

Islamic teaching "the Koran in the Arabic language is holy, and may not be translated lest it lose its power." Thus millions of Moslems read and sing the Koran without ever having understood its meaning. What an illogical fanaticism, which considers the Arabic letters and the paper of the book of the Koran so sacred. Formerly, I myself was a Muezzin, blinded in this faith, till Christ enlightened and freed me. Even the first followers of the Islamic faith evidently feared that by translating the Koran into the languages of nations with higher development one might perceive how much had been borrowed from Christianity, Judaism and Paganism. Therefore the holy command was not to translate. Mohammed's single miracle was not translatable into other languages. Some Turkish newspapers here tried to proclaim that the Bulgarian Koran was not well translated, but their proof is still wanting. The learned amongst the Pomaks tried to warn the people saying it was sinful to read the Bulgarian Koran. This they did, in face of the fact that the Pomaks are pure Bulgarian Mohammedans and use only the Bulgarian language. Such statements, however, cannot hold their ground long against enlightenment. Therefore they are not to be taken as discouragement but only as an encouragement. As night must give way to the day, the time will come when the Bulgarian Mohammedans will gratefully respect those who worked for them so untiringly. Whom they thought their enemies they will then recognize as real friends of the people, who love them with their whole hearts.

Razgrad, Bulgaria.

NATANAIL NAZIFOFF.

CURRENT TOPICS

Iraq now a Nation

The *British Empire* comments as follows on the entrance of Iraq into statehood:

With the admission of Iraq to full membership of the League of Nations, a new and, it is to be hoped, abiding triumph of British genius in dealing with dependent peoples has been registered. It is eleven years only since the Emir Faisal was elected and crowned King, and the work of creating a nation was inaugurated under the British mandate. The result has been due to the fine spirit of cooperation which has animated tutor and pupil. Grateful acknowledgment of the manner in which Great Britain has discharged its mission is made by King Faisal and his representative at Geneva, and the event is a complete answer, as Sir John Simon said, to the cynics who saw in the whole mandatory system only a cloak for colonization and annexation. Fully to appreciate what has been achieved, it is necessary to turn back to Sir Percy Cox's address and the subsequent discussion, at a meeting of the Royal Empire Society in February, 1929. The emergence of the Arab kingdom as an independent state is the opening of a new chapter in a tragic romance of history covering more than 12 centuries. For Iraq the Great War meant emancipation from the Turkish yoke after nearly 400 years: a yoke which has been described as "the greatest sterilizing agency the world has known." British and Indian soldiers at immense sacrifice rescued Iraq, and British Civil Servants have nursed it till it is able to run alone. "The example given by the greatest Empire deserves to be studied and followed," said Noury Pasha el Said.

The Bible in Hausa

The British and Foreign Bible Society has issued a well-printed Bible in Roman type extending to 1,100 pages for the Hausa people in Northern Nigeria. They occupy a territory which extends from Lagos to the Sahara, and their language is described as the most far-reaching in West Africa. Some seventy-five years ago they received the Gospel of St. Matthew. Over thirty years later the Hausa Association, formed in Great Britain, began a new translation in Arabic characters. In 1903 a new effort, started under the leadership of Dr. Walter R. S. Miller, of the C. M. S., and other C. M. S. missionaries, completed another version in Roman characters. The New Testament was issued in 1912. Representatives of other missions, including those of the Sudan United Mission and the Sudan Interior Mission, joined Dr. Miller in preparing the Old Testament. They were assisted by two Hausa-speaking boys living in Birmingham who helped to pass the proofs through the press.

Stop Polygamy by Legislation

The following letter and reply appeared in *The Light*, Lahore, September 16, 1932:

SIR,—I am glad to read the article "Mullaism and Islam" published in your paper of August 8, 1932, written by Moulvi Mahmudur Rahman of Noakhali. The writer of this valuable article has shown how these narrow minded creatures are misleading the Muslims of India. Here I want to put a similar example which I got from one of these unfortunate beings to show how these enemies of Islam are disgracing our Holy Prophet.

The other day I asked one Mullah who was the keeper of four wives and whose worldly condition was very bad, why he married four wives as he was not able to support even one wife properly.

The Mullah replied, "I have performed the *Sunnat* of Muhammad and by marrying four wives I have shown great respect towards him."

