

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Challenge and Counter-Challenge* can be found here:

https://missiology.org.uk/journal_challenge-and-counter-challenge-01.php

Challenge
and
Counter
Challenge



CHALLENGE AND COUNTER-CHALLENGE

A Missionary Magazine for Young People desirous of learning more about the challenge of Islam, and of helping to counter it by the proclamation of the Gospel.

Issued by the

FELLOWSHIP OF FAITH FOR THE MOSLEMS

The following Societies co-operating:—

ALGIERS MISSION BAND

c/o 37, Stephen's Road Tunbridge Wells.

BRITISH SYRIAN MISSION

119, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

CENTRAL ASIAN MISSION

47, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

EGYPT GENERAL MISSION

106, Highbury New Park, London, N.5.

FRIENDS OF THE MOSLEMS IN CHINA

53, Poets Road, Highbury, London, N.5.

NORTH AFRICA MISSION

34, Bisham Gardens, Highgate, London, N.6.

Copies may be obtained from the Young Peoples' Secretaries of any of the above Societies.

Subscription 2s. per year

A Letter for You!

CHALLENGE AND COUNTER-CHALLENGE,
c/o 106, Highbury New Park,
LONDON, N. 5.

March 1st, 1952.

My dear Reader,

A very happy New Year to you! Does it seem a bit late for such a greeting? I don't think so. After all, you still have ten months before you, which I am sure will be filled with delightful experiences. In all of them, I wish you the maximum of happiness as you come through them "more than conqueror through Him that loved you."

Do you reciprocate that greeting, and wish the same to "Challenge and Counter Challenge"? For the magazine stands in great need of such. It is not feeling at all happy just now, for it is suffering from poor circulation. No, that is not the medical term, but a literary one, which means that it has not got enough subscribers. This issue begins Volume 3. A three-year-old ought to be a sturdy toddler, standing on its own feet, but we find the magazine financially still an infant 'in arms,' far too dependent on the missionary societies, instead of being self-supporting. Can you not do anything to help?

Here is a suggestion. For each quarter's issue, try to get one new subscriber, that would mean a total of four for the year. Will you do it? Don't just read this and pass quickly on to the next page. Take it up as a challenge to yourself. "Challenge" has just that personal meaning; one explanation of the word is 'a summons to fight a duel,' which, as you know, is a battle between two people. Why not make a game of it, and have as it were a series of secret duels between yourself and other people, who, when you first present them with the 'Challenge,' have no idea of subscribing? See if you can win the victory. I am sure

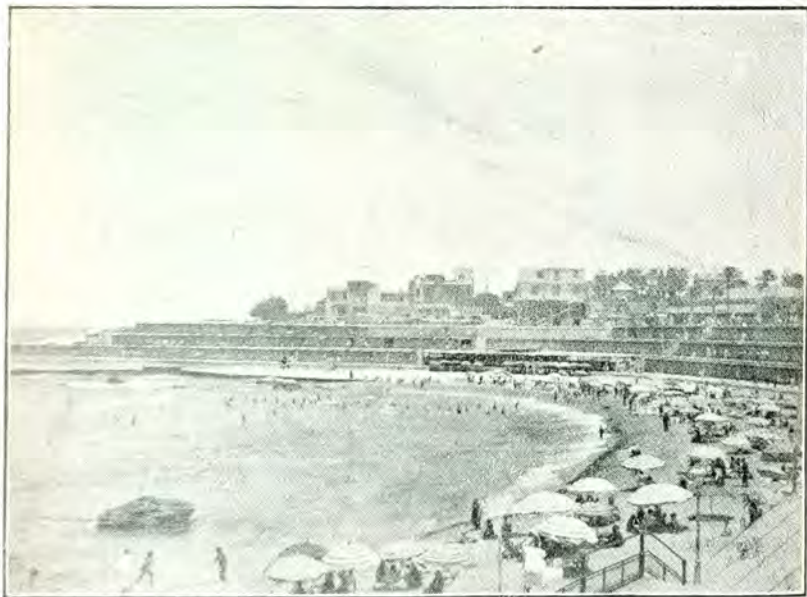
your vanquished opponents will be very grateful to you in the end when they realise what a splendid magazine you have introduced them to.

I wish this was a telephonic communication, and not a letter. I would like to hear your cheery answer, "All right, count on me. A happy New Year to 'Challenge' and lots of new subscribers." Of course, there is such a thing as a postal reply. . . . I wonder??

With renewed best wishes for 1952,

Yours in the Master's Service,

THE EDITOR.



Stanley Bay, Alexandria

A Girls' Club in Egypt.

Everywhere in England these days one hears of Clubs, Youth Fellowships and "Squashes," for young people. Perhaps you would be interested to hear about a Christian Girls' Club in Alexandria, one of Egypt's sea-ports? It is not exactly as you would picture a Club, possibly just the very opposite, but then most of the things in the Middle East seem upside down! To begin with, the Club meetings are held in the mornings. This is because it is for girls who have left school, and are old enough to be useful at home. Their mothers either go out visiting themselves in the afternoons and need the girls to look after the house, or they receive visitors and the girls must be there to wait upon them.

Let us go along to the Club. As it caters for the better-class girls, we must make our way to the residential part of the city. We come to a very fine looking house, surrounded by a beautiful garden, and we climb to the top flat where the girls meet. As we said before it opens early, at 9 a.m. We begin the day by singing hymns and choruses, a habit which we hope and trust the girls will continue to practice even when they have left us, and gone to homes of their own. Then we have prayer together; and this is followed by lovely Bible Study Classes.

After this, the scene changes—on with our aprons and to work! There are cooking classes, dressmaking, painting, and all kinds of needlework. Presently there come a break, when there is just time for a game of ping-pong, then all get quickly to work again until 1 p.m.

But I am sure, most of all, you would like to take a look at the girls themselves. Over there is a fine looking girl of about eighteen. She looks so sad and tired; she even seems to be crying. But they are tears of joy, she tells us, because she is so happy here. At home, there is never any peace; although she does her best, she is just beaten in order to make her do more and more. "This is the only place of happiness I have," she says. Each girl has some story of difficulty, and how glad we are to be able to help them.

Now here is S—— coming running into the room with an armful of models of dresses to show us. She is one of the dressmaking teachers, and such a lovely Christian. You would not recognise her as the girl who joined us some years ago. Then she looked the picture of misery. She was stunted in growth because of the cruel treatment of her step-mother, and her face seemed really distorted. She could hardly hold a needle, because of the terribly hard work she had had to do at home ; she could not even smile. She found it almost impossible to learn at first, but very gradually she made progress. One day, as some of us were working together, we suddenly heard laughing in the next room. We all stopped with surprise. It was S—— laughing! we had to go and see her. In the end she became one of our very brightest girls, took her diploma, and is now a most successful teacher.

Shall we stay just a few minutes longer to get to know H——We had prayed and prayed so much that she might be allowed to join the Club. Oh, what a joy it was when God graciously answered our prayers, and one morning in walked H—— Her father is a Moslim, but her mother was English, and she died when H——was seventeen. Almost at once her father began arranging to marry again. When H——knew she just said “ Oh, father ! ” He asked her how she dared say anything. She answered that she had two fires in her heart, one because she missed her mother and the other because he was going so soon to fill her place. That night the father beat H—— so unmercifully that he thought he had killed her. After three days she regained consciousness, but was terribly disfigured. How these girls suffer ! You can imagine how they love the happy hours spent at the Club.

Will you pray for these our Moslim sisters ? It is not easy for them to follow the Lord. Some have not yet even come to Him, but if “ we ask ” He will do, for “ Whatsoever ye ask the Father in My Name, *that* will I do.”

“ Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear My Voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd ” John 10, 16.

Miss F. Webb
(*Alexandria, Egypt.*)

“Reading the Way to Discipleship of Christ.”

“I want you to give up Friday afternoon to the young Muslim pharmacist in the hospital. Ask him to take you for a walk, and listen to his story.” So spoke Mr. Macintyre to me, and thus my friendship with Simaan commenced.

The hospital spoken of was in Amman, the capital of the country which was then called Transjordan. For this all happened in the year 1925. I was staying in Es Salt with Mr. Macintyre who was the missionary in charge there, and I was helping him with the services in Holy Week. I had never been to Amman itself, which was 18 miles away, so I was very pleased when Mr. Macintyre told me he wanted me to go to that city and take the Arabic services on Good Friday. Then he added his request that I should make time in the afternoon to get to know the pharmacist there who



was a young Muslim. I gladly complied, for what could be more fitting than to spend Good Friday making friends with one who was enquiring into the meaning of the Christian

Faith—one who for some twenty years had believed the Muslim challenge, so unsuccessfully countered down the centuries, that Jesus Christ had never really been crucified?

So Simaan and I met that Good Friday afternoon. Later he told me why he wanted to be called by that particular name, which is the Arabic form of Simon. It was not Simon Peter whom he had in mind to choose as his 'patron saint,' but Simon the Cyrenian, who had carried the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ to Calvary. We sat for some time in the ruins of the great amphitheatre of the period when Amman was called Philadelphia, one of the cities of the Decapolis, mentioned in the New Testament. (In Old Testament days the city was called Rabbath Ammon). Afterwards we went to Simaan's room, and there he told me something of his story.

He came from a leading family in Iraq, his father having been an officer in the Turkish Army. The lad in his teens had been a voracious reader, but it was not until he had completed a somewhat unsatisfactory year in Beirut that he came across Christian literature. Thereafter he bought and read all he could find and that was available, including the New Testament. (I could see the shelf of the room we were in was well stocked with Arabic books and pamphlets). But he had met very few Christians, either indigenous (that is belonging to the lands where he lived) or foreign, that is from Europe or America. On leaving Beirut, he found his way to Transjordan and there obtained employment in the pharmacy of the small mission hospital. Here, at the time that I met him, he was working, but spending his spare time reading himself into the discipleship of Jesus Christ.

It was all to good effect, for the next year he was ready to take his stand and was baptized in Jerusalem. The service centred round the Cross of Calvary, the cardinal factor of the Christian Faith, which Islam yet needs to appreciate. As so often happens with converts from Islam, there was a break with the family in Iraq. None the less there was an occasional exchange of letters until Simaan's father passed away. It will be a long time yet before Islam will realise all that is meant in the term "Freedom of religion"—but patience will one day meet its reward. After his baptism he went to work

for a spell in the larger hospital in Old Cairo, where he came into touch with Temple Gairdner, an outstanding missionary of that time, who was working amongst the Muslims of Egypt.

In due course Simaan married. His bride was a Jewess, but she had been baptized into the Christian Faith in Cairo sometime before Simaan was. She was trained to be a nurse in the English Mission Hospital in Jerusalem. Then she went to Amman hospital where she met her husband—he from Iraq, she from Greece, but in finding Christ, they found each other. The newly-married couple went to live in Gaza, and from now on Simaan entered into a period of increasingly useful and fruitful service. He was no longer employed on the medical side, but became a catechist. After a while he went to Jerusalem where he taught Arabic to missionaries in the Newman School of Missions. While here the Palestine Church Council asked that he should be released to care for the (then) important, if small, congregation in Akka (Acre). Then in 1938 he was chosen by the Council as a candidate



Galilee

for ordination. This entailed a year's study at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, where he was accompanied by another Arab clergyman, who to-day is in charge of Christ Church, Nazareth.

