and West, to the benefit of both. Happily the great company has been treated not only as a wealth-getting machine, but also as an agency for the amelioration of life and for social service. Meanwhile Henry Martyn's New Testament has been doing its work, silently at first, but more and more reinforced by the voice and example of the living messenger, whether from America or from Britain. A Persian church is growing up, in friendly comradeship with the remnants of the ancient Armenian church, intensely conscious of its own nationality, and desirous of complete union in its own ranks. These aspirations have received the expression of hearty sympathy on the part of the Lambeth Conference, 1930. Meanwhile the young church is striving to serve its mother-land by leading the way in efficient hospital service, in education that will both meet the needs of the new age and build up character to meet its demands, and by social service for child carpet-weavers and other neglected ones: all in the footsteps of Him whom the Magi once worshipped in Bethlehem. H. U. W. S.

King Ibn Sa'ud

The following account appeared in *Al-Hilal* (Cairo, Jan., 1931): When Mr. (H. St. J. B.) Philby, (author of "The Heart of Arabia," "Arabia of the Wahhabis," and "Arabia,") the great English Orientalist, visited this country (*i.e.*, Egypt) three years ago, one of the Egyptian newspaper men asked him his opinion of His Majesty, Ibn Sa'ud, King of the Hijaz and Najd. He replied, "He is the Bismarck of Arabia!"

And indeed, all the acts of His Majesty up to the present time indicate that his friend Philby did not exaggerate in his description when he likened him to the founder of the German Union. For Ibn Sa'ud, after he had strengthened the pillars of his kingdom in Najd, and had gained the decision over Al-Rashid (Ruler of North-Central Arabia) and his helpers, turned his attention to the conquest of the Hijaz. Then came the Hijaz War, which was kindled between him and King Husain al-Hashimi at first, and afterwards between him and King 'Ali bin Husain. It ended with Husain's leaving the Land of the Arabs, and King 'Ali's abdication of the Hijaz throne, and the setting up of the *pax* of Ibn Sa'ud in the Holy Lands (of the Mohammedans, *i.e.*, Mecca and al-Madina).

After his conquest of the Hijaz, King Ibn Sa'ud sensed that a section of the Moslems were hostile to him on account of the difference between them and the Wahhabis in some of the traditional religious practices. So he announced that he had not entered the Hijaz except to put right what was awry in its affairs, and to restore tranquility to the people, and that he would leave the right of settling the final state

of the holy lands to a Moslem Conference, in which all the Islamic peoples should be represented, so that it would decide upon the kind of government which would be more suitable for the Hijaz than any other, in view of the exalted religious significance it has for all Moslems.

At the same time His Majesty began to work for the permanence of his foothold in the Hijaz, by displaying the standards of justice and peace over its abodes, and by endeavoring to issue new ordinances and edicts that would bring back ease and comfort to the land. No long time passed after his coming to the Hijaz before the opposing voices were silent. That encouraged him to announce himself as king over the Hijaz, and his title became "King of the Hijaz and Najd" after having been "Sultan of Najd."

Ibn Sa'ud noticed lately that the Amirate of 'Asir (between al-Hijaz and al-Yaman) grew more disordered every day, so he feared that if he did not hasten to benefit from this situation, he would be anticipated by his rival, the Imam Yahya, King of al-Yaman, who has never ceased earnestly desiring to extend his authority over 'Asir since the Great War laid aside its weapons.

Negotiations were then carried on between His Majesty Ibn Sa'ud and the Amir of 'Asir, and these negotiations were crowned with success, and revealed the inclusion of the Amirate of 'Asir within the protection of the King of the Hijaz and Najd.

Ibn Sa'ud has succeeded in the meantime in straightening out his contentions with Persia and 'Iraq, and now begins to exert himself to put an end to the causes of discord between himself and Egypt, in the desire to induce the latter to recognize his government.

