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Challenge
and
Counter
Challenge



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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.

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**NOT WANTED
ON
VOYAGE**

S.S. _____

Passenger's
Name ...

I wonder how many young people in England have any idea of what it means to be brought up in a Muslim land. Perhaps some of our boys at home would prefer it, since boys in Muslim lands are very spoiled and never punished! But girls—no, I don't think any of you girls would care to have been born a Muslim. In this country girls are definitely **NOT WANTED**. When a boy is born the news is hailed with joy, and the happy parents are greeted with congratulations on every side. But when a girl is born, her entrance into the world is met with a stony silence. Her birth is considered to be the will of Allah (God), and a misfortune which must be stoically borne! Of course, nowadays some Muslim folk are more enlightened and the advent of a daughter, especially after several sons, is greeted with joy; but this is not the general rule.

Then during childhood the girl naturally accepts her inferior position. She knows it is not her brother's place, but hers, to help with the work. She is entirely ignorant, and accepts that also as the natural condition of her sex, and has no ambition to be educated. Although her brothers may bathe in the river she certainly may not, and therefore she is indescribably filthy. The condition of the more wealthy Muslim girl is scarcely any better, for she is not free to wander about the countryside or play in the streets. Oh no, she must remain at home, and if she ventures outside, must be clad in a cloak called a "burka" which covers her from head to foot, with only two little windows, covered

by net, through which she can see the world, but no one can see her.

Then the next step is marriage. This usually takes place about the age of 14. How nervous the young girl must be as the great day approaches. She has never seen her husband before; she does not know whether he will be handsome or ugly, a youth or an old man who has already had several other wives. She does not know whether he will be kind to her or beat her. She just knows that she is to leave her home and become the property of a strange



Miss Drew with some of her Kashmir friends

man. I have seen several Muslim weddings, but never a happy bride. I remember being invited to a wedding next door to my home away up over the Himalayas. The bride, a girl of about 15, was arrayed in pretty silk clothes, with a veil hiding her usually handsome face. She and her lady friends were entertained to a lavish feast in one room, while the bridegroom and his men friends were entertained similarly in another room. All feasted heartily but the little bride ate nothing. People spoke to her but she answered in mono-syllables. One of the girls lifted her veil,

and such a face of misery I never saw. How many English brides look like that on their wedding day? Before the wedding the bridegroom's friends come to tear her away from her parents to take her to her new home. She weeps bitterly and struggles to go back. Of course this is mainly play-acting for it would show lack of filial duty for a young girl to leave home willingly. But nevertheless it must be a tremendous thing for a young girl to leave her parents and venture forth on the great unknown.

And for the rest of her life she is the "property" of her husband. Of course some husbands are kind to their wives, but the majority are not. Yes, she is literally his property, and he may and does beat, punish and divorce her, as he sees fit. We have frequently seen the results of the Muslim's idea of disciplining his wife, as a young woman has arrived all tears and bruises at our Mission dispensary.

And what is their shut-in home life like? What do these Muslim women talk about among themselves? The future political condition of Kashmir? The most exciting news in *The Times*? The advance of Communism in Asia? Atomic energy or the hydrogen bomb? No, they know nothing of any such matters, not even of their own religion. Their talk must be exclusively of their husband, and children, their neighbours and the latest local scandal. How blank their minds must be!

And yet we can help them. Oh yes, we can bring them the message of Christ's Gospel. We have to explain it so simply : just a story with the flannelgraph, expressed as for little children, telling why Christ came into the world. They are slow to respond, but through your prayers God can cause them to understand the wonderful story. And then as the Muslim people are won for Christ, the conditions of their women and girls will alter, and they will have the opportunities and freedom which girls at home enjoy because of the liberty which emanates from the Gospel of Christ.

MISS N. DREW,
*Central Asian Mission,
Bandipur, Kashmir.*



Batting and Batmen

When you come to think of it, it is quite clear why the Army camps in Egypt were usually out in the deserts, well away from the very fertile parts of the country. The water that makes the land so productive often has to be brought by canal to places that it would not reach in the natural river channels. After going to all the expense and bother of digging canals and keeping them clear it would be wasteful to give up large areas of rich farm lands for Army camps which could just as well stay on the edges of the barren wilderness.



Water . . . brought by Canal

What I am getting at is that out there we were not able to have grass cricket pitches, but had to make do with a matting wicket laid out on a fairly flat stretch of desert. There was a grass cricket ground at the Gezira Sporting Club in the centre of Cairo, but that was kept for the big matches in which many well-known Test and County players took part. The only one of these who was ever in the same camp as myself however was the younger Graveney, who with his brother was often in the Gloucestershire 1st XI last season.