Simaan returned from England, and was the first convert from Islam to be ordained in our church in Palestine. After ordination he was sent to the first church to be built by the C.M.S. in Galilee, namely the Church of St. Paul in Shef Amru. Some years later he was transferred to Ram Allah, ten miles north of Jerusalem. This is close to the village from which, tradition says, Mary and Joseph returned to the city in their quest for discovering the whereabouts of the Boy Jesus. Here he lived with his wife, and four children, and made himself increasingly indispensable as a Christian minister. People would listen to what he had to say, because he preached and taught from an experience that he had made his own. His influence extended beyond his own parish, too, for he was made Editor of the Church magazine published by the Arab Anglican Church. Then, at a moment when from the human side he seemed most needed, God saw fit to take him. He was fatally injured on the road between Jerusalem and Nablus, while he was on his way to arrange with the Bishop about a confirmation service in his church. Just about half his life he had been a Muslim, the other half he spent as a Christian. An important point to remember is that because in part he had been a good Muslim, so he developed into a better Christian with growing influence and respect.

The four children with their mother continued to stay in Ram Allah after their father's death. It was in the early days of the Palestine war, and the Iraqi army came to encamp not far from the town. Amongst the officers was a friend of the family who knew their history, and soon heard of the tragedy of Simaan's death. He found out how the family was situated, and on returning to Iraq he told the relatives what he had discovered. Simaan's older brother came at once across the desert to visit his nieces and nephew and their mother. He made them a very generous proposition that he should share with them the ancestral property, thus giving his brother's children the same rights as his own. The only request the uncle made was that they should all leave war-stricken Palestine, and go off with him to the safety and plenty of Iraq. This was enticing and generous to a degree; there were no other conditions. The bonds of relationship were

strong, and the real kindness appreciated. But after thought and prayer and advice from friends, their answer was that they could not go with him, grateful though they were. Their father has chosen to go forward along the "Via Crucis" (The Way of the Cross) and as one of them expressed it, if their father had thought it worth it, they would follow him.

"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

Rev. Eric F. F. Bishop

(formerly Newman School of Missions, Jerusalem).



*A Group of Muslim Converts from
Egypt, Nubia, Palestine, Persia, Sudan*

The Cicada

In the Lebanon mountains, and other places near the shores of the Mediterranean Sea where pine trees grow, there exists an insect with a very interesting life-story. It is called the Cicada (pronounced *Si-kay-da*) and sometimes it is mistaken for a cricket.

It begins life as a little wormlike creature, living down in the dark earth at the foot of a pine tree. When it is hungry and thirsty it sucks the juice from one of the roots of the tree until it is satisfied. Thus its life goes on for years, until one day its tiny body begins to change. It has grown bigger and now has two pairs of legs and two arms with hands like small shovels. How wonderful this is! Now it need not crawl any longer: it has become rather like a beetle with legs for walking, and with its 'hands' it can dig out passages in the earth.

Then one day as it works hard digging a passage, the soil seems very loose, and soon there is nothing left but a great space, and instead of darkness to which it has been accustomed there is a bright light which hurts its eyes. Yes, it has come to the surface of the earth, into the sunshine.

"I cannot live here" he thinks to himself, "I prefer to go back to the darkness from which I came," and back he goes. Yet in the darkness he cannot forget the strange light he has seen, and a deep longing takes possession of him until finally it becomes unbearable and he feels he *must* get out of the dark earth. But this time, as he appears above the ground it is still dark, for he has reached the surface by night. Still not satisfied he feels a craving to go higher. There is a small bush nearby which he finds easy to climb. Reaching the highest twig he grips it and rests. He would like to go higher still . . . but he has no wings like a real beetle.

After a time the sun rises and the warm sunshine envelops him, and now he finds he welcomes it: in fact he has no desire to return to his former life.

Suddenly he realises that the skin on his back has rent and left a large hole, and instinctively he knows that he has to crawl out of it: first his head, then his legs and arms, and lastly his body. It is not easy and takes two full hours of strenuous effort. Then he rests awhile, sitting near the old

skin which stands on the twig as if he were still inside.

Then gradually he notices that he has become an entirely new creature. He has two pairs of lovely wings, and spreading them out finds he can fly! Up he goes, higher and higher! Now he has reached the uppermost branches of the pine tree. A wonderful world opens out before him. However did he endure living in the darkness of the earth? Now the Cicada enjoys light, fresh air and a gentle breeze blowing through the branches of the tree.

How he would love to praise and thank his Creator for such a wonderful new life. Then to his surprise he finds that he has received in his new body a musical organ with which he can praise his Creator all day long. By the movement of membranes and fibres placed where his wings join his body, he can emit loud sounds. And up there in the pine trees he finds many others like him, so all together they sing and praise their Maker in a mighty choir that the whole wood in their vicinity resounds with the noise.

The female Cicada lays her eggs on the pine branch, and later these turn to tiny grubs. They fall down to the ground and crawl into the earth, beginning the same life-cycle as their mother lived.

There is a parable for us in this, for it resembles so nearly our experiences of life. God says, "The heart of man is evil from his youth," but He graciously puts into our hearts a longing for something better, till like the Cicada we begin to crave for light.

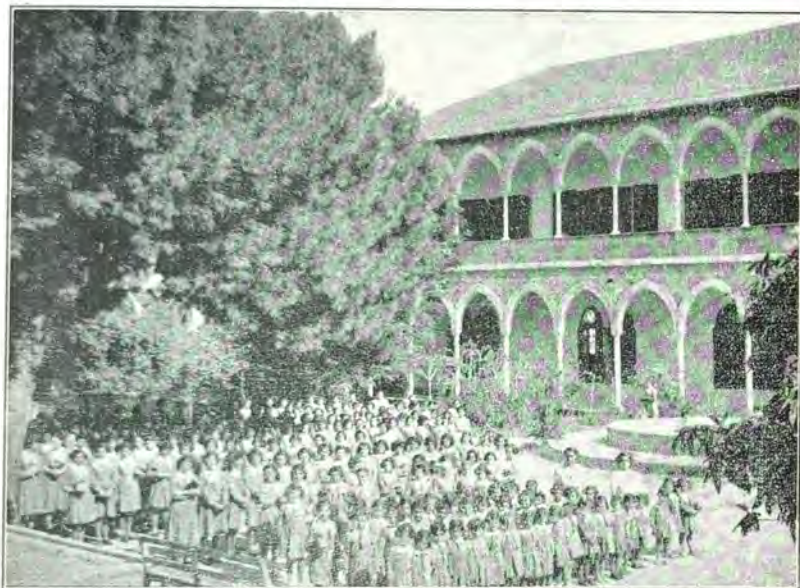
Then we long to climb higher as the beetle did, trying to overcome evil in our own strength. But, just as it got to the highest twig and could go no farther, so we too come to an end of our power, and not until our lives are completely changed by Christ Jesus can we live the new life God wants us to live.

But this miracle can take place in our lives if we come to Him for cleansing in His precious blood, and His joy may so fill our hearts that we shall love to praise Him too.

Clara E. Peter
(*Swiss Evangelical Mission*).

Lebanese School Girls.

It was about four o'clock so school was over for the day and the girls were streaming out under the great archway of the main gate. As they got to the gate two girls paused



Training College Beirut

before getting off for home in opposite directions. One of these, a Muslim, was just turning away when her companion asked her to go a little way with her. She refused, she wanted to go straight home that day.

“Just come a little way with me,” said her friend, “then you can hurry back in plenty of time.”

“No, I can't, not to-day.”

“Oh, come on. Come with me as far as the corner.”

“No,” replied the other firmly. “I must go this way. There is no other way,” and turning in the direction of home she set off up the road. As she went she thought of what they had been saying and of her last remark. “There is no other way. What made me say that? Where did I hear that expression before?” For a long time she could not remember, and then suddenly it flashed into her mind: “No other way but Jesus.”

Then she could not forget, and she wanted to forget. She was a Muslim and Muslims did not believe that there was no other way but Jesus. In fact they did not believe that Jesus was the Way at all. They must not! Mohammed was their Prophet. But there it was ringing in her ears, slipping into her thoughts when she least expected it, disturbing her work and her play. She told herself that it was just a saying of the Christians. It was all right for them to believe it, but for a Muslim—impossible.

The weeks went by but, try as she would, she could not forget. At last in desperation she thought she must talk to somebody, and when the opportunity came she consulted one of the staff. As they talked together she came to realize that the Lord Jesus was indeed the Way and the only Way, and there and then she asked Him to be her Saviour.

Easter time had brought round the usual holidays. The girls had gone home rejoicing, and the school seemed very quiet. So it was a surprise when one afternoon a Muslim girl came in. She had learned to love the Lord Jesus in another school but she knew she would get a welcome. She looked as if she had been weeping, and when asked she said: “It is awful with my relations. Just because they know I love the Lord Jesus they mock and laugh all the time. They say terrible things about Him. I don’t mind what they say about me, but when they go on saying things about Him I can’t bear it.” She was welcomed and comforted. Then she said: “I came in this afternoon because I had to be with Christians for a little while. If you are busy, don’t bother about me. Just let me sit with you. I won’t even talk. I just want to be with you.”

These are little incidents from the lives of two Muslim girls. They show how hard it is for them to come to believe in the Lord Jesus, and how hard is the way when they want to follow Him. Will you who read this pray for them and ask God to give them courage to confess, and His protection and guidance in the hard times that follow.

Elizabeth Neill

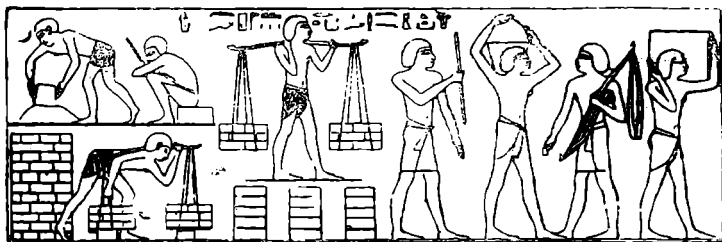
(British Syrian Mission).



Hassan Learns to Build

Part 1

Hassan met the Missionary as he came along the drive from the Mission house carrying a measuring tape, a mallet, some wooden pegs and, sticking out of his pocket, a piece of paper which Hassan rightly guessed must be a sketch of a building. That meant that they must be going to build something. Hassan was curious to know what it was going to be. All through the Summer men had been making bricks,



just as they have been made in Egypt for thousands of years. They had first of all made heaps of dirt, hollowed out in the centre like a volcano—very much extinct, of course—and then filled them up with water, and scattered a lot of chaff over them. They left it like that for three or four days to “ferment,” as the men said, then added a lot more chaff, and mixed it all up together. Then they had carried this sticky mud and chaff off to the flat place where the men were moulding bricks. They had wooden boxes without tops or bottoms, but with a piece of one side sticking out for a “handle,” in which to mould the bricks. They took up a handful of mud and pushed it into the mould on the ground, and then lifted up the mould, and there was a mud brick!

They worked quickly, and each man could make about 2,000 of these bricks a day if he worked hard. After the sun had been shining hard on them for a few days, the men had come along and turned all the bricks on to their sides. A few more days in the sun, and then they were stocked up in rows ready for use. There they were now, thousands of them, soon to be built into something—what? Hassan did not

know, but he was soon to find out.

“Hassan, I want you to come and help me a moment,” the Missionary called to him. Hassan promptly dropped what he was doing and came across. Building was always such interesting work. You could “see” something for what you were doing. It wasn’t like feeding grown-up cows for instance. They never seemed to get much bigger however much you fed them, and there wasn’t much to see for the work put in. Of course if you didn’t feed them they got thinner, but that was different. But building! Why every day you could see a difference!

They stopped alongside the garage and the Missionary put the pegs and mallet on the ground and pulled out the “plan.”

“What are you going to build?” Hassan enquired eagerly.

“Chicken houses!”