The Great Desert of Rab'-ul Khali

In a copyrighted despatch from Bahrein, on the Persian Gulf, received February 23, the *New York Times* announced that the English Orientalist and explorer Bertram Thomas, had successfully crossed the great desert of southeastern Arabia known as Rab'-ul-Khali, having left Dhofar, in Southern Arabia, in December and reached Dohah, on the Persian Gulf, fifty-eight days later.

This first news was supplemented a few days later by a succinct personal account of Mr. Thomas himself describing his experiences. His most important discovery, it would seem, was a salt water lake seven miles long, together with traces of an old caravan route which traders in ages past must have used in crossing Arabia. The possibility of there being an old people living in isolation from the rest of the world and constituting a remnant of the once flourishing Arabian civilization was exploded.

This great section of the Arabian peninsula which had defied all efforts at exploration comprises a territory of about 500,000 square miles, extending 650 miles from north to south and 850 miles from east to west.

Mr. Thomas' feat was acclaimed by scientists as ranking foremost among the world's great discoveries, comparable to the explorations of Livingstone, Peary, Shackleton, Scott and Amundsen.

In their report of this important news, we noticed that the *Times* and other papers gave the name of the great hitherto unknown Arabian

desert as Ruba-el-Khali. In the interest of correct transliteration we would respectfully submit that the name should be written Rab'ul-Khali, and more correctly with the addition of the definitive article here pronounced "Ar" instead of "Al" for euphony. In the first form, "Ruba," the word would mean quarter, in the sense of one-fourth, while in the second form "Rab'," it would imply a meaning of space, which the Arabic word clearly indicates. The original meaning of the word "Rab'" in Arabic is a camping ground, so applied because of its relation to spring and to grass, which the nomad Arabs sought most in selecting their camping grounds. The term was later applied to any section of land without distinction.

—*The Syrian World* (New York City).

An Autograph Letter of Mohammed?

The following appeared in the *Egyptian Gazette* March 20, 1931:

"It is believed that archæological circles will be extremely interested in the news which has been received from Beirut that Prince Selim, son of the late Sultan Abdel Hamid of Turkey, has in his possession an original letter written by the Prophet Mohammed to Ras Nagaschi of Abyssinia.

"According to *Al Ahram's* Beirut correspondent, Prince Selim issued a statement to the Press, through his secretary, that on his wedding day his father, the late Sultan Abdel Hamid, gave him a letter written by the Prophet Mohammed to the Ras of Abyssinia. Prince Selim stated that his father advised him to preserve carefully the letter which was presented by Ras Nagaschi to the then Sultan of Turkey and had been handed down from father to son until it reached Prince Selim's possession. The Prince believes the letter to be authentic. *Al Ahram's* correspondent further states that an English Archæological Society excavating in that district is now negotiating with Prince Selim to persuade him to allow the letter to be sent to England to be examined by experts. The letter would be insured against loss or damage for the sum of £250,000 and the Prince's secretary would accompany it on its voyage. Prince Selim has denied that he has been in negotiations with King Feisul of Iraq with a view to selling the letter and added that he has no intention of parting with it."

Many scholars, however, declare the letter not genuine.

We thank the "Review of Religions"

The editor of the *Review of Religions* (The London Mosque) congratulates the *Moslem World* on its January issue and after quoting from our editorial writes:

"We welcome the aims and objects of the *Moslem World* as herein set forth and reiterated at the commencement of the twenty-first year of its life, and venture to make two suggestions, trusting that our doing so will not be understood to denote anything other than a spirit of helpfulness. For one thing, in order to be able to interpret Islam faithfully it is necessary that the magazine should give its readers some idea of what the Muslim himself thinks of his religion. His conception of God; his conception of the position of the previous divine Messengers, and the position of the Holy Prophet Muhammad in the

religion of Islam; his views upon the ethical problems, the philosophy of good and evil as expounded by his Scriptures; the ways and means for improving the social and economic environment, which has an important bearing upon man's spiritual progress, as indicated by Islam; all these questions are such that the value of a thorough understanding of these on the part of the evangelist can hardly be exaggerated. . . .

