

## CHRIST SETS UP HIS CHURCH IN MUSCAT<sup>1</sup>

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God puts special days into our calendar sometimes. Last Sunday was such a day. We came home from church and listened to the Choir of Heaven, the one that sings in the presence of the angels of God when a sinner repents. "He shall reign forever and ever", the choir sang. It was through the gramophone that the music came. When something very special happens we put on the Hallelujah Chorus. Last Sunday as we listened to the Choir that stands before the throne of God and of the Lamb, their tremendous symphony of triumph shook our souls in unison with theirs. We saw them too, a multitude that no man could number. Faces that we knew were there, Peter Zwemer, and George Stone, and Sharon Thoms, who opened Muscat and died; Rena Harrison and Henry Bilkert, Vickie Storm and Ray De Young. Many were there that we knew; Mrs. Olcott, and M. B. Harrison, for Arabia is not redeemed with corruptible things, not even that tiny part of its redemption that has been entrusted to us. And the omnipotent triumph of the Eternal Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ shone from their faces as it rang out in their voices.

"I baptize thee Rubeyah, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen". Whom does God choose as pillars in His church, in this city of Muscat, where Satan's seat is? The weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty. Who is Rubeyah? A motor driver, but not any longer, for competition was severe, and the cheerful happy spirit of the African does not always travel with lots of Dutch business ability. A cook who can excel in faithfulness, if not in brilliance. An honest and sincere believer in Christ who has walked in the paths of sin, and repented, and brings to the feet of Christ real humility and genuine faith. Three days later he was married to Miriam who previous to this was the only Christian in this city, and Christ's lone witness to the fact that men and women can be saved in Arabia. And now with the shy radiance of real love shining from their eyes, they give to the tiny Muscat Church the solid nucleus of a Christian family, and for that we thank God and take courage exceedingly.

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<sup>1</sup> Reprinted, by permission, from the *Intelligencer-Leader*, of April 22, 1936.

"I baptize thee Sheero, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen". The little room was filled with the presence of God as the Church of Christ in America reached out to take the new-born church in Arabia by the hand. Who is Sheero? A Beloochee boy who came from the wilds of Beloochistan, three years ago, with a disposition as sunny as the mountain slopes of his own country. He cannot read nor write, that is, not human writing. God's writing on his soul he did read, and when he came into contact with the Gospel while working in a construction gang on the mission hospital, he embraced it with all his heart. It is a pleasure to send Sheero on an errand. The opportunity to do something for somebody affords him pure pleasure. But work on a mission hospital cannot last forever, and when it was finished, Sheero was an open Christian. Can a Christian secure work in a hostile Mohammedan town like Muscat, where poverty reigns, and where rows of unemployed seekers for bread sit everywhere? He can if God says so. Sheero found work under the same contractor who had employed him at the hospital. He has not been out of work since. That is perhaps the severest test of the new convert. If he is humble enough and sincere enough to work successfully with Mohammedans, as an open Christian, he is ready for baptism.

"I baptize thee Noobie, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen". We heard the majestic mercy of God saying, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt". For Noobie came from Beloochistan too, and the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. It was not as a free man seeking work that Noobie came. He was a toddling little boy, stolen from his home and sold. Seeking even in his baby days to run away, he was beaten with increasing cruelty, till he would admit that he was a slave. And as a slave he worked through the years, till he had children of his own, slaves like himself, and because the spirit would not break, the body often carried manacles, and the back had to heal many times the welts of the owner's whip. One day opportunity came, and loaded with irons, Noobie managed to climb aboard a wandering camel, just as the evening shadows fell. The camel was driven fiercely through the night for fifty miles, and lay down to die in the early morning, still eight miles from the city of refuge that is found wherever a British Consul lives. Noobie dragged himself over that last eight miles, irons and all. In Muttreh a sympathetic blacksmith cut the irons off from the scarred and long-suffering body, and a smooth-shaven Consul with the lines of British justice and fair play seaming his face, slipped the manacles off his unbreakable spirit. He came to work in the hospital a little later, and there he found the freedom with which Christ has made us free. Noobie too, learned obedience through the things which he suffered,

and humility and sympathy. His is the job of dressing the ulcers of Muttreh, and the odors of Araby the blest hang over his work room like an aureole. He is the friend of every ulcer in the city, and such an assortment we have not seen before in the hospital's whole history. This morning we had a hundred of them to treat.