“*Chicken houses?*” Hassan emphasised each word, “What do chickens want houses for? You foreigners are funny. You build a better building than we live in, for the cows; then you build special boxes for the bees; now you want to build houses for chickens! I don’t see why they can’t run about the house like they do in our village, or at most, put them in cages.”

“Well there are several reasons for that, Hassan. First of all, of course, we are trying to teach people to keep their houses clean, as you know, and it doesn’t help to keep them clean if the chickens are running all over the place, does it? Then, I think we can produce much better chickens, and more and larger eggs if we give the ‘chickens’ proper places to live in, don’t you?”

“Maybe,” said Hassan, rather dubiously, “But do we need to have ‘plans,’ and measure things, and everything, just for chicken houses?”

“Perhaps we don’t *need* to, but it’s always wise to have plans for everything in life, Hassan, even chicken houses. When you have a plan you know what you are aiming at, and it saves a lot of time to have things all worked out beforehand. Now I have a plan here and I know just how long I want these houses, and how wide, and high. I know where I want the doors and where the wire comes, and where we have bricks: I know just how many bricks I need, how much wire

and how much wood, and I know just about how much it is all going to cost, and whether or not we have enough money. You know, the Bible tells us how foolish it is to start building unless you have made plans and worked out the cost, so that you know whether or not you have enough to finish the work. The Lord Jesus, of course, was not thinking only about buildings when He said that—at least not buildings of brick and timber—He was thinking of men's lives. How important it is for us to have a plan in life, even for little things, and how important it is for us to reckon up the cost! When the Lord said these things He was thinking particularly of men and boys who say, 'Oh yes, I will follow Jesus' without thinking how much it is going to 'cost' them to do it, and afterwards when they find out, they decide not to go on with it. Jesus says that sort of thing is like building a house and leaving it half-finished. It is important, too, to have a plan in life even for small things. Do you know that I have a plan for each day? Yes, I do, a time to get up, a time to spend in prayer and reading the Bible, a time to eat, and for everything I do in the day. That saves me from wasting a lot of time."

"You have a plan for us, too!" said Hassan with a mischievous grin, "We have to get up and feed the animals, and milk them, and come to prayers, and cut the feed—and everything, just when you say so."

"Yes, and not only do we have a daily plan, of course, for all the little things, but we plan ahead, too. We like to think of what we may be, not only of what we are, and to plan everything to fit in with that. You see when we planned this farm, long before we started to build these chicken houses, we knew where we were going to build them, and we know now, where we want to put all the other buildings we are going to build in the future. We may make some little changes later on, but we have a plan to which to work even now. I think that God wants us to plan our lives ahead, too, don't you? When people who want to build buildings don't know anything about building, they call in a man called an Architect, who knows all about it, to do it for them. We have an 'Architect,' who knows all about our lives, too, haven't we? And He can plan them for us. Yes, you're right! It is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!"

A. Whitehouse

(*Egypt General Mission*).

Challenge



and
Counter
Challenge

CHALLENGE AND COUNTER-CHALLENGE

A Missionary Magazine for Young People desirous of learning more about the challenge of Islam, and of helping to counter it by the proclamation of the Gospel.

Issued by the

FELLOWSHIP OF FAITH FOR THE MOSLEMS

The following Societies co-operating:—

ALGIERS MISSION BAND

c/o 37, Stephen's Road Tunbridge Wells.

BRITISH SYRIAN MISSION

119, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

CENTRAL ASIAN MISSION

47, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

EGYPT GENERAL MISSION

106, Highbury New Park, London, N.5.

FRIENDS OF THE MOSLEMS IN CHINA

53, Poets Road, Highbury, London, N.5.

NORTH AFRICA MISSION

34, Bisham Gardens, Highgate, London, N.6.

Copies may be obtained from the Young Peoples' Secretaries of any of the above Societies.

Subscription 2s. per year.



CHALLENGE AND COUNTER-CHALLENGE,
c/o 106 Highbury New Park,
LONDON, N.5.

June 1st, 1952.

MY DEAR READER,

Spring is in the air! And all the trees are bursting out in new leaves, and brightly coloured blossoms.

Spring seems also to have got into the "Challenge" for in this issue it has blossomed out with some exciting new ideas. We do hope you will like them.

First, there are four special pages for the younger readers. You can find them in the centre of the magazine. They form part of an "A.B.C. of Arabic." The little pictures illustrating them were drawn by a missionary in Egypt, so they are very true to life. We hope to put some more of the letters in the next issue.

Then at the end there is something for those of you who like to expend your energies doing things! There is a Cross Word Puzzle to solve. No prize is offered, but if anyone likes to send in his or her solution (enclosing a stamped envelope for reply), we will let you know if you have done it correctly.

The Office has not been swamped with new subscription slips *yet*, but we are still hoping you will come off victor in a few challenging duels!

Yours in the Master's Service,

THE EDITOR.

The Camel.

I expect most of you have ^{seen} seen a camel at the Zoo, or in a picture? In Egypt and the Holy Land we see them every day—often a large number of them tied to one another by a rope, walking behind one another in single file. We call that “a string of camels.” As a rule they carry loads of sand or stones in roughly-made wooden boxes which are fixed on to their backs.



The Arabs, or Bedouins have a saying that “the camel is the greatest blessing from Allah.” (Allah means God). They may well say so for the camel is to them their horse, cow, sheep or goat as well as their burden-bearer! The Arabs ride the camel, eat its flesh, though it is dreadfully tough meat, and use its hair for making ropes, coverings for their tents and cloaks. Can you think of someone in the Bible who had a camel-hair cloak? (Look up St. Matthew, chapter 3, verse 4).

The camel's usefulness does not end even when it is dead, for the hide is cured and dyed for leather from which saddle-bags are made, as well as the bright red and yellow shoes with turned-up pointed toes which people wear in the East. Even its bones are used, being made into rough utensils for kitchen use, or into tools.

I have seen old camels, no longer capable of carrying heavy burdens working the water-wheels. They are blindfolded which keeps them from getting dizzy, and then they are made to walk round and round in a circle harnessed to a long pole.



The end of this pole is fastened to the centre of the water-wheel, which invariably squeaks as it works, drawing up the water from the stream in queer-looking buckets which when they reach the top, tip their contents on to the fields needing water.

But I think a camel's proudest day must be when he carries the bride to her husband's house. A box is erected on its back and covered with a gay coloured cloth, inside of which the bride sits with one or more of her nearest female relatives. What gorgeous trappings adorn the camel at this time! We read in the Bible also of a bride mounted on a camel going to her husband. This story is in the Old Testament, in the book of Genesis. See if you can find it.

But I am sorry to tell you that the camel is a very bad-tempered animal. He never loves his master as do the horse and the dog. His bite is very poisonous, so you often see camels muzzled. I once read a story of a lad who was conducting a camel laden with wood from one village to another. The camel would loiter, and at last refused to go so the boy struck him several times. A few days later the lad was leading the camel, unladen this time, to his own village. The camel seized the opportunity, took hold of the boy by the head in its huge mouth, lifted him up in the air, and then flung him down, thus killing him.

We cannot admire his character, although he is so useful. But he really cannot help himself, as he is only a beast. What about the boys and girls who are so clever and capable, and yet spoil their service by their bad temper? They have no excuse for we have a Saviour who can save to the uttermost, and who is more than willing to break the power of sin in our lives if only we will ask Him to do so.



Camel used for threshing, "unequally yoked."

“GO YE . . . and teach ALL. . .”

The Saloon Lounge of the B. and I. Ship, S.S. Dumra is situated just beneath the Captain's Bridge, and commands a splendid view of both the ocean ahead, and the foredeck below.

If you could have been in that lounge on the evening of Thursday, December 13th, 1951, as we steamed away from Kuwait, down the Persian Gulf toward Bahrein Island and thence to India, you would have observed a remarkable scene. Every square foot of the deck below, between the winches and on the hatch covers, was taken up with parcels, trunks, and bedding in close proximity, interspersed with human forms of many nationalities and creeds.

On the port side, you would have seen a group of Muslims from Pakistan sitting in a circle. Enjoying the meal along



Egyptians “enjoying a meal” in the same way.

with them were two missionaries, tearing off with their hands strips of “chipattee” (thin dry bread rather like a pancake) and dipping these into a common pot of fiery curried stew.

Can you guess who those crazy white fellows were? Well, it was my colleague and myself, and we rejoiced that the Lord had given us this real privilege, by our being allowed a "Deck passage," when normally it is refused to Europeans.

These dear Indian and Arab peoples have much to teach us about hospitality and courtesy. They insisted on laying out a carpet for us to sleep on, and gave us a pillow; also a length of clothing material for use as a blanket. We shared our food with them and they theirs with us.

Praise God! We also had something very precious to give them, namely our testimony of the Salvation of our God through Christ. It was indeed a thrill to see them come in little groups to hear the message, and to be shown from the Scriptures that there is forgiveness, cleansing from sin, and the gift of the Holy Spirit for all who put their trust in Him. Yes! there were Arabs who came, Punjabis who listened, and Portuguese descendants from Goa who questioned. We thank God that many of them accepted Gospels.

There were three very devout Muslims who rose at 3 a.m. to pray for over two hours. These asked for and received a New Testament each. One of them was from Baluchistan and two from that closed fanatical land of Afghanistan. A Sikh nearby, who had taken nearly half an hour to wind on his turban to his satisfaction, was straining his ear to catch every word as we talked to the others.

To think that the One True God can save people individually and show His plan for their lives certainly was a new revelation to these dear souls.

Bahrein Island came into view during the morning—all too soon. We had to say goodbye to our new found friends, with the earnest prayer that our Lord Jesus would use His Word and our testimony to bring these precious souls out of Satan's deceits and slavery to Himself. We prayed also that they be made into true men of God to bring the Glad Tidings of Salvation through the Cross of Christ to their own peoples.

DR. LIONEL GURNEY.

A
Allah



A is an important letter as it starts our English alphabet. It is also the first letter of a very important word continually heard spoken by Muslim people. This word is **ALLAH** and it means **GOD**. You can see it written in Arabic in the little picture at the top of the page. The word is read from right to Left, so the long stroke that looks rather like a sword represents our English A.

The Muslim people are not heathen who bow down before idols of wood and stone. They worship God and His name in Arabic form, Allah, is often on their lips and brought into all their conversation. "Allah bless you," "Allah reward you" they will say, but unfortunately also they are constantly asking Allah to curse people.

This is because they do not really know the truth about God. They think He is like some heavenly dictator who makes everyone do what He wants, sometimes good things and sometimes bad! They do not know that God is Love and God is Holy. This can only be learnt properly from the Lord Jesus His Son, who came to this earth for that reason. But the Muslims still prefer to believe what Muhammad their prophet taught them, rather than follow Christ's teaching.

B

Bakhsheesh



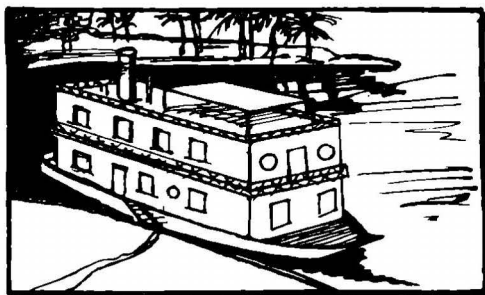
Isn't this a strange looking word? It is another Arabic word, and one which you would soon hear if you were to visit any of the countries about which you read in the "Challenge and Counter Challenge." At the first port, when you disembarked from the ship, the porter who carries your luggage off the boat will ask for "Bakhsheesh", the driver who takes you in his cab to the railway station will ask for "Bakhsheesh", and the little boy who opens the door of the carriage for you will ask for "Bakhsheesh". It means "a tip!".