Matting wickets take some getting used to, although when they are set on hard sand that is free from stones the ball comes through very truly, the spin bowlers particularly getting little help from the pitch. Fast bowling is generally most effective though anything short of a length usually rises quite sharply and simply asks to be hooked.

This article is not meant to be an account of beautiful hot afternoons in the spring months, when we pretended we were playing cricket with the local club or village side. It is about batmen, not batsmen, that we are going to talk about! The idea behind having a batman is that an officer should always be a good example of smartness, for he is often too busy to take as much care of his appearance as he should. So the tradition has grown up that a batman is allotted to certain officers to help them always to be smartly turned out. In the United Kingdom and in active service units, the batmen are British troops, but in base camps abroad they are often native workers.

The first Egyptian batman who had the job of looking after me for some time, was a stocky man about 5ft. 4ins. tall, and used to answer when we called out "Ba-shir"! He had that deep bronze complexion that one expects of men whose life has been spent out in the sun and wind, though I doubt if he had been far away from Cairo for very long. His dark skin was deeply wrinkled, and though he was probably not much beyond middle age, his thick walrus moustache was turning grey. As it drooped somewhat, he had the air of being rather surly, but he was usually quite cheerful, and when he smiled a row of gold fillings glinted through the whiskers.

The poor man seemed to feel the cold first thing in the mornings for he would come in arrayed in a variety of pull-overs and scarves under his outsized jacket. In the colder weather particularly he preferred a pair of baggy trousers to his long galabiyya. On his head he usually wore a little round cap that I believe the girls call a Juliet cap. It was a little embroidered affair at any rate. With this in the middle he wound a length of white cloth round his head into a turban. The only other thing about him that is still clear in my mind is that he had a thin curtain ring through the upper part of his left ear. It looked rather as if he had been hanging curtains one day and not knowing what to do

with a spare ring he had over, had stuck it through his ear just as a busy grocer might lodge a pencil behind his ear when he wants both his hands free.



*A typical Egyptian servant wearing
a long galabiyya*

There came a time, however, when Bashir had to be left behind, as, with his noble assistance, kit and stores were loaded into trucks and camp moved from the Cairo district out towards the Suez Canal. Later on he arrived in the new camp, but by that time the tent I was in had one, Mohammed, as batman.

This zealous upholder of Islam was tall, angular and silent, very different from quick little Bashir. He almost

always wore a flowing galabiyya reaching right down to his ankles, and on his head he wore a red tarboosh (or fez). Never a willing worker, it was not long before he saw in the fact that I prayed by my bedside a possible excuse for avoiding duties. He commented favourably on my action and quickly followed it up by pointing out that Friday was his sabbath so of course I should not expect him to do anything that day!

A devout Muslim, blind to spiritual truth, would sum up Mohammed's position. He had some kind of respect for Christianity, but he saw in it nothing more than Islam offers—a set of rules and a pious hope. There was no knowledge of deliverance from sin, nor of the great gift of freewill, far less any idea of a personal Saviour, Who gave Himself so that all who wanted to be free from sin could be saved through the worthiness of the Lord Jesus dying in their place. What irksome things religions other than Christianity must be! We have freedom from sin, and friendship with God Himself through the Lord Jesus Christ, while all they have is a lot of regulations which even if they keep perfectly can never give them eternal life such as we enjoy even now. Oh how these people need to be told of what has already been done for them on the Cross of Calvary.

ALAN EAST,
(All Nations Bible College).



*Boys from Kargil (in best clothes)
amongst whom Miss Drew works*

No. 4. PROPHETS.

Islam has six major prophets with special titles for each :—

- Adam, the chosen of God.
- Noah, the preacher of God.
- Abraham, the friend of God.
- Moses, the spokesman of God.
- Jesus, the spirit of God.
- Muhammad, the Apostle of God (Rasul Allah).

The Qur'an also speaks of the last as Khatam Al Anbiyya—the Seal of the prophets. Before we turn to our Bibles we note :—

(1) The inferior and incorrect title given to the Lord Jesus Christ.

(2) The supreme position usurped by Muhammad.

The Lord Jesus is the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega (*Rev. 1.8*).

NABI. The word prophet in Hebrew (NABI) is used 315 times in the Old Testament. Let us look up a few references and see what we can learn.

N. The NATURE of the office.

Genesis 20.7. He is a spokesman for God to men, and to God for men.

Exodus 7.1 and 2. Aaron is Moses' mouthpiece.

Deut. 18.18. Here it is perfectly expressed: "I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him".