"On our own part we here and now declare that we undertake to publish articles of the above-mentioned character about Christianity (or any religion for the matter of that). For instance, what exactly is meant by such phrases as 'finding satisfaction in Christ?' Such expressions, however clear their meaning may be to a Christian, convey nothing to a Muslim. Then, what is the distinctive, specific value of Christianity? What does it consist in? What exactly is the position of Jesus Christ in Christianity? These are some of the questions upon which we would welcome contributions, as we are sure such an exchange can not but have purely beneficial results."

A new Move in Egyptian Education

An unusual move has been made this winter in Cairo, Egypt, in the appointment by the Egyptian Government of Dr. Charles R. Watson, President of the American University at Cairo, as a member of a special Commission on Education to work out a national program of education.

This represents an important change of policy in the Egyptian Government, to have a non-official, especially a foreigner, appointed on any government commission. This appointment also is a timely tribute to the position of leadership gained by the American University of Cairo in the brief ten years of its existence.

A new Beginning of the German Orient Mission in the Balkans

The German Orient Mission, founded by Dr. Lepsius in Potsdam, has done a great deal of pioneer work among the Moslems in Bulgaria.

The chief worker in this mission was the famous Turkish Molla Emirsade Mehmed Shukr  (Rev. John Avetaranian). Besides his wonderful work, he served his Mohammedan brothers by a mission press, which at first found place in Shumen and afterwards in Philippopolis. He translated and printed among other books for the first time in Turkish and in Azerbaijani "Pilgrim's Progress." He printed also for the first time the whole New Testament in Kashgari-Turki which he translated during the time of his mission work in Central Asia. He published the first Christian newspaper in Turki-Osmani *Guenesh (The Sun)* and also the magazine *Shahidul Hakajike (The Witnesser of Truth)*. The World War put an end to the ten years mission work of Mehmed Shukr , who died in Germany in the year 1920.

It is for many a great joy that the German Orient Mission at Potsdam has again opened a Mohammedan Mission in Bulgaria at Sofia and Philippopolis.

E. M. HOPPE.

Did Mohammed Know Slavonic Enoch?

Dear Mr. Editor,

The article on the above theme which you published in the January number needs some annotation lest the unwary should be misled. One can hardly imagine a more far-fetched hypothesis than the one suggested, nor one for which the writer has brought less evidence. Had the writer put his query—"Did the late Muslim *Traditionists* know Slavonic Enoch?" there might have been more a shade of possibility, but even in that case every point he raises is susceptible of another and generally a better explanation.

To begin with Idris. The philological argument brought by Nöldeke in *ZA.* xvii. 84 is absolutely conclusive that Idris=Andreas, though whether the Andreas referred to is the Andreas of ecclesiastical legend as Nöldeke thought, or the famous cook of Alexander the Great, as has been suggested by Hartmann (*ZA.* xxiv. 315)¹ is a matter of some doubt. However, as he is undoubtedly an Andreas of some form of Christian legend, how could Mohammed have derived information about him from Slavonic Enoch?

But is even Moslem legend indebted to Slavonic Enoch for any of the details of its Idris legend? Let us consider those suggested—

(i) The idea of Enoch revisiting the earth after having been taken to the heavens does not occur, so far as I know, in any Moslem Idris legend.² The Moslem legend is that his soul left his body for an hour, and then he was taken to the heavens and refused to leave. Thus this parallel fails us, and in any case the idea of his return to earth underlies Ethiopic Enoch and is not peculiar to the Slavonic cycle.

(ii) For the origin of the theory that Enoch was given thirty books, we do not need to look to Slavonic Enoch, for the idea was widely spread among the Jews that Enoch had books. Ethiopic Enoch represents him as the author of a book of Instruction, and in the Enoch Tractate printed by Jellinek in Vol. II of his *Beth Hamidrash* we find Enoch figuring as the communicator of God's wisdom to Moses.