You would also see many beggars, all asking for bakhsheesh, but if you had not enough money to give to all of them, you can send them away quite happy by saying "Allah will reward you."

Although the word is now used in many Muslim countries, it really belongs to Persia. It is sometimes used to mean a bribe. But it is not in this sense that it is heard on the lips of missionaries, when they come home from the market joyfully exclaiming that they got something "bakhsheesh". They then mean they got something for nothing, something free of charge, but this doesn't often happen in Eastern markets!!

D

Dahabeeya



How would you like to live in a house-boat like this? It is called a DAHABEEYA, and there are lots of them moored along the banks of the River Nile close to Cairo. They are very comfortable inside and in the hot weather they make most pleasant dwellings, as there is usually a cool breeze on the river in the evening.

Boys and girls find them very convenient for bathing, as they can just jump off the side right into the water.

Sometimes the owners have a small rowing-boat or sailing boat tied alongside in which they can go for trips up and down the river.

These house-boats are also used by the missionaries. They sail in them far up the river into Upper Egypt, and reach isolated villages which would never otherwise hear the Gospel. The boat can be tied up at the edge of the riverbank, while the missionaries spend two or three days teaching in a particular village, and using the boat to sleep in at night. This is putting the boat to its very correct use, for the Arabic word "dahabeeya" really means "a going", and we find a form of the same word used in the Arabic New Testament when the Lord Jesus gave His last command, "GO . . . (ye into all the world)."

G

Gamoosa



Is not this a peculiar shaped animal? It is a Gamoosa, or in English, a water-buffalo. It is grey in colour and has large ears, the insides of which are pink, as is its nose.

The story is told (but it is not true!) that when Adam saw the cow which God had created he asked if he might try to do the same. When God gave him permission he produced the gamoosa!

It may be ugly, but the gamoosa is a very useful animal. It gives a rich creamy milk, and its flesh can be eaten as meat.

As its English name shows, the water-buffalo is very fond of water and on hot days it goes right into the canal and submerges its huge grey body till only the pink tip of its nose is seen. Although it is such a big animal, it is often seen in charge of quite a small boy who, when he is tired of walking beside it, will hoist himself up on to its back, and even go into the water still riding on his precarious perch. From this vantage point he can get the animal out of the water more quickly. The women on the bank do not find this task so easy, and sometimes have to resort to throwing stones in order to make the buffaloes obey their orders when it is time to go back to the farm.

Hassan Learns to Build

(Part II.)

The land had been measured, the pegs put in, and the foundations dug, and now they were ready to build. This was the really interesting part of building to Hassan. You could see what you were up to. There seemed no reason why pegs should be knocked into the ground just where they were, though it began to look more reasonable when they dug places for the foundations. But now they were bringing over piles of bricks and we should soon see something going up—even if it was only a chicken run.

Hurrah! They were building now! One of the men was helping the Missionary to lay the bricks, another was standing up to his knees in a mound of mud similar to that from which the bricks had been made. This was the "mortar". Another was bringing bricks over from the stack in a basket on his shoulder, and two girls were bringing mud-mortar in large iron saucers on their heads. Sometimes Hassan brought a



donkey-load of bricks across, and sometimes was just simply standing by to hand up bricks to the builders, or help fix the lines in place, or hand up the plumb-bob.

The first thing that intrigued Hassan was to see the builders lay one row of bricks facing one way, and then the next row on top of them, another way. They were careful too, to see that they didn't get the joints one on top of the other. Hassan thought this was just a fancy pattern, and he thought it really was a waste of time seeing that they were going to plaster the whole wall inside and out with mud plaster after they had finished building, so he had been told. He voiced his thoughts to the Missionary.

"Oh no, Hassan, this isn't decoration. This is one of the principles of building with bricks. It's called 'bonding' and that word really means binding together. Now you watch and I'll show you what I mean. Suppose I put this row of bricks on top of the other, one brick on the other, just like the row underneath. Now watch! When I push on them, so, they fall apart. But watch when I push on these bonded ones—they don't fall apart! No, it isn't *just* the mortar that holds them, the other bricks that fell apart had mortar too—just the same kind of mortar. The secret is that one overlaps the other and each one holds the other in place. All the bricks are the same strength, but when they each stand on their own, they fall apart; when they help each other, they are strong."

"I guess the Bible must have something to say about that too," observed Hassan, for it seemed to him that the Bible had something to say about everything.

"Yes it has, of course, in many places. But there's one particular verse that comes to my mind just now. The great Apostle Paul was writing to some people called the Philippians and he wrote something like this: 'Look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others.' That means if we are all bricks in God's house, we are not to stand on our own and have nothing to do with anyone else—like those bricks I showed you that were not bonded—but we are each to be concerned with one another, like these bricks that overlap. Each brick helps his neighbour to bear the weight. That reminds me of another verse too which says, 'Bear ye



This is not Hassan, but someone like him.

one another's' burdens.' Well now, we must get on with the job again."

As the wall began to get higher, Hassan noticed that the builders were using the plumb-bob in order to make sure that the wall went up straight. The next day they had some hired builders in to help build, so that they would finish more quickly. After these hired builders had been working some time, Hassan noticed the Missionary standing a little way off the wall they were building, looking at it with quite a look of disapproval. Then he heard him say:

"I say, you fellows, that wall isn't being built quite vertical, you know. It appears to me to have quite a lean inwards. Haven't you been using the plumb-bob?"

"Of course we have," they insisted, "Look!" They held the plumb-bob against the outside of the wall and sure enough there it was nestling right against the wall. "See," they said triumphantly, "It's absolutely straight up!"

“Very well,” replied the Missionary, “Now hold the plumb-bob on the inside of the wall.” They did so, and Hassan, watching, laughed out loud, much to the annoyance of the builders. For there was the plumb-bob hanging about three inches out from the wall, which meant, as you know, that the wall was leaning over three inches.

“Ha,” laughed Hassan, “They forgot that the wall has an inside as well as an outside!”

The Missionary looked at him, and Hassan knew something was coming, “No,” he said, trying to anticipate the remarks he thought were going to be made, “I’m sure that they didn’t forget that they have an inside as well as an outside. Judging by the look of them I guess they look after their insides more than their outsides!”

“No, I wasn’t thinking of men’s bodies, Hassan, but of their lives. We all have an inner and an outer life. The outer life everyone sees: the inner life no-one sees but God and ourselves. It is our thoughts. Most people like others to think that their outside life—the life others can see—is all right, just as those men used the plumb-bob outside, but often the inside life, our thoughts, are all wrong. But it is very important that the inside should be straight too. Very soon that wall would have fallen over if we had left it alone, even although those men thought it was straight from the outside. Remember, God says that man looks on the outside, but God looks at the heart, and only He can help us to build that up straight, so that our lives shall be a beautiful building for Him.”

AUBREY WHITEHOUSE,
Egypt General Mission.

The Silver Cicada.

You mean to come to borrow books from the Library some day—Tuesday a.m. or Thursday p.m. don’t you?

When you come you can see a silver teaspoon with a cicada on the handle. Above the cicada there is Chinese writing—did you know that there are cicadas in China as well as near the shores of the Mediterranean?

Once upon a time there was a School—no, three schools, Prep, Girls and Boys—near a gully where cicadas sang, “ss-ss-ss, zz-zz-zz,” all day in the Summer; we called them Scissor-grinders because of that song.

Several girls from that school have trained as nurses at a certain big London hospital; the first one to apply was almost sent away, because the Matron *didn't know* that anyone could get a good English education at a school in China.

Of course you know that there are silversmiths in China—did you know that the silversmiths in Mecca are Chinese?

What a lot that silver cicada is telling us!

There are cicadas in China.

There were English schools in China.

There are Chinese silversmiths in Mecca.

The important thing to remember is that there are lots of Chinese Muslimeen. No one could go to Mecca and tell the ones there what they are missing by denying the only Way to the Father; we can't go to those in China now—but we can still pray for them.

Those in China who have turned to the Lord Christ for salvation are having their faith tested now; though the “flames” are lighted by enemies, we know, as Malachi says, “It is the Lord Who has put His silver there to be purified.”

When you want to open a tin and the lid is tight what do you use to prize it up? Not a silver teaspoon I hope! The one with the silver cicada was once used for that, and got bent so that the Chinese word “peace” is nearly broken off. It would have been stronger if the silversmith had put something in to make the silver less soft; years ago a missionary who was married in inland China had to have her engagement and wedding rings melted down to have some metal put in because the gold was too soft. You see gold and silver need purity *and* strength.

Come along and see this spoon and two Afghan coffee-poons; or just write and ask for a book about the country you are specially interested in.

THE LIBRARIAN.

Clues

ACROSS.

3. The answer to a man's shout in a cave. (3, 4).
7. A country sometimes called the "head of Islam." (5).
9. A Sufi leader, who expects absolute obedience. (3).
10. Muhammad's wife. (7).
11. Early in the day, perhaps the time of the first call to prayer. (2).
12. A Sh'ah thinks more of *him* than of Muhammad, his uncle. (3).
15. You are probably reading this—home, not—school (2).
17. The Challenge to Christian Faith. (5).
19. Initials soon to be seen on letter-boxes. (2).
20. 'New', but often means something old revived. (3).
22. "As in the days of——." (Matt. 24). (3).
23. Islam commands this before prayer. (8).
26. Myself. (2).
27. We have been allowed more than one a week lately (3).
28. Negative (2).
31. Missionaries must buy, build or pay——— somewhere to live. (4, 3).
32. Educated Algerians speak French, so called our King this. (3).
34. More dry. (5).
35. This country is not thickly populated, but most of the people are Muslimeen. (7).

DOWN.

1. A convert can only stand firm if "—— by the power of God" (4).
2. Two countries, both of which used to be included under the name of the first. (5, 7).
4. Claimed as forefather of the Arabs. (7).
5. Two lands, both having large Muslim populations, one in Asia, one in Africa.
6. Muhammad gave this on several occasions to stir his followers. (7).
8. American soldier.
10. First two letters of the central shrine in Mecca. (2).
13. The beginning of the Muslim creed. (We often sing this when we forget the words of a song!). (2).
14. He leads Muslim prayers. (4).
16. We can trust the Bible more than the Qur'an, for the Bible is this. (4).
17. Through Christ, we this eternal life. (7).
18. Thus. (2).
21. 33 down backwards. (2).
24. What Rachel called the son whom Jacob called Benjamin. (6).
25. The first and last letters of a North African tribe, sometimes called "the men of the veil." (2).
29. Conjunction which suggests choice. (2).
30. The Mount where Muhammad had his first revelation. (4).
33. Short for "Old England."

Challenge
and
Counter
Challenge

A stylized illustration of a hand holding a flag. The hand is green and is positioned in the center, gripping a dark brown flagpole. The flag is white and features a large red cross. The flagpole is angled diagonally across the page. The text 'Challenge and Counter Challenge' is written in a green, cursive font, with 'Challenge' at the top, 'and' in the middle, and 'Counter Challenge' at the bottom.

CHALLENGE AND COUNTER-CHALLENGE

A Missionary Magazine for Young People desirous of learning more about the challenge of Islam, and of helping to counter it by the proclamation of the Gospel.

Issued by the

FELLOWSHIP OF FAITH FOR THE MOSLEMS

The following Societies co-operating:—

ALGIERS MISSION BAND

c/o 37, Stephen's Road Tunbridge Wells.

BRITISH SYRIAN MISSION

119, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

CENTRAL ASIAN MISSION

47, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

EGYPT GENERAL MISSION

106, Highbury New Park, London, N.5.

FRIENDS OF THE MOSLEMS IN CHINA

53, Poets Road, Highbury, London, N.5.