"For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth; King of kings, and Lord of lords, forever" and as Mr. Pennings baptized those three men whom God had translated from the power of darkness into the Kingdom of the Son of His love, the Church of Muscat emerged into view before our eyes. To that little group more are to be added and soon, if the favor of God continues. Every hard and lonesome trip, and every shaking malarial chill; every lonesome child thousands of miles away from his mother in school, yes, every one of the graves that mark our path like milestones, stood justified and worth while in that moment. Far more indeed than justified, they shone with the eternal radiance of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and a deep gratitude filled the very atmosphere we breathed, the gratitude of a whole church whose we are and whom we serve, that God has chosen us, in these days when the missionary enterprise means sacrifice at home and abroad, chosen us who are less than the least of all saints, to be among those who not only believe on Him, but also suffer in His behalf.

*Muscat, Arabia*

PAUL W. HARRISON.

## CURRENT TOPICS

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### Leone Caetani

The death of Don Leone Caetani, Duke of Sermoneta, at Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on December 25, 1935, marked the passing of a distinguished, constructive Arabic scholar. Born in Rome, September 12, 1869, he studied Oriental languages and literature in that city, and obtained his doctor's degree in 1891. After traveling extensively in northern Africa and the Near East, he decided to write a comprehensive history of the Moslem peoples, to the time of the Turkish conquest of Egypt (922/1517). In 1905 he published in Milan the first volume of his "*Annali dell'Islām*", which dealt with the life of Muḥammad to the year 6/628. The enthusiastic reception accorded this book by authoritative European scholars prompted him to proceed with the second volume, which described the last years of Muḥammad's life and the beginning of the Arab conquests beyond Arabia. By the end of 1914 seven volumes, carrying the story to 32/653, had been completed, and materials for three other volumes were ready. When Italy entered the World War in May, 1915, Caetani enlisted as a volunteer and served at the front as an artillery officer. In January, 1917, the Italian Government sent him abroad on a special mission, and upon his return he published the eighth volume.

Conditions in Italy after the armistice diverted him from scholarly activities to the reclamation of lands on his vast estates in the Pontine District. He generously cooperated with the Government in forming settlements of peasants in that region. Heavy financial burdens forced him to abandon this project and to sell his estates, whereupon he resumed the publication of the "*Annali*". The ninth and tenth volumes, which appeared in 1926, brought the work up to the end of the caliphate of 'Alī (40/661). Caetani later removed to British Columbia, where he died.

In addition to the monumental "*Annali*", the Duke was the author of other notable books dealing with Islām. In 1915 he published at Rome the first two volumes of a work entitled "*Onomasticon Arabicum*", which he described as "an alphabetical catalogue of personal and place names contained in the principal historical, biographical and geographical works, printed and in manuscript, relative to Islām". The two volumes go through 'Abdallāh. The remainder of the work, which was interrupted by the War, exists only in the form of 200,000 unedited and unpublished notes.

Caetani also published, among other writings, the first and third volumes of his "*Studi di storia orientale*" (Milan, 1911 and 1914). The first treats of "Islām and Christianity, Pre-islamic Arabia and

the Ancient Arabs", and the third bears the title, "A Biography of Muḥammad, Prophet and Statesman; the Beginning of the Caliphate; the Conquest of Arabia". The second volume, which was not published, would have discussed the Meccan period of Muḥammad's life, and the beginning of Islām.

A fitting monument to the Duke's prodigious scholarship is the Caetani Foundation, which is housed in the "Reale Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei". He organized the Foundation for the purpose of promoting knowledge of the Moslem world, by means of research and publication. He gave it an endowment of 100,000 *lire*, furnished its rooms, bestowed upon it his entire personal library, and paid its operating expenses for a number of years. The Foundation enables Italians and visitors from abroad to pursue Moslem studies which otherwise could not be undertaken. Don Leone Caetani will be remembered for his published works, for his munificent Foundation, and for his tirelessness and idealism as a scholar.

*Bristol, Conn.*

FRANCIS T. COOKE.

### Chinese Pilgrims Sail for Mecca

Bound for Mecca on pilgrimage, 126 Chinese, ranging from a boy of eight to an old man of 86, who travelled to Shanghai from Kansu and other distant provinces where Mohammedanism flourishes, sailed from Shanghai yesterday in the Blue Funnel steamer *Pyrrhus*.

Among the pilgrims were fourteen women and two children, and their ranks included humble workers who had saved for years to accumulate the necessary money to defray the cost of the passage, while at the other end of the social scale were wealthy merchants whose expenditure on the visit to the tomb of the Prophet is expected to be as much as \$100,000. (Chinese.)