(iii) That Enoch was an astronomer and a chronologist is told in the *Sepher Yuhasin* which recounts how he taught astronomy and arithmetic, and as a matter of fact the astronomical detail in Ethiopic Enoch is at least as copious as that in the Slavonic book, and as to his being an artificer, we remember that in the *Midrash Yalkut* he figures as a cobbler.

(iv) That Enoch was the inventor of writing is told in the *Targum* of Pseudo-Jonathan and in the *Book of Jubilees*, which is an even closer parallel with the Moslem legend than is Slavonic Enoch xxii. 12.

(v) The story of his visiting hell as well as heaven is told also in the Ethiopic Enoch, and seems to have been a favorite theme of the Enoch legend.

Now to pass from Idris to the other suggested parallels with the

¹ Mr. Jenkinson is quite wrong in thinking that Nöldeke made this suggestion. Nöldeke's first suggestion was that it was some Theodorus (*ZDMG.* xii 706), and later he made an attempt to identify him with the Andreas of the Ecclesiastical *Praxeis Andreou.* (*ZA* xvii, loc. cit.)

² It goes without saying that the present writer has not read all Moslem literature, and it may be that there is a Moslem legend somewhere that makes Idris return to the earth after being taken to the heavens. If Mr. Jenkinson has found such a legend I should be very grateful for the reference to the text in which it is to be found.

Slavonic book, we shall find that the same inconsequence holds in every case.

(i) The belief in seven heavens, and in the rivers and trees of Paradise, is a commonplace in the Rabbinic writings, and there are no closer parallels with Slavonic Enoch than with the Talmud in this matter.

(ii) Sūra xvii. 1 has not the slightest reference to a "tour of the heavens," but to a night visit by Mohammed (in dream) to the Holy House at Jerusalem. Moslem legend has developed this into the story of the Mi'rāj, but even in this story the correspondences with the Ethiopic Enoch and *Sefer Hanok* are closer than anything that can be quoted from the Slavonic book. It is true that Slav. Enoch xxi. 3-5 makes Gabriel place the Prophet before the face of God, whereas in III Enoch vi. 1 it is Anaphiel who does this, but this is hardly a parallel with the Mi'rāj legend, where Gabriel accompanies Mohammed. In view of the Koranic association of Gabriel with revelation it could hardly have been anyone else who would accompany the Prophet on that occasion.

(iii) Still less is there any parallel with Sūra liii. 14, where, as Caetani has shown, the reference is to a physical location at Mecca, and the boundary is the boundary of the *haram*, and the lote tree an actual tree standing on that boundary.

(iv) The casting out of Satan from Paradise is a commonplace of Jewish legend, so that there is no call to refer to the Slavonic Enoch for a parallel. The same is true of the references given to the delights of Paradise and the pains of hell, for all of which there are Rabbinic parallels in plenty, and there is nothing particularly cogent in the references given to the Slavonic Enoch.

(v) The Guardians of Hell mentioned in Sūra xcvi. 18, the *Zabāniya*, are, as Tor Andrae has shown,³ of Syriac origin, so that the reference to the Grigori of Slav. Enoch xviii. is pointless.

In all this the only actual parallel I have found is that the Moslem Idris legend does mention the Books of Adam and Seth, as they are mentioned in Slav. Enoch xxxiii. 10, but even in this case I should be much surprised if they are not mentioned in other Jewish Enoch legends also.

All that this discussion can be held to have shown is that Mohammed and later Moslem Traditionists were acquainted with numerous legends of Jewish origin, and that some of this legendary material appears also in Slavonic Enoch. That either Mohammed or the Traditionists actually knew Slav. Enoch would seem to be a very remote hypothesis.

ARTHUR JEFFERY.

³ *Ursprung des Islams und das Christentum*, p. 154.