Now, I want to know through your esteemed paper whether it is true that by marrying four wives the *Sunnat* of the Prophet is performed and if a man marry only one wife can it be said that he has shown less respect to the Holy Prophet of Islam? If not, then, is not the time now come in India to take some action so that the Mussalmans of India should not marry more than one wife at a time, as the Mussalmans of India are now too poor to support four wives and many Mussalmans of India are so poor that it is very difficult for them to support even one wife. If my view is correct, I appeal through your highly esteemed paper to the Mussalman members of the Legislative Assembly to bring a Resolution in the ensuing Assembly Session that no Mussalman of India will be able to marry more than one wife at a time. Is there any such courageous man like Mr. Har Bilas Sarda amongst the Mussalman members of Assembly to bring such a resolution?

Shillong.

S. M. A. SATTAR.

It is wrong to say that polygamy is the *Sunnat* of the Prophet. In normal conditions, his *Sunnat* is one man, one wife. Did he not confine himself to one wife—and that too a widow—while he was in the full bloom of youth, up to the good old age of 53? If polygamy were something desirable for its own sake, the Prophet certainly would have set that example long before the declining years of his age. Other wives were forced on him by circumstances and the motive underlying these was, not sensuality as in the case of the Mulla you speak of, but shelter and protection to helpless women. We would certainly welcome some sort of legislation to check this evil. As in Turkey, a second marriage may be allowed only when a good cause has been shown for it before a Court of law.—Editor of "*The Light*."

Opposition on Arabia's Frontiers

The following incident reported by the Reverend W. F. Smalley shows the cost of missionaries' success:

"The religion of Mohammed was propagated with the sword, there is no god but God!" Shouting this rhythmic, blood-stirring couplet, the angry mobs came down the street on feast day. Their co-religionists

were offering their sacrifices at Arafat. Tens of thousands of animals had been slain that day everywhere as a sacrifice in memory of the day that—as Moslems believe—Abraham almost offered his son Ishmael as a sacrifice to God, and local religious zeal was at such a heat that anything might have happened. There was more than usual reason for all the excitement because one of their number, a fellow townsman, had openly stated to a friend in the market that he had become a Christian. The town had been disgraced—its honor was at stake.

When the mob arrived at the missionary residence they bombarded the door with stones and animal refuse. It was only after the arrival of the soldiers with their sticks and the officers with their promises, that quiet was restored. As the mob dispersed, each individual went his way home muttering, "The religion of Mohammed was propagated with the sword, there is no god but God!"

Ma'an had never before yielded one of its own to Christianity, and therefore the excitement. It happened last year at the feast period, April 16th and 17th. The convert was taken by the authorities. Koranic arguments were brought to him and he answered from the Word of God; promises of a good position with a large salary were made; he was assured of a wife, daughter of the faithful, to become the mother of his believing children; he had only to assert that he was a Moslem and no Christian. He refused to do so. Then sleep was denied him, and when he would drop from exhaustion someone would come and in no gentle way awaken him. Every now and again someone would rush at him with drawn dagger and threaten to kill the "infidel." When he was caught reading the Bible it was burned and he was beaten. All this is part of what it costs a Moslem to become a Christian in this year of grace and in an area where there is a strong restraining influence exerted by British officers. Witnesses have been brought to state on oath that this man trampled on the Koran and cursed the prophet of Islam. He is forbidden to leave the town and he never knows what is going to happen to him next.

Political Meetings in Mosques

The following significant editorial appears in the *Sunrise*, Lahore, under the above title:

"A letter recently addressed by the Chief Commissioner of Delhi to the Managing Committee of the Jumma Mosque in the metropolis has raised the question whether Islam allows the holding of political meetings in Masjids. Christian churches are still used in the West for purposes of political propaganda. The campaign waged by the Catholic clergy in Malta, which resulted in the recall of its last Governor by the British Government, is fresh in the public memory. The Prophet of Islam (peace be on him and Allah's blessings) delivered sermons in mosques which had a distinctly political flavor. Masjids were also used in his time for preparations for the Jihad and he himself helped one of his wives in witnessing the performance of manly exercises in the now famous *Masjid-i-Nabavi* at Medina. The same practice was followed by his four rightly guided successors and if some tyrants later on forced the Muslims to use the mosques for prayers alone, they did so in defiance of the injunctions of Islam. It is therefore absurd to assert that mosques are meant for religious worship alone. Like Christianity,