Acts 3.20-26. Peter declares this prophecy fulfilled in the Perfect Prophet the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 12.50. "Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak".

All the Lord Jesus said about Creation (*Matt. 19.4*) about Noah (*Matt. 24.38*) Lot (*Luke 17.28-32*) Jonah (*Matt. 12.40*) the Old Testament generally (*Matt. 5.18*) was the Father's Word. No wonder any soul who rejects the words of This Prophet is to be cut off (*Deut. 18.19. Acts 3.23*).

It is interesting to note in the Nature of this office that God has room for Women too; read *Exodus 15.20, Acts 21.9*. See also *Acts 2.17. 1 Cor. 11.5*.

and Islam

- A. The ABUSE of God's plan for a prophet.
Look up *Deut. 13.1-5*. There would be false prophets whose prophecies would come true but whose motives would be evil; to lead away from the Lord. They would prophesy smooth things—progress, worldly success, evolution.
1 Kings 18 tells us the lovely story of Elijah alone versus the false prophets of Baal.
1 Kings 22 the thrill of Micaiah, the true prophet first mimicking the false prophets, and then boldly declaring God's judgments on Ahab the sinner.
Jeremiah 14.14-15. Jeremiah the true prophet who prophesies ruin for Jerusalem has much to say of the false prophets and their abuse of their high office.
- B. The BAPTISM of the Spirit.
So we come to this that a real prophet must know the Baptism of the Spirit.
Numbers 11.25-29. "When the Spirit rested upon them they prophesied.
Look up also *Micah 3.8* and *Zechariah 4.6*.
- I. The INSISTENCE of God's prophets.
With one voice they declare the glory of One Blessed Person, the Messiah Jesus . . . His Deity, His Death, and Glorious Resurrection.
David (did you realise he was a prophet?) speaks of His Atoning Death in *Psalms 22.16* and of His Triumph over death *Psalms 16.10-11*.
Daniel (is this another surprise?) also speaks of His Death in *chapter 9.26* of the book which bears his name.
Isaiah, of course you all know that wonderful *chapter 53, verse 5*, speaks of His Death, and *verse 12* of His Triumph. But he also mentions it again in *chapter 25.8*.
Zechariah (12.10) prophecies of His Death, and *Hosea (13.14)* of His Triumph, while *Jeremiah (23.6)*, *Micah (5.2)* and *Isaiah (7.14, 9.6)* emphasise His Deity.
Finally, The Lord Jesus Himself tells us of this Insistent Theme of "all the prophets" (*Luke 24.27* and *44*) a glorious crucified and risen Saviour. Praise His Name.

Hassan learns to De-horn Calves

Hassan was watching a baby calf being de-horned.

"It's a shame", he said. "They look much better with horns. I'm glad that the man who was supposed to have de-horned Subha didn't do a good job. Look at her lovely horns".

Hassan liked Subha. He had known her since she was a small calf and he thought that everything about Subha was a model for all cows. Still, work was work, and he helped hold the calf on which a man was working. The man rubbed what looked like a piece of chalk on the calf's head, just at the place where the horns would normally begin to appear in a short time. As this "chalk" burned the calf slightly she struggled a little and Hassan hadn't any more time to think. It was all over in a couple of minutes—less trouble than having a tooth out—and the calf was running around again.

A few days later the missionary met Hassan in the barn yard. He was looking at Subha with anger glinting through the tears in his eyes.

"What's up, Hassan?"

"Subha horned me", he burst out, more mortified at this betrayal of trust than at the physical pain.

"But surely such beautiful things as Subha's horns wouldn't hurt you, Hassan? You know yourself said only a few days ago that it was a shame not to let the calves' horns grow"!

"Yes, but I didn't know then how much horns can hurt. And she was only playing with me too. I'm glad she wasn't really angry".

"Well, do you think Subha would look better without her horns, Hassan?"

"No", thoughtfully, "I like her horns. But they're dangerous. I think perhaps it's best to de-horn baby calves after all. I'd rather have them safe; and, anyhow, they do look nice without them. Look at 'Owleera' over there. She's nice, and she hasn't any horns".

"Then you agree that it might be well to de-horn the next calf when it is born"?

"Yes, I think so".



“I like her horns; but they’re dangerous”

Shortly afterwards another calf was born and Hassan was shown how to rub the “chalk” on the right place and how to find the correct spot to do it, so that her horns would not grow. As they worked together Hassan learned a deeper lesson.

“You know, Hassan”, said the missionary, “we human beings are much like calves and cows”.