NORTH AFRICA MISSION

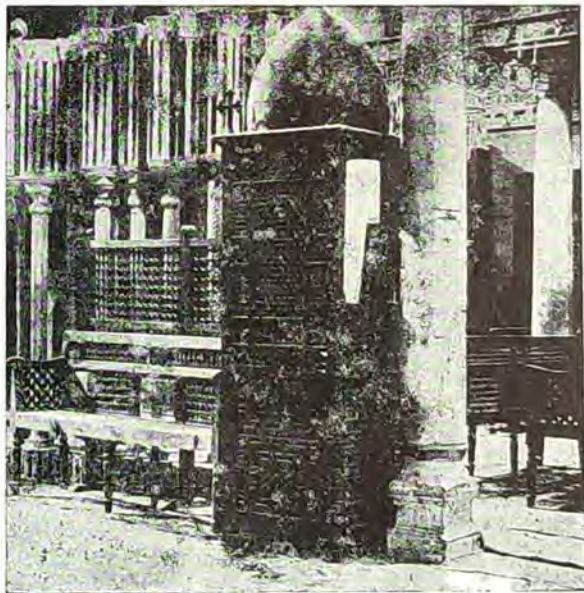
34, Bisham Gardens, Highgate, London, N.6.

Copies may be obtained from the Young Peoples' Secretaries of any of the above Societies.

Subscription 2s. per year.

Cross or Crescent ?

It is Good Friday in Libya, the world's youngest nation. The Jews are celebrating their Passover, the Europeans, mainly Roman Catholics, are commemorating the death of Christ, but for the majority of the population, the Moslems, the day is just an ordinary Friday, their Holy Day. To them the Cross is indeed a "stumbling block" and a "rock of offence." How sad it is when we think that Simon, who carried the Lord's cross, came from the very same land. All along the coast of North Africa, are ruins and remains of Christian churches, where the successors of Simon worshipped. Large magnificent churches they must have been. I have a photograph of the baptistry of one of them at a place called Leptis Magna. It is in the shape of a cross. Yet today there is no native Christian



Coptic Church, Old Cairo

church in Libya. The Islamic invaders sought to stamp out every trace of Christianity, replacing the Cross with the Crescent.

I got a big surprise when walking along the sea front one day recently to see a white vehicle approaching. Yes, it was an ambulance, but instead of the familiar Red Cross on its side it had a red crescent! Even that international symbol of healing had been changed! Today Moslems are being trained in the Government hospital in the ways of modern medicine but the vast majority of the followers of the Crescent still persist in their crude and cruel practices. As soon as a little child has a fever its face and chest are cut with a razor to let out blood (and incidentally—evil spirits). If it has a pain, a red hot knife is applied to its poor little body. Sometimes paraffin (such as is used for cooking) is poured into aching ears, rubbed on painful chests or applied to the head. One day an Arab woman came to us in such pain from her ear that she could not sit still. She had poured in paraffin, she said, to deaden the pain. After gentle syringing, a huge bug was extracted! Another popular “remedy” is to go to a special writer and get a quotation from the Koran written on a slip of paper. This is placed in a small leather purse and hung round the neck or pinned to the clothing, like a charm.

Very often it is not until all these “treatments” have been tried and have failed that the sufferer is taken to a doctor or brought to the Medical Mission.

But more important than the healing of the body is the salvation of the soul. The Christian missionary is sent to preach the Gospel of the Cross, which is foolishness to them that perish but the power of God to them that are saved. This Eastertide we have had the joy of telling the simple story of the Crucifixion to two classes of Moslem girls, most of whom had never heard it before. One of the little ones who was present remarked that it was not a good story today, whilst the bigger ones refused to look at the flannelgraph pictures (though we did not portray Christ on the Cross) and whispered one to another that it was all lies, Jesus Christ did not die, someone died in his place. It was only when I took all the

pictures off the board and told them a simple story about a mother who burned her hands in the fire saving her baby son that I regained their attention. The parable seemed to touch their hearts, for did not the mother's scarred hands remind us of Christ's wounds which he suffered for us? Perhaps we can all remember the time when we too were shocked by the story of the Crucifixion and yet now, like Bunyan's Christian, who lost his burden at the foot of the Cross, we can say:

"Blest Cross! Blest Sepulchre! Blest rather be
The Man that there was put to shame for me."

Thus may the Cross triumph over the Crescent in the lives of Moslem men and women and boys and girls!

Margaret A. Pearce, (N.A.M.).

A Visit to a Village Home

We are going on a visit today from the hospital compound to an Egyptian village to see a young girl who is sick. We are going in a train but it will only take us about a quarter of an hour.

As we walk up the platform to get into the train we have to be careful not to walk too near the edge of the platform or else we will find ourselves being hit by the remains of the sugar cane which the people inside the carriages are chewing. They suck out the sugar and then spit out the stalk part of the cane, not minding whoever happens to be passing by. After climbing over baskets and crates of chickens and fruit and various other bundles we manage to get inside the train and find a seat. As we look up we see various figures stretched out asleep on the luggage racks: after a few minutes along comes someone who wants to clean our shoes—then another one selling drinks—another comes with a basket full of sweets followed by a man with a basket of nuts: at last we think we can have some peace and enjoy the countryside, but no! a man begins chanting portions of the Koran (the Moslems' sacred book) hoping to earn the money for his train fare. A young boy comes by with his blind father begging money.

At last we reach our destination and get out: a short walk brings us to the village and soon we are winding in and out the narrow dusty streets: then we reach the house which we want to visit. In this house is a young girl of about 14 years old. Two years ago she fell off the roof of the house and injured her back and since that time she has not been able to walk or move her legs at all. The brother takes us upstairs: they are mud stairs and not very easy to walk on. As we enter the room there is just a big old-fashioned brass bed and a cupboard. As we sit down on a mat on the floor several rabbits come in and run all round us: there is rabbit food all over the floor which is covered with mud.

On the bed lies Kowkab (the girl we have come to see) very pale and thin. Kowkab is a Copt, that is to say she belongs to the ancient Christian Church of Egypt and so is a nominal Christian. She is able to recite the Lord's prayer to us and she knows quite a lot of the Bible stories as for a time she had been in the Old Cairo Mission Hospital. By means of the flannelgraph we tell her more of the Saviour's love for her, but she finds it very hard to believe that when the Lord Jesus died on the Cross and rose again He bore all her sins and there is nothing for her to do but to trust in Him and accept His wonderful provision for her need. She has been taught that she must say long prayers and fast and do good works and by these things she will perhaps be able to enter heaven. As we talk we remind her of the hymn which you all know so well:

“There was none other good enough

To pay the price of sin;

He only could unlock the gates

Of Heaven and let us in.”

After a while other members of the family come in and we are able to tell them, too, the good news of salvation through belief in the Lord Jesus.

Will you remember to pray for Kowkab and her family that they may learn to trust in Him as their Saviour, and that she may be able to patiently bear all her sufferings. During these days of trouble and uncertainty in the land of Egypt many of the Christians are in great fear of persecution, so they especially need our prayers.

Miss Evelyn Jordan, Egypt General Mission.

I am Alive

Weary, hungry and footsore, after a long day spent in visiting the hill villages of Kabylia, dropping from hill top to the depths of a beautiful ravine, only to climb again to another hill top, I find myself in the last village to be visited that day. One awaits with Oriental patience the welcome invitation 'Abide with us,' always extended, even to the man who is not a Moslem, and who, dealing with the eternal question of 'Mohammed or Christ,' takes advantage of the hour to propound a parable.

"Do you know, dear friends, that when I arrive in a village towards the end of the day, I am in the habit of standing in the middle of the cemetery, with its thousands of tomb-



A Moslem Cemetery

stones (very rudimentary, it is true!) and of calling out: 'Who, among you, oh honoured dead, will offer me a shelter and food for this night?'

Again, with increased insistence, 'Oh, happy ones, delivered from the sorrows of life, which of you will take pity on me, a poor, wretched pilgrim in this cursed world? Who will take me in, and give me to eat?'

At this point, generally, there are exclamations: But surely you don't do this! No one goes to the dead for shelter and subsistence. They can do nothing for you!

"But why not," I reply. "Truly it is preferable to address the dead rather than the living."

"But you are mad, absolutely mad!"

"Steady, my friends! I am speaking in parables, but perhaps you are right. And yet, if I am not mistaken, it is true that when it is a question of your eternal salvation, you do call on the one who is not alive, ignoring the One who said: 'I am he that liveth, and . . . am alive for evermore.'"

But is it true that the dead, whose tombs we care for, loved ones we have dutifully laid to rest with their faces turned towards Mecca, those whom we know will one day be called to judgement, are unable to succour a poor pilgrim who asks of them food and shelter?

Then, after all, you are right!

But is it not true then that we are neglecting the One who, alone, can save sinners, and are continually calling on another who is unable to deliver or to save?

Would it not be wise to meditate this parable, and to remember the reply of Abraham to the rich man when seeking relief from his torment: "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed."

Yes, you are right, and I am wrong—pardon me! the dead cannot succour the weary nor save the lost.

May God give us understanding!

S. Arthur, Azazga, Algiers.

H

Hasheesh



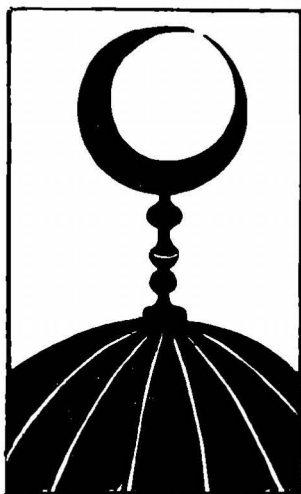
That sounds like a sneeze, but it isn't! It is the Arabic word for grass. In the picture you see an Egyptian woman bringing a bundle of grass to use as food for her animals, probably some rabbits or a goat which she keeps in her house.

One sort of grass is called hemp, and from the pressed seeds of this grass they obtain juice which is used in the preparation of a kind of tobacco. The Egyptian people love to smoke it through a long hasheesh-pipe, but it is not good for them as it makes them sleepy and ill.

However, they like it and try to get as much as they can of it, and as there is not enough of it in their country they try to smuggle it in from other countries. The frontier policemen have a lot of trouble searching the cases and even the clothes of travellers entering Egypt to find where it is hidden. Sometimes these travellers make their camels swallow little oilskin packages containing the hasheesh. Then when they are safely past the frontier and in their own village they kill the poor camels to get the drug from their stomachs.

I

Islam



And in this picture you see its sign of the crescent which looks something like a new moon. When it is carried as a flag it is usually coloured green on a white background.

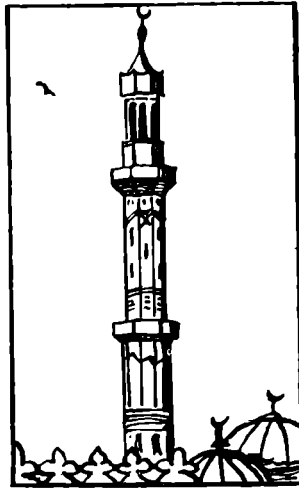
Islam is the name of a religion which is followed by 300 million people. It was founded by the prophet Mohammed who lived in Arabia about 600 years after the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth.

After Mohammed's death, his converts were anxious to get other people to follow this religion too, but they went about it in a strange way. For they decided to wage a Holy War against all infidels, that is those who did not believe in Allah (the Muslim name for God.). They marched out of Arabia into many other countries, bringing the people by force under the rule of Islam. The infidels they conquered had to choose whether they would accept this new religion of Islam or die. This is the reason why some people nowadays think that the crescent-shaped sign of Islam was originally a scimitar or curved sword.

