

understanding of history and of Muslim-Christian relations is an accurate appraisal of the motives which dominated the Crusades.

Seldom are these campaigns thought of as being motivated mostly by desire for territorial acquisition, or for political or spiritual control, as is here shown. Moreover, the Muslims themselves were not as much concerned about the religious implications of the wars as they were about their political and territorial consequences. The record of the Crusades is filled with bickerings, private animosities, and civil wars which weakened both sides.

A correct comprehension of these facts can do much to remove the prejudice against Muslims which still infects our people and which, in some measure at least, stems from a faulty understanding of this period in the history of Muslim-Christian relations.

Other interesting passages from this stimulating volume might well be mentioned. For all but the expert its various sections will not be quickly assimilated. It is thereby no less to be commended as a book that can contribute to Western appreciation of and friendship for our Muslim brethren.

WILLIS A. MCGILL.

Cairo, Egypt.

Beyond Romance. By Florence Balph. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. pp. 131. \$1.00.

Boot and Saddle in Africa. By Thomas A. Lambie, M.D. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York. pp. 158. \$2.00.

These two volumes are of interest as they give a practical answer regarding approach in work for Moslems. The former is "a true missionary story from northwestern India." It tells how the writer and her husband gained entrance to an unoccupied district by tact, patience and prayer and were able not only to gain the love of the people of Poonch but to witness for Christ among rulers and common people.

The second volume is by the well-known pioneer of Ethiopia, whose earlier books, "A Doctor without a Country" and "A Doctor Carries on" met with eager readers. In familiar style, he tells of his adventures in the Egyptian Sudan and in the country of Haile Selassie. He says that the most important center of Islam is Jimma in west-central Ethiopia. His contact with other missions in those areas and with the government, both before and after World War I., are of special interest. One would like greater detail as to dates and places. The book betrays a rather superficial knowledge of the religions in Ethiopia. Dr. Lambie classifies them in one district as "almost all pantheistic heathen or Mohammedans" (p. 114).

Z.

New York City

CURRENT TOPICS

Letter from an Airman in Arabia

At a tiny outpost in South Arabia, their neighbours the most primitive of any Arab race, a company of R.A.F. men are living the strangest life of this war. They live on a fringe of a region into which only a handful of white men have ever dared to venture, and their supplies can only come to them by air or from the rare ships which unload at a tiny jetty which the men have built themselves.

On one side they have a mountain range, behind which lie unexplored country and savage tribes. Only a few miles away is the broad expanse of the Indian Ocean. For weeks, they were alone, making an aerodrome out of a stretch of sandy desolation, but now they are having daily visitors—R.A.F. aircrews, who are landing to re-fuel, snatch a meal and spend the night on their way to the Far Eastern battle zone. This little community is now seeing itself as it was visualized months ago—a link in a chain of supply, which is sending more aircraft to blast the Japanese out of the Eastern Seas.

R.A.F. personnel at this station were the first body of foreign troops seen in the area since a handful of Portuguese navigators landed centuries ago and built a fort. They are now the guests of a Sultan, who, before the war, was a visitor to many of the great capitals of the world, and his personal bodyguard is responsible also for the protection of the R.A.F. unit. That is why, when an aircraft lands, the visitors will see fierce-looking men approach. They carry modern Lee Enfield Rifles, and a wicked silver-mounted dagger in their belt.

Whenever a member of the R.A.F. goes beyond the Aerodrome's barbed wire boundary (and to do this a special pass has to be issued by the Sultan) one at least of these guards must accompany him. Thus, on bathing parties, a guard rides with the lorry, and stands guard at the beach. When the men were building the jetty, the guards went along too, and they also go with the R.A.F. hunting parties, organized about once a month. These hunts are a privilege granted by the Sultan, who has stipulated, however, that only two animals must be shot on each expedition. Gazelles are usually the victims, and they form a useful addition to the camp menu.

On any expedition to the Arab village nearby, the Sultan has decreed that R.A.F. men must not smoke. Another of the regulations is that no foreign flag must be flown at the camp. As a result, this is possibly the only R.A.F. camp in the world where a visitor will not see the familiar sky-blue, rondelled ensign flying. Another stipulation to which the Service has agreed is that between sunset and half-an-hour afterwards, there will be no music in the camp. This is the time the local population is at evening prayer, and the camp's wireless set is always silent.

The Malays and Their Sultans

Sir Thomas Adams writes of these ununited tribes in the *Asiatic Review* (Jan. 1944):

The word "Malaya" was not invented by the Malays, nor has it much, if any, meaning for them. It represents the British urge to unite peoples having the same language, the same religion, and to a considerable extent the same customs. In fact, many Malays suspect it as possibly involving something even more than that—something which they fear and dislike. So those of us who have worked and played with Malays know and think of them as individuals, charming, courteous, friendly, loyal, courageous, democratic, yet welcoming ancient constituted authority imposed on them by custom and religion, democratic, that is, in a different way from British democracy based on the vote; we think of villages hospitable to the visitor but immersed in village affairs; of States composed of villages held together by the allegiance of the minor chiefs and headmen to the Sultan: but only in the last twelve years of the beginnings of inter-State unity in the conferences of the Rulers and leaders of all States meeting together to discuss and advise on matters of common interest. . . .

Some persons appear to think that a Sultan is a mediæval autocrat, a relic of days of oppression and violence, imposing his unfettered authority on unwilling subjects. A Malay, be he agriculturist, artisan or a member of a profession, would be amazed at the ignorance shown by those who take this view. A Malay Sultan is really a constitutional Ruler. He can do little in the political and administrative spheres without the approval of his Council, composed of leading men of his own race and representatives of immigrant races: in the religious sphere he is bound not only by Muslim doctrine but also by his Council of the religious hierarchy, many of whom are shrewd, tolerant men, though a few—as everywhere in the world and in every religion—are narrow-minded and fanatical.