“Oh”, said Hassan, wondering what was coming next. The missionary had a strange habit of telling him he was like all sorts of things. He couldn’t think how he could possibly be like that little fluffy beast in front of them, but he supposed he’d soon learn.

“You remember how you said a little time ago when we de-horned the last calf that you thought horns were beautiful, and that it was a shame to stop them growing?”

“Yes”, he replied, rather annoyed that the subject should have been brought up again, “but don’t you remember that I have changed my views since then?”

“Well, perhaps you have—yes, I think you have. But let me tell you something else. You know there are lots of people in the world who like to hold on to some things in their lives which are just as dangerous as horns on a cow. They are even more dangerous, because they hurt themselves as well as others, but they hold on to them because they are attractive. Tell me, Hassan, what would you like to do, best of all, every day of your life?”

Hassan was but a little boy, only slowly learning to be obedient and he didn't wait long before replying. Looking up with a mischievous grin he said: “To do ‘ala kefi’”. This expression which Egyptians love means “to do exactly as I like”.

“Just so”, went on his companion, “and although that seems to you to be something as necessary to your happiness in life as you once thought Subha's horns were to her beauty, let me tell you it is just as dangerous”.

“How so?” asked Hassan, genuinely puzzled.

“Well”, continued the missionary, “you remember the story of the Prodigal Son, don't you? How he left home and ended up feeding pigs?”

“Served him right, too”, agreed Hassan.

“Then tell me. Do you remember why he left home?”

Hassan thought for a while, then: “I suppose it was because he wasn't happy at home and wanted his money so as he could go away and do ‘ala kefu’”.

“Exactly. The start of all the trouble was that he wanted to do just as he liked. Most sin starts that way, Hassan. Do you remember too the story of Cain and Abel? Why wasn't Cain's sacrifice accepted? It probably cost him as much as Abel's. The point was he wanted to serve God as he pleased not as God required. So you see how harmful it can be to do just what we want to do—to be selfish”.

“Yes”, said Hassan, “but what can we do about it? We can take the calves's horns off before they start, but who can take selfishness out of us?”

“That's just the difficulty, Hassan. We can't do it ourselves any more than a calf can get rid of its horns, but we can let our Master, Jesus, do it. It hurts a bit at first, of course, just like it hurts to de-horn a calf, but its worth it. And really, don't you think these calves look just as nice

without horns? I'm sure they are quite happy too, because its not so easy for them to quarrel when they haven't got them. And boys, too, who have had selfishness taken out of their lives by our Master aren't as quarrelsome, and they are much happier, too. Don't you think so?"

"I guess you're right again", said Hassan.

A. WHITEHOUSE,

Egypt General Mission.



Harvest Time

Customs in Bible Lands

The *Enterprise* carried us swiftly through beautiful country, giving us just sufficient time to glance at the hedgerows and streams that appear everywhere in the Emerald Isle. The abundance of green vegetation reminded the traveller of the barrenness of Eastern lands, especially Syria, and brought a song of praise to one heart at least, for had God not promised us "waters in the wilderness" and "streams in the desert"?



The Barrenness of Eastern Lands

Suddenly the train came to a standstill and everyone began to unstrap baggage. Several neatly dressed officers in navy blue uniform boarded the train and went from compartment to compartment. "Anything to declare, Madam?" Half an hour later the train gathered speed to make up for lost time. "What a bother customs are", exclaimed one passenger to another. "Yes, indeed; but what about the Customs in other lands? I do not mean places where officials charge duty on certain articles, but the customs of the people". "And what do you know of such customs?" "I

happen to know quite a lot about customs in Arab lands for I've lived for several years in Syria", answered the young missionary. "Please do tell me about them", pleaded the traveller becoming interested.