Prior to the arrival of the pilgrims in Shanghai, the China Travel Service had made necessary arrangements, first with the Blue Funnel Line for their comfortable accommodation, and secondly with the National Quarantine Service for properly vaccinating them against small-pox and cholera, these preventive measures being required by the health authorities at Jeddah, the Red Sea port, before the pilgrims will be allowed to land.

A visit to the *S. S. Pyrrhus* yesterday morning proved interesting, for it showed the diversity of types. While all of the Chinese pilgrims were wearing Chinese long padded gowns, most of them were bearded and quite a number showed evidence of their Caucasian or Turkish origin. Some had fair hair, others thin, hooked noses, while not a few, including the women, were most fair in complexion.

The financial side of the pilgrimage was interesting to discover. The minimum cost, it was ascertained, for the round trip, which lasts four or five months, is in the neighborhood of \$1,500. Some of the pilgrims had obviously labored for years to save sufficient money for this longed-for opportunity of their lives. About half a dozen were wealthy farmers and fur merchants. Most of the passengers on this occasion were making the trip for the first time, but there was a limited number who had visited Mecca once or twice before. Among the baggage was a wooden camp-bed for each

pilgrim, besides numberless cooking-pots, tin kettles, etc. Whether rich or poor, the pilgrims are expected to discard their clothing on arrival at Jeddah and don only loin-cloths for the overland journey.

Officers of the *Pyrrhus* stated that the steamship company would provide flour, rice and other necessary provisions uncooked, while the pilgrims themselves would undertake the cooking, according to Mohammedan custom.

The women passengers were mostly secluded from the others, and it appeared as if, even in China, the *purdah* system of Mohammedan countries was enforced, though not so strictly as in India. Some of the women were seen wearing short white veils over their faces; others had tight-fitting caps over their hair, and not a few, white turbans.

Three days previous to the sailing of the vessel the Quarantine Officers of Shanghai, headed by Drs. J. W. H. Chun and Wu, had visited the pilgrims at their temporary quarters—one at the Mohammedan Mosque at West Gate and the other in Avenue Haig—to examine them medically as well as to perform inoculation against cholera and small-pox. In compliance with their strict religious rule, a Chinese lady medical officer carried out the work among the women.

The final medical inspection was made on board yesterday morning before the steamer departed. A British ship surgeon, Dr. Stone, was on board to take over charge of the passengers from the Quarantine Officers.

It will be interesting to ascertain, later on, what proportion of these pilgrims will survive this arduous pilgrimage to Mecca. Since the introduction of direct steamship communication with Jeddah and thence the quick conveyance by motor bus to Mecca, the trip has been made far less severe than it was in the past.

—*North China Daily Herald.*

### The Moslem World on the Screen

(TERRES D'ISLAM À L'ÉCRAN)

Marque indubitable d'un intérêt naissant de l'opinion pour les terres et les gens d'Islam : on les présente au cinéma !

C'est le Maroc, dans *Itto*. Le vrai Maroc, qui n'est pas celui des cartes postales et des organisateurs de croisières . . . le Maroc de l'Atlas, le Maroc des grandes kasbahs féodales, écloses au sommet d'un roc, gigantesques fleurs de granit, qui semblent avoir été sculptées miraculeusement par le vent du désert comme la rose des sables, le Maroc des tempêtes de neige, qui possède la gamme de lumière la plus riche de la terre africaine (Emile Vuillermoz, dans le *Temps* du 23 mars 1935).

Et c'est dans ce cadre haletant, un épisode-type de l'épopée conquérante. Sur ces sommets, les hommes s'affrontent, et avec eux s'affrontent les races, les religions, les cultures, les traditions, et aussi toutes les passions de haine, de colère, de peur, de noblesse, de patriotisme, d'honneur, tous les emportements de la tendresse et de l'amour.

Film noblement humain, déparé pourtant, ici ou là, par des épisodes

où le café-concert vient heurter malencontreusement l'héroïsme. Film supérieurement interprété, où, d'après tous les critiques, les indigènes, sous l'impulsion de leur seule nature passionnée et vibrante, ont atteint, dépassé peut-être, le talent et la technique de nos professionnels.

Avec *Golgotha*, c'est l'Algérie. Sous un ciel, dans un cadre rappelant ceux de Palestine, se déroule le drame unique de la Passion. Qu'un chrétien ne puisse étouffer quelque secrète déception, pourquoi s'en étonner? Comment l'homme, fût-il un prodigieux artiste comme Robert le Vigan, nous rendrait-il le regard de l'Homme-Dieu et le son de sa voix? Comment le sens universel de cette épopée viendrait-il s'enclore dans un coin de terre et dans des personnages qui passent? Il reste que ces hommes sont splendides, que ces paysages sont éblouissants, que ces foules sont bien vraies, toujours prêtes à l'enthousiasme, à la furie, au meurtre. Il reste que le scénario du chanoine Raymond est d'une incomparable délicatesse à la fois et d'une poignante émotion. Il reste que Julien Duvivier est un extraordinaire évocateur.