Prideaux's Life of Mahomet*

In recent years Prideaux's book has been referred to as an example of polemic—the method which we of the twentieth century have found to be wrong in dealing with Moslems. But Prideaux was not a missionary to Moslems. His study of the "Impostor" was not intended for propaganda among them. Perhaps we of the twentieth century have something to learn from Prideaux.

The book now before me is the third edition, dated 1698, and the title reads:—"The True Nature of Imposture fully display'd in the LIFE of MAHOMET with a Discourse annex'd, for the Vindicating of Christianity from this Charge; Offered to the Consideration of the Deists of the present Age." The Preface "To the Reader" begins with the words:—

"The great prevailing of Infidelity in the present Age, making it the Duty of every one of us that have undertaken the Ministry of the

* Humphrey Prideaux (1648-1724) an English clergyman and Orientalist who became Dean of Norwich and was a celebrated Oxford scholar. His most popular work was the *Life of Mohammed* (1697). His greatest work was on the O.T. and N.T. Connections—*Columbia Encyclopedia*.

Gospel of Jesus Christ, to endeavor to put a stop thereto; that I may in some measure do my part herein, is a sufficient reason to justify the present Publication. But besides, the Poyson having, I fear, reached some places, where it is my particular Duty to prevent its Mischiefs; and infected some Persons, for whose Eternal Welfare, as well as Temporal, I have reason to be nearly concerned; I have hereby been more especially engaged to set forth the ensuing History, . . ."

Was this seventeenth century parson merely foolish? Or may we hope that a study of Islam would produce an antidote to some of the errors of the present Age? Do you find it hard to believe in the Deity of Christ? See to what heights Mohammed, and Ali, have been promoted by those who refused the God-given Mediator. Does sacrifice for atonement appear cruel and unnecessary? Watch the Muharram procession, or ask the Sunni Moslem if he *knows* that his sins are forgiven. Are miracles difficult of belief? Mohammed claimed only the language of the Koran as above human power, and see the miracles ascribed to its words, from its eternal place in Heaven, to the written extracts worn as charms.

These are examples taken at hazard: any theological student could add to them after reading the Life of Mohammed.

Prideaux thought this study worth while for the refutation of deists and infidels: and even now we dare to tell all Christians that a study of Islam would reveal many apparently small errors as sins against the True Light, and so bring them back to the assurance that we must walk in the light as God is in the light, if we are to be safe.

OLIVE BOTHAM.

London.

De Gaulle Broadens Moslem Rights

General Charles de Gaulle recently made a conciliatory gesture, according to the press, to the Moslems of North Africa.

In a speech at Constantine, Algeria, he announced the decision of the French Committee of National Liberation to grant full rights of French citizenship to "several tens of thousands of French Moslems" in Algeria and to increase the proportion of Moslems in local councils and public offices in Algeria.

The decision regarding citizenship means that the Moslems may become full French citizens without abandoning their Moslem status or polygamy, as was formerly necessary. Educational qualifications will be maintained.

By restoring the Crémieux Decree, suspended by Vichy and by Gen. Henri-Honoré Giraud's regime, the Committee recently re-established the automatic French citizenship of Jews born in Algeria. It now improves the status of Moslems by removing some but not all of their disqualifications. Moslems are not yet on the same level as Jews, since, for them, the educational test remains, but they are nearer to that level.

Though it is agreed that little can be done during the war to raise the standard of living or of education, it is expected that the Committee's action and General de Gaulle's promise for the future may serve to counteract the ire of Moslems in Africa and the Middle East over the recent arrest of native Government officials in Lebanon.

There are more than 6,000,000 Moslems in Algeria, to whom General de Gaulle was speaking directly. Only about 10 per cent have elementary education and hence are potential French citizens. A spokesman for General de Gaulle said that the General's reference to better living conditions meant more schools as far as was possible in wartime, and subsidies for agriculture, with greater land-owning facilities.

Algeria is constitutionally a part of Metropolitan France. Hence it is only here and not in the protectorates of Tunisia and Morocco or the mandated regions that the question of French citizenship for native races arises.

The Moslem Wedge

Mr. Jinnah, President of the Moslem League, in his 'Id message to Moslems, makes his Pakistan goal the one thing that must be achieved. He says, "Work for it, live for it, and if need be, die for it, but achieve our goal we must or else all is lost."

We believe in free speech and the liberty of the press, but it is difficult to look upon such an appeal as anything other than an incitement to communal war.

We believe Mr. Jinnah will overshoot his mark. It is our opinion that there is not a handful of Moslems who really expect or want Pakistan as Mr. Jinnah pictures it. The reason no dissenting voice has been raised is that Moslems wish to appear united and many think that by demanding Pakistan, other concessions will be secured.

But why should any Moslem think that "all else is lost" if Pakistan is not achieved? It is a slander upon both Hindus and Moslems to say that they cannot live on as they are living. Patching up a mere majority of Moslems by shifting populations from one Province to another would mean nothing. If the two groups could live peacefully after such a shifting of populations they can continue to do so as matters now stand.

The Pakistan scheme fails because there is no demand for it; and it fails because it would be impossible to induce the Moslems of one language and provincial area to shift to other locations where they would be among strangers and have to begin life again under new conditions. What possible reason is there for doing anything so revolutionary?

We hope calmer reasoning may soon become vocal. Either the Moslems do not expect the rest of us to take the Pakistan demand seriously or else they owe it to us to declare that they do not take it seriously.

The Indian Witness.