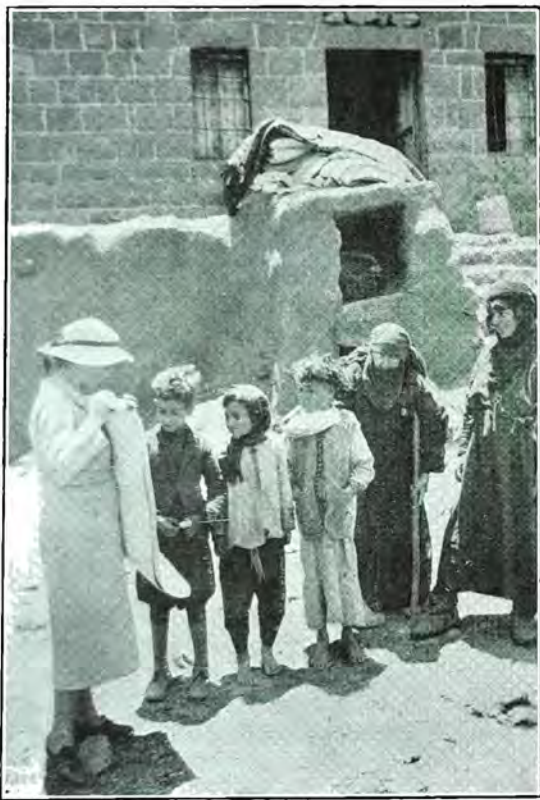
A missionary must know and understand the ways of the people among whom she works, for she is but a guest in their country and must act as such. In the Bible we have some very good advice given us about remembering to take the lowest place in case some more important person happens to come into the room. "How I wish the young people of today would remember that" interjected the listener, "they are so selfish". That may be so, but in Arab countries it is imperative that the visitor takes the seat nearest the door. It is their custom and some hostesses have almost to move Heaven and earth to get their guests to "come up higher". It reminds one of a verse in the Bible which says "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted".

Then there are customs with regard to visitors and especially men visitors, for the man in the East is the important person. Every woman must stand to attention when a male visitor arrives: he is, or will be in future, the honoured head of a house. "Honour to whom honour is due" is in keeping with the Scriptures, is it not? and a very good motto for everyone.

Life in Syria is not so complicated as life here, for the guest-to-be does not send a postcard in advance to announce the possibility of his arrival. He simply arrives and every possible comfort is given him. He is never asked how long he is going to stay either, that would be most rude. He is entertained every moment of his stay and many friends are called in to meet the visitor. When the main meal is prepared the host goes forth to call his invited guests to partake. It is all rather nerve-racking for the poor hostess and often she has to go quickly to a neighbour's house and say: "Friend, lend me three loaves, for a visitor has come to us". She had good intentions of baking on the morrow and had just sufficient bread for the morning meal, but alas the need is now and she must borrow. "Are there no bakeries?" asked the listener. "Of course not. In the villages every woman bakes for her own family".

"It must be interesting noticing the ways of the people", remarked the listener. "Yes, very, but after the first few

months one forgets the newness of everything and is taken up with the spiritual need of the people. Let me tell you how one little girl spread the good news in her village. The going was hard there, the women were so busy washing the clothes. We became friendly with three small girls in one house while the busy mother sat on the floor washing some small garments. We talked of the One Who can make black hearts white, but, alas, there was no interest aroused.



We turned to the children. With the aid of a small picture of the Good Shepherd with the words written at the top in Arabic 'I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd giveth

his life for the sheep' the message was clearly given. Then we popped the question: 'Who can say the verse without a mistake?' All had a try but only one succeeded and the small card became her very own. Later on we were sitting cross-legged on somebody's floor when about 15 youngsters in gay Arab dress descended upon us headed by this small girl carrying the little picture in great triumph. We soon discovered the reason for their coming, they had all been taught the verse by this small girlie. How true are the words of Scripture: 'A little child shall lead them'".

ELIZABETH MARTIN,
British Syrian Mission.

Overseas Mail

North-West China.
June, 1950.

DEAR ELDER BROTHER,

Such changes since I last wrote! General Ma Pu-fang went to America because he had to have an operation done by a foreign surgeon—at least that's what we were told. Then in came the new Government. They say we can still worship as usual, and so can the Christians. People from other parts of China whisper (no one dare say these things aloud!) that freedom won't last long.

All my grown-up cousins, that is most of the ones over 14 years old, have joined the army. The new Government is like the Han people have always been in calling our private armies "Brigands". They take food and money, and guns if they can, from anyone who has them of course. How are they to get things if they don't? The Government uses the taxes.

My uncle is more against the Christians than ever; he says the new Government is ruled by Europeans, and all Europeans are Christians. I am going to the Good News Hall whenever I can, though. I find peace there, and I do really believe that it must be God's way to do something we couldn't have thought of to make us able to come to Him. We couldn't have thought of His Living Word becoming Man to die for us. It still seems wrong to say "The Son of God", though I have read a chapter that

explains it. I mean the first chapter of John's Good News. That uses so many names for the One we have always called the Prophet Ersa—Word, Light, Life, as well as Son. Anyhow, he shows God to my heart.

I mustn't write more, letters have to be very light in weight to go by air. We can only send by air now, and I am not allowed to have a whole letter to myself. I hope this note will be passed to you all right.

Greetings from

YOUR CHINESE YOUNGER BROTHER.



“The Letter of Peace” a magazine carrying the Good News in Arabic to Moslem Lands