Gageure et surprise: voici *La Mecque*. La Mecque, la ville sacrée et jalouse, qui savait se dérober aux curiosités du roumi! La Mecque filmée, offerte, dévoilée à tous les yeux! Comment Madame Valentine Dahaby a-t-elle pu saisir ainsi, sur la pellicule mouvante, les pèlerins en prière et jusqu'à l'intérieur de la Kaaba?—Ce fut un coup d'audace, servie par une non commune habileté. Strictement voilée, paraît-il, elle parvint, à travers des plis artificieux, à ménager assez de jour pour l'objectif de sa caméra. Et, la fortune favorisant l'audace, elle fut là juste à point pour filmer l'attentat récent des trois Yéménites contre Ibn Sa'ud, roi du Hedjaz.

C'est enfin l'Islam tout entier : son berceau mystérieux, son prophète, ses conquêtes, foudroyantes, ses haltes, ses reculs, ses réveils, toute sa vie enfin et ses environnements et son atmosphère qui sont captés dans ce surprenant film trois minutes intitulé *l'Arabie et l'Islam*.

En trois minutes, une histoire de quinze siècles synthétisée, ressuscitée, vécue, avec mille réflexions suggérées, mille émotions infiltrées, avec ce saisissement qu'on éprouve à dominer un instant les événements et les hommes.

Pourquoi ne pas répandre à foison les copies de ces instructives merveilles?

—*En Terre d'Islam.*

### Psalms in Egypt's Lingo

The Rev. E. W. G. Hudgell, M.A., of The British and Foreign Bible Society, writes:

"Lingo' advisedly, for the everyday speech of Egyptians is a dialect of Arabic. The complicated intricacies of classical Arabic have been simplified. 'Book' for example is always *ki-tab*. Its case is determined, as in English, by its use in a sentence and no longer by means of the inflections *kitab-un*, *kitab-an*, and *kitab-in*. Though the bulk of its vocabulary remains of Arabic origin, words from living languages such as Greek, Italian, French, and English have been incorporated in it. 'Furniture' is *mobilier*. 'Hospital' is *isbitalia*.

'Organ' is *urgun* and 'overcoat' is *balto*. Egyptian Colloquial Arabic has thus come to fulfill the proper function of a language, namely, to be a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

"Into this rapid and vigorous speech the Psalms have lately been turned. It was done by a committee—not by an individual. And the committee included Egyptians as well as Europeans. The members presented an imposing array of learning, for they were drawn from the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, and London, with a graduate of the Military School in Egypt, another from Assiut College and a Sheikh from al Azhar University. As many as five Missions were represented. The translation took two years to complete, and was made afresh from the text of the Ginsburg edition of the Hebrew Bible published by the Society.

"The chief difficulty met with was to find a word for 'hell' in such a passage as 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell'. In which one? For Moslem theology teaches that there are no less than seven hells. There is one hell which is for Moslems, another for Christians, yet another for Jews, and so on. All seven words called up associations of ideas not found in the Bible and therefore to be avoided. The Hebrew word is *sheol*. That seemed the only word free from un-Biblical associations and was therefore adopted and spelt with Arabic letters.

"A delightful and happy touch occurs in Psalm 42. The 'hart' that 'panteth after the water brooks' is the 'gazelle' in Arabic, pronounced almost as in English. Arabic poetry repeats again and again the theme of longing for the beloved, even as this Psalm does. And no Arab would regard a poetical passage as wholly complete which did not bring in this metaphor of what is, to him, the perfection of beauty and grace!

"The Hebrew words for 'caterpillars' and 'grasshoppers' denote actually locusts at different stages of development; and the corresponding names for them in Arabic are all too well known.

"These Psalms in Egyptian Colloquial Arabic are used often for reading aloud to the unlettered and unlearned; and it is hoped that the simple language in which they are couched will not only help them to understand, but also prove worthy of the sublime truth of which it has been made the vehicle."