The word Islam means to submit, and a believer in this religion is called a Muslim, which means one who has submitted himself to Allah. But it is not the willing obedience of a son to his loving Father as in the Christian faith, but rather more like a slave performing duties for a hard master.

M

Minaret



You have surely seen pictures of something like this, and perhaps you already know the word that begins with "M"? It is **minaret**. It has a close connection with another word also beginning with "M" which is Mosque.

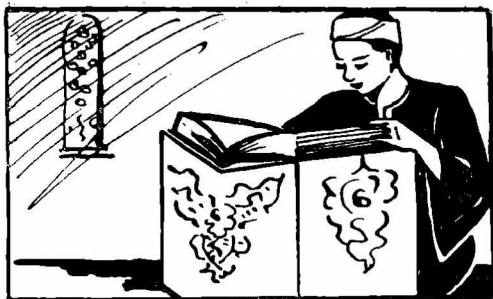
Mosques are special buildings which the Muslims set apart for their religious services, and each mosque has a minaret. As you can see in this picture, the minaret is a tall, thin tower, sometimes built of stone, sometimes of wood.

Inside there is a spiral staircase leading nearly to the top, where it eventually opens out through a little door on to a balcony. Five times a day the man who looks after the mosque climbs the minaret's staircase and goes out on to the balcony, and cupping his hands around his mouth, calls the Muslims to prayer.

Before a Muslim prays he must wash himself in a special way, and then he repeats passages from the Qur'an. He has no idea of confessing sin or need, nor of asking God for anything for himself or others, neither does he pray in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, so he knows nothing of answered prayer, but hopes that by his "prayers" he will heap up merit for himself on the Judgment Day.

Q

Qur'an



“Q” is the first letter of the Arabic word for the sacred book of the Muslims, the Qur'an. The comma helps you to pronounce it correctly, for it shows you that there must be a little pause after the first syllable. Say “qur” first, then a tiny stop, and then say “an.”

This book is to the Muslims what our Bible is to us, only our Bible was written by the Holy Spirit of God, whereas the Muslims believe that the Qur'an was dictated by the angel, Gabriel, to Mohammed piece by piece. Before that, it had been in heaven since eternity.

It is not as long as the Bible, but about two-thirds the size of the New Testament. There are 114 chapters, or “suras” if you can manage to remember another Arabic word.

The Muslims reverence the Qur'an greatly, and always take great care of it. They would never put anything on top of it, nor let it rest on the ground. There are men specially trained to read it, and they do so in a melodious voice. They are often hired to come and read it in people's houses. Some of these men are blind, and so they learn the whole book by heart and recite it from memory. A Qur'an reader is called a Fiqi.

The language of the Qur'an is very beautiful, and flow along with some of the sentences rhyming, though it is not really poetry as we know it.

A Daughter of Damascus

It is early morning, and the sellers of Damascus have been crying their wares in the narrow streets since the light of dawn began to silhouette the minarets of a hundred mosques against a clear and cloudless sky. It is hours since the voice of the muezzin rang out the call to prayer over the sleeping city—a call to be obeyed by two hundred thousand followers of the Prophet who acknowledge that "there is no god but God, and Mohammed is his prophet." And now the Street called Straight



is crowded with life streaming to and fro. A little' black-robed, veiled figure, emerging from the Jewish Quarter, picks its way among the laden donkeys, camels, and jostling human beings, the clatter of her wooden clogs lost in the general hubbub as she hurries towards a narrow alley, and disappears in the gloom, to knock presently on a heavy wooden door which opens to reveal a large tiled courtyard. It is shaded by orange trees, and dotted with groups of playing children dressed in black like the newcomer. A bell rings, and the veiled figure slips off her outer covering to reveal a girl with thin face, bright eyes, and curly dark hair. She joins her class, and files into the class-room in joyful anticipation of the first lesson of the day, for who can make the Word of God live as can her beloved Syrian teacher, herself a student and lover of the Holy Book?

Zahra looks round at her class-mates, some listening with ill-disguised impatience and scorn, others with signs of uneasiness and indecision in their expression. How well Zahra herself remembers passing through those stages. But now something has happened to her—she cannot describe what it is—she only knows that she loves the words of the Book and Him of Whom it speaks. She drinks of its sweetness as one who is thirsty and knows not how long he may drink. For Zahra is twelve years old, and in her last class in this school, which has been her home since she was a kindergarten tot. Already some of her class-mates are engaged to be married, and are prattling of jewels and silk dresses and all the excitements attendant on the bride-to-be. But Zahra's thoughts are elsewhere. Oh, if only her father will consent to let her go on to the school in the Christian Quarter, where she may learn English, and continue to find the treasures hidden in the Book!

The long, busy day is over. Zahra lowers her veil and hurries home through the crowded Straight Street, across the Jewish Quarter, and into the Moslem Quarter beyond, passing on her way her father's tiny shop, where the old man sits, his red tarbush bound with the white cloth of the orthodox Moslem, the mouthpiece of his hubble-bubble to his lips as he contentedly draws the tobacco smoke through the cooling water in its glass bowl.

Zahra gains the room which is the home of the family. Her delicate mother awaits her, and soon the father comes in for supper—bread, olives, cheese—placed on a rush tray on the floor in front of father and son, who sit cross-legged on the piece of worn carpet. Their hunger satisfied, mother and daughter may sup. Their kerosene lamp sheds a feeble glimmer on Zahra's books as she studies her lessons to the monotonous drone of her father's voice reading the Koran. Then mother lifts a curtain hiding a recess in the wall from which she takes the mattresses and quilts, unrolls and spreads them side by side on the floor, and soon the family is plunged in darkness and silence—all except little Zahra, who kneels quietly in her bed and prays.

A year has passed. Zahra's prayers are answered. You cannot tell her now from the Christian girls in St. Paul's School



in their bright blue uniform. And how she loves her work! She bobs up and down in her class, a question always on her tongue, and woe betide the teacher who cannot answer to her satisfaction. After three years of happiness, Zahra again

finds herself facing a parting of the ways—a certificate in her hand which will take her on further to a boarding school in Beirut (an almost unattainable dream of bliss)—or the bondage of a Moslem marriage.

Again her dream is realised, and she finds herself in a new and much bigger community as a boarder in Beirut. New worlds of knowledge open up before her, all fascinating to her enquiring mind. But what of the spiritual world? Has she entered the door to life eternal? Yes, she has taken Him who is that life to be her Saviour, and now comes the question—can she count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus her Lord? While she is counting the cost of this, news comes that her mother has died—the only one in her family who seemed secretly to reach out timid hands towards the Saviour. Dare she confess at home now? Holidays are unhappy times. She compromises by confessing her faith to her two younger sisters, and binding them to secrecy lest her father should take her from school. Three years passed thus—in confession at school and partial silence at home.

Now another difficulty arises. All the classes of the school are behind her, and she needs only a year or two in the teachers' training class to be able to earn her own living and gain her freedom. But there is a rule that a girl who is still openly a Moslem may not be trained as a teacher by the gifts of Christian people. Unless she is a baptised believer, she must finance her own way. Zahra is not yet willing for the open break, so she returns to Damsacus with little hope, but a great determination, to complete her training. After trying every means, she at last raises the necessary money for her fees, and returns to school as a training student, living and dressing as a Christian there but closely veiling on her return home—for fear.

The time of training flies happily enough, until, with a teacher's diploma to her credit, Zahra faces the world. Now she may earn her own living, and her thoughts go to her two sisters, who, with her help, may also have Christian teaching. A position is offered her in Palestine in a Government School, and she begins her teaching career, as a Moslem. The Koran

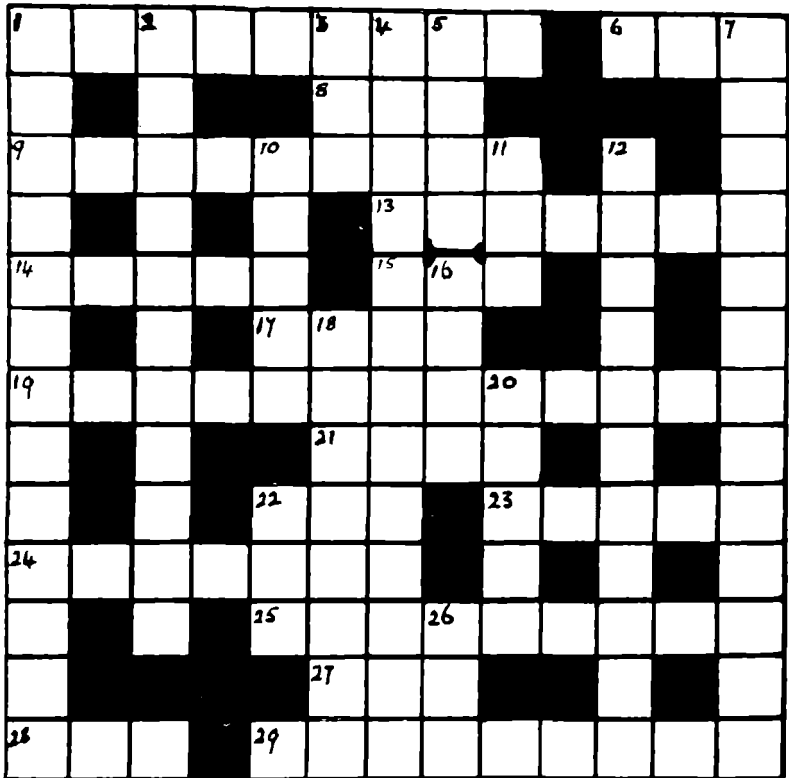
must be taught, and day by day it becomes more difficult, as she finds that she does not believe what she teaches, till gradually the realisation comes that she is truly Christ's and dare not deny Him as she is doing. A message comes to her at this time as she attends a Church service: "Why halt ye between two opinions?" The words, like a challenge, ring in her ears till she can bear it no longer. When the Inspector comes, she informs him that she is a Christian, and intends to be baptised at the first opportunity. This meets with the curt announcement that she must lose her job, and may consider herself dismissed from the end of the term. Then a load is lifted from Zehra's heart—no work, no money, possibly no home when she is baptised—what matters it when she has the sunshine of her Lord's presence, and all the riches of His promises?

At home, an ignorant and bigoted step-mother holds sway, and is working hard to counteract the bad influence of a Christian School on the younger sisters. They must act as the family drudges while her own daughter sits like a lady. Zahra's announcement to her father of her impending baptism is unwelcome, and even more so when she confesses that it cost her her position. But strangely enough, he does not cast her off, and she assures him that her new Master is able to supply all her needs. A quiet baptismal service, memorable to her, marks her entrance into the Church of Jesus Christ and, before long, there is a place for her in a Mission School in the Lebanon mountains where she will be free from persecuting relatives. Zahra's first thought, as her first month's salary is placed in hand, is of her two sisters. Here is the means that will help to save them from unhappiness and the dangerous bigotry of the step-mother.

Thus is Zahra led step by step, until she becomes a student in a Bible Training Institute where she learns deeper lessons from the Book, and undergoes discipline which will strengthen character and lead to fuller service in future. Farewell Zahra! May he who has redeemed you and called you to His service, use your witness increasingly to bring more of Syria's daughters to the new life in Him.