### Temperance Campaign in Hyderabad State, India

His Exalted Highness has been graciously pleased to sanction the proposal of his government for starting a Temperance campaign in the State on an organized scale under the guidance of a Committee which will receive assistance from government officers. A Central Committee is, therefore, being set up under the chairmanship of Nawab Mirza Yar Jung Bahadur, Chief Justice, for a period of three years, to carry on temperance propaganda in the State in conformity with the rules laid down for the purpose. The government has, further, decided to donate a sum of Rs. 5,000/- for the first year (1936) to meet the initial expenses of the campaign. The Central Committee will consist of honorary members who will

all be appointed by government, the chairman being, however, empowered to co-opt, after obtaining government sanctions, one or two members of his choice whenever the occasion necessitates such a course. In consultation with the chairman of the Central Committee, the government may, if necessary, also appoint sub-committees in the districts for a similar period.

The work of the Central Committee will consist of propaganda and publicity, through pamphlets or otherwise, directed towards eradicating the drink habit; advising the Education Department in the matter of including such stories in text-books as would infuse an aversion towards this evil in the minds of the youth; advising the government in selecting sites for liquor shops or determining their number at a particular place and submitting draft rules for the purpose; opening tea-houses for replacing or reducing the drink habit; starting libraries in villages for the furtherance of this object, and lastly, granting sums, according to provision, for the construction of model houses for persons who have effected savings in their expenditure through reform of habits.

It will be a further function of the committee to appoint, when necessary, reliable agents who will assist excise officers in bringing to book illicit distillers of liquor as well as illegal importers of wines and drugs. These measures are found necessary in order that reductions in the number of liquor shops may not result in people restoring to surreptitious means for satisfying their craving.

The Committee will also be expected to advise the government and submit proposals generally in regard to the sale and use of intoxicating drugs and liquors to the extent of promoting the interests of temperance.

—*Exchange.*

### The Doom of the Veil in Iran

A Moslem correspondent writes to the *Iraq Times*, Baghdad: "The days of the *chaddar* are numbered.

"Instructions have been sent from Teheran to all provincial Governors informing them that it is the wish of the Government that the veil be discarded, and these instructions have been passed on to the populace at a series of 'at homes' given in the first instance by the Governor for the heads of the Government Departments, including their 'unveiled' wives, followed by others for the merchant and non-official classes.

"The authorities are evidently proceeding in a way similar to that adopted in the case of the 'Pehlevi' hat. No printed orders have been issued, and the consequences of non-compliance are not yet known, but the official classes have been notified that their 'jobs' will be vacant in the event of their wives' not conforming with the new decree, and the females of other classes will no doubt find the consequences uncomfortable if they don't fall into line.

"The difficulties are very largely economic, and the middle of winter is hardly the best time for the introduction of the new mode. In no country in the world would the head of any family view with complacency the reclothing and re-hatting of all the female members of his household at one time, but here, where the majority of the people are poor and materials are both scarce and expensive, many

may find it simpler for their women folk to remain at home until the winter is over and the new spring fashions arrive.

"Needless to say, public interest in the new order of things is intense, and the first public appearance of unveiled royalty is looked forward to eagerly. Women's hats have mysteriously appeared apparently from nowhere, and for the first time in the history of the country the number of shops now selling women's hats exceeds these selling the masculine variety, not only in Teheran but in the provinces. When Mustafa Kemal Ataturk makes his expected visit to Iran this year he will find the country little behind his own in the progress it has made towards westernization.

"Various other subtle changes are taking place in the country. Most of the mosques are now supplied with chairs, arranged in rows after the manner of a cinema, which makes it very difficult and uncomfortable for the religious-minded to say their prayers in the customary manner.

"The religious faction has very little say in the affairs of the country either in the political or the religious sense, but the latest changes will tend to decrease what little influence they have left."

### Japan Woos the Moslems

We learn from *The Indian Review*, Madras, in an article by Vasuedo B. Metta, with the above title, that the

"Conquest of China is not the only goal that Japan has in view. One of the things that struck me when I was in Japan at the beginning of this year was the great interest that the Japanese are taking in Mohammedanism and building mosques in different parts of their Empire. In pre-war days when I was there, I came across hardly any Japanese Moslems, but this time I met quite a good number of them. A fine Moslem seminary has been established at Tokyo under the guidance of the Imam Khurbangali, who enjoys the confidence of both the Moslem and the non-Moslem Japanese officials. From this seminary, Islamic literature is circulated all over the country.

"In pre-war days, it was difficult to come across any Japanese who knew Arabic, Persian, or Turkish, and there were hardly any chairs for those Islamic languages in the Japanese universities. But now you meet quite a good number of Japanese who are familiar with those languages, and chairs for them have been founded in a great many Japanese universities. Why is Japan interesting herself in Islam? Is she really attracted to Islam or is it to advance her commercial and worldly interests?"