G. M. Harries, British Syrian Mission.

Cross-Word Puzzle



Clues

Across

1. **First** missionary to Muslims (5, 4).
6. **First** name of **first** missionary to Aden (3).
8. **First** number (3).
9. A young soldier in the Army, when India was British (6, 3).
13. Don't say this, except of sin (1, 4, 2).
14. An Egyptian hen (this) small egg (4, 1).
15. Relation (3).
17. Stand on **them** to reach up high (4).
19. Surname of **first** missionary to Aden (5, 8).
21. **First** person to die (4).
22. National civil Service (3).
23. **First** big city of Upper Egypt coming down the Nile (5).
24. King Saul, a Benjamite—(this prophet) Tishbite (6, 1).
25. He hasn't seen you—shout!! (5, 4).
27. Lend me some money, I'll pay you later (3).
28. Initials of a Missionary Society (inside the Cover of Challenge) (3).
29. His friends called the **first** great missionary to Arabia **this** (3, 6).

Down

1. The men of Jabesh Gilead burnt this of the **first** King of Israel (I Sam. 31) (5, 8).
2. **First** modern missionary to Muslims; and the land he **first** went to (6, 5).
3. Add "d" and its heavy; or add "f" and eat it (3).
4. Even if you are as goodlooking as David's son, be **this** to your parents (6, 7).
5. **First** wife of Jacob (4).
7. Cut off the last letter and it is the home of a bird; Retain the last letter and an enemy has copied the bird (4, 3, 6).
10. "— of the desert," Jer. 17 (5).
11. One of the twelve tribes of Israel (3).
12. The name of the Prophet of Arabia — — — (6, 4, 1).
16. Of Wight or of Man (4).
18. The **first** fruits — — — was Stephanus' house (2, 6).
20. My family, O (4, 1).
22. **First** three letters of one of the Minor Prophets (3).
26. **First** name for the biblical town of Bethel (3).

Challenge
and
Counter
Challenge



CHALLENGE AND COUNTER-CHALLENGE

A Missionary Magazine for Young People desirous of learning more about the challenge of Islam, and of helping to counter it by the proclamation of the Gospel.

Issued by the

FELLOWSHIP OF FAITH FOR THE MOSLEMS

The following Societies co-operating:—

ALGIERS MISSION BAND

c/o 37, Stephen's Road Tunbridge Wells.

BRITISH SYRIAN MISSION

119, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

CENTRAL ASIAN MISSION

47, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

EGYPT GENERAL MISSION

106, Highbury New Park, London, N.5.

FRIENDS OF THE MOSLEMS IN CHINA

53, Poets Road, Highbury, London, N.5.

NORTH AFRICA MISSION

34, Bisham Gardens, Highgate, London, N.6.

Copies may be obtained from the Young Peoples' Secretaries of any of the above Societies.

Subscription 2s. per year.

Valete

My dear Reader,

This letter brings some rather sad news . . . which is that the Magazine "Challenge and Counter Challenge" is having to close down! So this will be the last issue you will receive.

All who have been responsible for its publication do thank you, Readers, for all your help. Many of you have expressed such kind appreciation of the magazine which has been a great encouragement. You have done your best by paying your subscriptions regularly, and trying to increase the circulation by interesting others in it. But still the income on sales amounted only to 60% of the cost of the printer's bill. "For God's work we should 'cut our losses' once, twice, thrice . . . but not in perpetuity" saith the Treasurer!

We hope that it has fulfilled its aim during the three and a half years of its existence. This was that it should help you to love the Muslims for whom Christ died, and to pray more intelligently for their salvation. If this has been so, then its work will not stop with this number, but the fire it has kindled in your heart will continue to burn and find expression in more fervent prayers

"But," you may say, "what shall I do for up-to-date information? I like to pray for real and urgent needs. Fuel is needed to keep a fire burning really brightly."

You can write to the Society in which you are specially interested, who will gladly send you literature. And you can also link on as a full member of the Fellowship of Faith to the Moslems. Then you will receive a Prayer Cycle booklet, and an Occasional letter, full of news from various parts of the Muslim world. Address your application to:—

The Ass. Secretary, F.F.M.,
A. T. Upson, Esq.,
8, Queen's Road,
Rayleigh, Essex.

Yours in the Master's Service,

THE EDITOR.

The Robe of Er Rashid

They say that long ago there was a king who reigned over a mighty kingdom: and all parts of his kingdom were subject to his rule, save only one far-off province, and this was instigated by a traitor into rebellion.

Now the king sent many a proclamation of warning to this province, and all passed unheeded, and at last he sent his own son with one last message of mercy if the rebels would lay down their arms. But in place of this there rose a fresh revolt, and in the midst of it the king's son was slain. And as he died, instead of wishing vengeance on his enemies, his message to his home was to ask that his death might be accounted as their death and that for his sake forgiveness might be accorded to those who would submit themselves in his name, and that then the blood that he shed might not be without avail.

And the king, by reason of the love and sorrow and pity that filled his heart, gave his seal that it should be as his son had desired, and he sent a messenger to the distant province to call certain rebels to his capital, where they could be made to understand fully what had passed, and that they might, if they made their submission, be sent to their own land as ambassadors, to bring others to submit to him.

Now among the first who were summoned was a band of four men who were brought to the king's chief city. And his will was that they should remain a month, and at the end of that time should be brought before him to make their submission. And during the month they were to weave, each for himself, the jelab (a long tunic reaching from shoulder to ankle) in which to appear. Now this was no hard thing to them, for the great industry of their own land was weaving, and every lad learnt it in his father's house. And the order was given to the four, that because their plea for forgiveness was in the blood that the king's son had shed for them, therefore the robe on each one was to be white, with one broad crimson border around it.

So the four looms were set up, after the fashion of their country in the room where they lodged, and a mass of wool ready for weaving was brought to them—some of the deep crimson and the rest as white as milk.

And that evening the four sat in consultation on their mat under the arcade of their room, but the faces of three looked dark and displeased in the moonlight.

And the eldest of them, whose name was El Khrati (which means 'He who is out of the road') said to the others, "O, my brothers, it is well that we should weave new robes in which to appear before the king and to own to him our submission, that it beseemeth us to make them after the fashion of our own country. And in our country, as ye know, we never wear crimson of this colour—it is outside our road—let us dye this white wool to the colours that are usual among us, then we shall be as ourselves, and not like strangers, when we go to appear before him. And as for the crimson, we will leave it out and lay it outside, we do not need it." And two of the other men agreed with his speech, and they took the crimson wool and hid it in a chest that stood in a corner of the room; only the youngest, whose name was Er Rashid (which means 'He who is rightly directed') did not help them and was silent, and remained pondering in his heart.

Now the next morning the men rose early and began dividing the white wool into five heaps, according to the five colours that they proposed to dye it, that is to say, lemon and orange and green and blue and deep purple. But Er Rashid's face was pale, and withal he came forward with a strong heart and said, "Give me first my part of the white wool; I will not have it dyed; I am going to weave my robe as the king commanded me." And he went to the chest, and took with reverent hand his portion of the crimson wool from its hiding place.

And El Khrati and the two others were exceedingly angry and cursed him for a foreigner and a renegade; but they could not force him to yield his portion, so they carried their own white wool to the dyers, and brought it back in two days

time tinted to the colours of the Arch of the Prophet (that is the rainbow), save only the crimson, and set it up on their looms. And in the meantime Er Rashid had woven the deep crimson border, and was working at the pure white texture that followed, and he bore in patience day by day their sneers and provocations and contempt, that only increased upon him as time went on. And in some strange way their hatred did not seem to touch him now, for as he wove his robe his heart was filled with love to the Prince who had pleaded for him in his hour of death, and this love overflowed in its turn to those who were hating him, so that he answered their scoffs with silence or with gentle words.

And in due time came the day when the four were summoned to appear before the king; and the three elder men walked proudly through the streets in their jelabs of many colours, sure at heart that the king would be pleased that they had come to make their submission, and would notice the pains and skill they had displayed in the weaving of their garments. But the face of Er Rashid bore the look of one who sees things that are hidden from his brethren—and in truth with the eyes of his heart he saw nothing but the distant battlefield where the Prince lay dying, and pleading for him, and for his people; and this seemed to him more present than ever, now that he wore his robe that spoke of the precious blood that had been shed.

And as the four stood side by side in front of the crowd that filled the audience chamber, a curtain was lifted and the king came in. And he looked at the four with a look that seemed to read their hearts and he asked them, "Tell me, O my people, what is in your minds, as to this matter of the surrender of yourselves for which you have come from afar."

So El Khrati answered and said, "O king, we have no king but thee, and thy kingdom alone shall remain. We are in the way of those who may have been rightly directed, and we have woven ourselves robes of fair colours wherein to appear before thee; therefore do we account ourselves to be submitted unto thee."

But the king answered, "Of a truth if ye and the house of your fathers had kept in the past all the laws of the kingdom, then might this submission have sufficed. But have ye forgotten that ye have sinned grievously? I hear nothing in your words that makes mention of the past."

Then El Khrati answered and said, "Of a truth we know that we have sinned; but thou art the merciful and compassionate one, and to thee do we come for help."

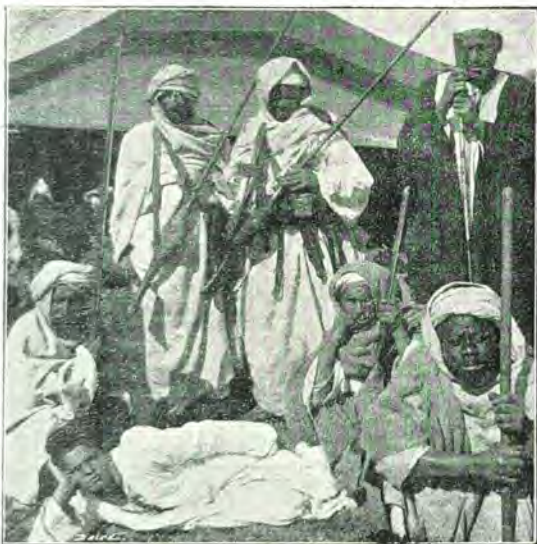
Then said the king, "My mercy and my compassion have chosen unto themselves a way in which the remembrance of your sin can be blotted out. It is through the blood that my son shed for your land. That blood cries to my heart for mercy, and not for vengeance. You may not understand how this can be, but I tell you that the only way that you can come boldly thus into my presence is by the way that he has opened for you in his dying. Had you of a truth submitted unto me, you would of necessity have appeared before me in the manner that I have commanded, and would have woven to yourselves the robes of crimson and white wherein to draw near. Where is then the submission of which we speak? I see neither the crimson nor the white save in the raiment of one of you"—and the king looked with love and tenderness at Er Rashid and said to him, "Speak, O my son."

And Er Rashid answered, "O my Lord the King, I have nought to say; I am unworthy to come before thee—look not on me—look on this crimson that I bring as my plea, and in thy great pity count my guilty past as the snowy whiteness for the sake of thy son's blood. And send me back to my land to tell my brethren of the mercy thou hast shown us through him."

And the king answered, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt, thou hast brought me the plea that is above every plea. Go back, with my authority to all who will submit at heart, and will take my way of mercy even as thou hast done." And then and there Er Rashid knelt before the king, and his face shone as the sun as he gave up his whole life to this new sacrifice, no matter what it might cost him.

But the other three stood by with looks of gloom and displeasure, and the king turned to them sadly and said, "I have offered you one way of mercy and I have no other to offer, and ye have added now to your sins this blackest sin of all, that ye have set at nought my son, and have trampled in your hearts on the blood that he shed for you. Your beautiful garments can avail you nothing, for there is in them no mention of that blood, and your submission is but in word, while ye refuse the mark of submission that I have appointed. You have failed in my test, You have sent your own punishment before your face, and it awaits you." And the king signed to his jailer to lead them away into the prison house till the day of judging should come.

From 'Story Parables' by I. L. Trotter.
[By kind permission of the Nile Mission Press].



Desert Tribesmen



R

Ramadan

This is the name of one of the months in the Muslim calendar. During this month you will often see people acting like the two in the picture. You can see that they are looking towards the horizon and longing for the sun to set. Beside them are two flat loaves of bread and a nice dish of stew, but they must not start to eat or drink until the sun has set.

This fast is one of the commands which Mohammed gave to his followers and most of them obey it implicitly. It is very hard to do this in the summer time when the peasants working in the fields may not have anything to eat or drink during the day, and at night they do not get much sleep because they have several meals then to try to make up for the fasting by day.

After eating and drinking from sunset till well after midnight, the people usually fall asleep, and then very early before the dawn, watchmen go round the streets with large noisy rattles which they shake with great gusto to wake folk up to have a meal before the fast begins again.

S

Sheikh



This man is a sheikh. You can tell this by the clothes he wears, but especially by his head dress. This consists of a little crimson felt cap with a blue tassel, and round it is wound a fine white linen scarf with a picot edging. Sometimes one sees a Sheikh wearing a green scarf round his head instead of a white one. This means that he is a direct descendant of the prophet Mohammed's old family, or that he has been on a pilgrimage to Mecca, in Arabia. His long coat is often made of rich silk material, and may be of any colour blue, purple or red. The underneath robe is usually of some bright striped material.

He has been trained at the Ashar University in Cairo for perhaps as many as twelve years. He is able to teach the Qur'an and explain it to people. He has also studied his own language, Arabic, and knows the grammar and composition of it very well.

So if ever you go to Egypt you may have a Sheikh like this to teach you how to read and write the Arabic language.



T

Tarboosh

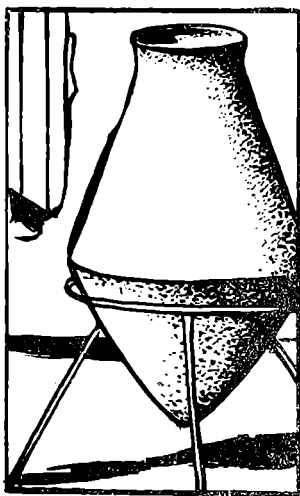
This is the name of the hat this boy is wearing. It is made of bright red felt and has a black tassel hanging down the back. This has been for some time the usual kind of head-gear to be worn in Egypt by all men and boys of the middle-classes, especially in the towns. There are special shops where they are made and where they can also be cleaned, ironed and reblocked if they get out of shape.

The policemen wear them and they add a nice touch of colour to their rather sombre navy winter uniforms. In the summer when it is very hot in Egypt the policemen wear white uniforms and then they are given white covers to put on top of their tarbooshes with a flap at the back to protect their necks from the sun. The soldiers, who wear khaki uniforms, are given khaki covers for their tarbooshes.

In England boys take their hats off in school, but in Egypt they keep them on indoors, and when they go to the mosque they keep their tarbooshes on but take their shoes off!

Z

Zeer



This funny-looking thing is called a **zeer**. It is a large vessel holding four or five gallons of water, and it is made of clay. It is porous, which means it is full of minute holes, so that the water is very gradually seeping through all the time. The outside is therefore damp to touch, and this prevents air getting in. So the water is kept cool in summer, as the hot air in the atmosphere cannot reach the water and heat it.

Then you will notice that the bottom of it is pointed, so that a bowl or other container can be put underneath to catch the drops which trickle down all the time.

Many people have zeers in their houses and they are also to be seen near railway stations, police stations and other places where people gather, so that they can slake their thirst.

I can assure you when the temperature begins to go above 100 degrees you get very thirsty and are most glad to have a nice cool drink.

“JENNIE” de Mayer of much loved memory

(obit May 3rd, 1951)

It was one afternoon in Jerusalem during the middle thirties that my wife came to my study (in the Newman School of Missions) and told me there was an elderly lady, named de Mayer, recently from Russia who did not seem quite English-speaking. “Jennie” had been talking Russian mostly for the previous eight years, though language with her quickly righted itself. In Jerusalem she wanted to study Arabic—she was one of our few students on the “seventy” line. Together we went to see her and I ventured the query, “Not the great Miss de Mayer?” “No,” she replied, “the very little one.” The story goes further back than that—to one Sunday in Cairo in the hot summer of 1916, when Mrs. Zwemer had invited me to lunch; and I met Dr. Zwemer in the lift on the way up to their flat. He had a postcard in his hand, which had found its way through to Cairo from somewhere in Central Asia. He waved it at me with the remark that it was from one of the most remarkable women he knew. She was Eugenie de Mayer, who after other forms of Christian work (which took her across Siberia), had lost her heart to the Muslim world. Had she not gone with the pilgrims to Jidda on two occasions as a Red Cross worker in Russian boats? In Central Asia she had become the friend of Uzbeks and others, of whom I knew next to nothing. “It is people like this,” added Dr. Zwemer, “whom it is worth while to pray for.”

From time to time Dr. Zwemer gave us news of “Jennie.” and then one day there came a letter with the news that on her return to Russia, she had been arrested and imprisoned—shut away as it transpired from Christian fellowship for nearly a decade. But her Christian witness continued unabated. It was not for nothing that she chose the **nom de plume** of **Shaheeda**. She was “witness” and “martyr” both rolled into one. A few months after she had grown acclimatized to social Christian comradeship in the Holy City she told her story to a group of praying friends.

Her worst experience was when for six months she **lived** on six foot of board in one room along with sixty women—and every misdemeanour of anyone was written down against the whole lot. “Jennie” said that she shuddered to think how her “crime sheet” must read, till suddenly she knew what vicarious punishment had meant to her Lord—just something of it—something that made all the difference then and afterwards, when she came to live in Jerusalem close to the Church of the Resurrection. Eugenie de Mayer was one of a family of six—her father Swedish, her mother with a double strain inherited from Germany and Holland. She and her two sisters were brought up in St. Petersburg (as it then was), and the trio lived to make their mark in the world. The eldest eventually became a doctor in Geneva. The youngest (Mrs. Sonia Howe) was married to an Irish clergyman, who ministered to British communities in several parts of the world.

How well we remember having breakfast in Paris with this sister. When Mrs. Howe heard of how “Jennie” was already comporting herself in Jerusalem, helping all and sundry, she told us that she had been doing that all her life. She was but six years old, when she found a mangy puppy in the streets of the Russian capital and gave it her own little bed—somewhat to the discomfiture of her parents, who were dining away from home and returned to find the future “Red Cross worker” doing her best to make the puppy feel comfortable! That was “Jennie” de Mayer all over.

For her declining, though not reclining, years, she lived in Canada (among the Mennonites when possible). Her letters went to missionary friends around the world, just as in prison she had “confounded” the authorities with her correspondence (sometimes accompanied by cheques) to lonely missionaries. She insisted on having her share in the last “Morris” we had in Palestine. During the Jerusalem days she lived mostly in the Muristan, close by the Uzbekis and other Central Asian pilgrims (they remained her first love), who not finding funds to make possible their return home had been settled in Jerusalem since before 1914 and lived in a **zawiya** or lodge of their own. “Jennie” lost no time in procuring tracts in their own

language, some of which were from her own pen. The world at large knows little of many of its "famous women" It was in human hearts that her influence resided; that was partly the reason why she suffered with the sufferings of stricken world. There were not only the lonely Uzbekis, whose faces lighted up, when she went to the Temple Area and found them on duty or passed their little stalls filled with laces, combs, and other small commodities. There was the Abyssinian boy, who was in trouble and had dived out of the porthole of a ship in Port Sudan, and eventually reached Jerusalem through Egypt, walking miles of the long route, and found his "friend"; or there was old Mrs. Einsler up in the eighties, who had lived in Jerusalem all her life, daughter of the Dr. Schick who made the models of the Temple (which delighted "Jennie") and located the Pool of Bethesda. Mrs. Einsler took her into her home and life and was the better for it.

Two things remain. There was the somewhat captivating way she had in talking—which sometimes peeped out in public-speaking—for when she was sure the other party would either do what she so much wanted or **must** agree with what she was about to say, she would preface it all with a confident, questioning "Yes," framed in a way that would not brook denial. More important, and so essential for those whose lives are spent on the Mission Field, where people do not always see eye to eye, "Jennie" seemed **intuitively** to realise that human goodness taught or caught in Christian living, was not confined as dogma is so often, for she recognised that where doctrinal gulfs were wide, there was no fissure in spiritual things; and where she sensed an underlying loyalty to the Person of the Lord, to the holder of that loyalty, through all vicissitudes, she remained unutterably loyal herself.

ERIC F. F. BISHOP,

The University, Glasgow.



A Bible in Syria

Near the centre of Damascus, that stronghold of Islam, the Bible Society were able to open a small shop some two years ago. A young man was placed in charge whose father had been won for Christ through the British Syrian Mission. Yusuf, too, was taught and trained by that Mission and now he is trusted with this wonderful opportunity of standing for his Master in a city where Satan is entrenched. The shop is



modern and attractive, and has a small room behind where conversations can be held with enquirers in private. These are sometimes started through passers-by being arrested by a poster displaying an open Bible on a black background with the simple words below it—**The way out of the dark.**

One day Yusif was sitting in the front part of the shop when he saw from the window two Moslem Sheikhs pointing at the shop, spitting on the ground and speaking to each other so angrily and loudly that people started to gather round them. The following is Yusif's own account of what happened next: "Fearing the consequences of such a gathering in front of the shop, I hurried out and invited the two Sheikhs in. As soon as they entered I asked them why they were so angry. They answered: 'Every pious Muslim should be like us when he sees that here, in the holy city of Damascus, there is a shop like yours with a big sign-board bearing the words **Holy Bible.** These words should not be displayed here.'

'If you say this,' I replied, 'you show that you are not respecting your own Koran and will be judged by God for this neglect.'

They grew even more angry and said, 'We shall see that a petition signed by all the Sheikhs of Damascus is presented to the Government, demanding the closing of this shop and the removal of this signboard, but . . . what do you mean by saying that we shall be judged for not observing our Koran?'

'I mean that your Koran mentions our Holy Book many times with the greatest respect, but you say that it is a bad thing and should be removed. What would be left of the Koran if you took away from it the words of our Holy Book? Don't you see that you are acting against your own religion by doing this?'

'Well,' continued one of them, 'Why don't you have your shop in the Christian quarter instead of having it here?'

'It is shameful to ask me this question,' I answered. 'When foreigners were masters of this land you were always saying that they divided us by creating among us religious fanaticism. Now the foreigner is no longer here, but you are feeding this fanaticism more than ever by what you are saying.'

Don't you know that we are all sons of the same beloved Syria, that we should live in peace together, and that each one of us is free to settle himself where he can work best? Don't you see that I am here in a quarter with a largely mixed population, composed of Germans, Italians, English, Americans, Armenians, Greeks, Arabs, Kurds, who will all buy my books? Or do you want me, in order to please you, to sell all sorts of bad books like the library over the street there, or to open a bar like my neighbour next door? To these people you dare not say anything, but when you see a shop selling holy books you become angry, you, Sheikhs of the religion, instead of helping me in this great task.'

They began to feel ashamed of themselves and one of them asked in a conciliatory tone: 'But why don't you sell the Koran as well if you sell all the holy books?'

'But nobody is allowed to touch the Koran except those who are circumcised! You know,' I added, 'that we Christians only believe in the circumcision of the heart. So how can you expect me to handle the Koran and sell it? You do not even want it to be sold but to be given away!'

Then they became very respectful, and even apologised for their former attitude, saying that we were indeed all brothers of the same country and that we should live together as such. My joy was great when two weeks later one of them came back and bought a copy of the Bible."

ELSA M. THOMSON,
British Syrian Mission.