

5V
2612
L5
42-1

Life and Light for Woman

© Love of Love, unguessed, unsought,
Shaping Thy realm divine
Wherein my toil and hope and thought
May link themselves to Thine!
The worlds are Thine for weal or woe;
Thou rulest stars and sea;
Yet to my love Thou bendest low,
And Thou hast need of me.
—Mabel Carle.

**Woman's Boards of Missions
of the Congregational Churches**

BOSTON CHICAGO SAN FRANCISCO

VOL. XLII. JANUARY, 1912 No. 1

CONTENTS

Editorial Paragraphs	1
Woman and Islam. <i>By Elihu Grant</i>	9
Islam and India. <i>By Mrs J. P. Jones</i>	14
The Mohammedan Women of India. <i>By Dr. Julia Bissell</i>	18
Messages from Our New Workers. <i>India, Gwen M. Jones; Turkey, Isabelle Harley, Mrs. Alice Shepard Riggs, Helen Curtis</i>	21
JUNIOR WORK.	
Helps for Leaders. <i>By Mary Preston</i>	28
OUR WORK AT HOME.	
Mrs Spencer Feels the Contagion. <i>By Hazel Banks Northrop</i>	30
Suggested Programs for the Season 1911-12	33
Sidelights from Periodicals	34
Receipts	35

Board of the Pacific.	
Editorial Paragraphs	37
The Do-hisha Girls' School. <i>By Mary F. Denton</i>	39
Receipts	40

Board of the Interior.	
Our Mission Schools in Bombay. <i>By Anna L Millard</i>	41
The Fellowship of Saints. <i>By Gertrude Wyckoff</i>	43
Missionary Messages. <i>Mexico, Miss Nellie O Prescott</i>	47
Receipts	48

Woman's Board of Missions

704 Congregational House, Boston, Mass.

President

MRS CHARLES H. DANIELS, Wellesley, Mass.

Vice Presidents

MRS. N. G. CLARK, Boston
 MRS. JOHN O. MEANS, Auburndale, Mass.
 MRS. E. E. STRONG, Auburndale, Mass.

MRS. A. A. LINCOLN, Wollaston, Mass.
 MRS. J. L. BARTON, Newton Centre, Mass.
 MISS SUSAN HAYES WARD, Newark, N. J

Corresponding Secretaries

MRS. JOHN O. MEANS MRS. E. E. STRONG

Recording Secretary

Mrs. J. FREDERICK HILL, Cambridge, Mass.

Home Secretary

Miss E. HARRIET STANWOOD, Boston

Foreign Secretary

Miss KATE G. LAMSON, Boston

Editorial Secretary

Miss ALICE M. KYLE, Boston

Associate Secretary

Miss HELEN B. CALDER, Boston

Secretary of Young People's Work

Miss MARY PRESTON, Boston

Treasurer

Miss SARAH LOUISE DAY, Boston

Assistant Treasurer

Miss S. EMMA KEITH, Boston

Auditor

SAMUEL F. WILKINS, Boston

Directors

MRS. HENRY F. DURANT
 MISS CARRIE BORDEN
 MRS. JOHN F. COLBY
 MRS. HENRY D. NOYES
 MRS. F. E. CLARK
 MRS. NATHANIEL GREENE
 MRS. S. B. CAPRON
 MRS. JOSEPH COOK
 MRS. S. B. CAPEN
 MISS HELEN S. LATHROP
 MRS. JOHN E. BRADLEY
 MRS. CHARLES F. WEEDEN
 MRS. EDWARD C. MOORE

MRS. EVERETT E. KENT
 MISS S. EMMA KEITH
 MISS LUCY W. BURR
 MISS LILIAN G. BATES
 MRS. E. H. BIGELOW
 MRS. EMILY L. McLAUGHLIN
 MRS. FRANK H. WIGGIN
 MISS FRANCES V. EMERSON
 MRS. HENRY FAIRBANKS
 MISS CLARA E. WELLS
 MRS. FREDERICK M. TURNER
 MRS. WALTER N. SNOW
 MRS. E. C. ROGERS
 MRS. S. R. MILLS

MRS. BREWER EDDY
 MISS HARRIETTE W. TUTTLE
 MRS. FRANK GAYLORD COOK
 MRS. FRANK WOOD
 MRS. W. L. ADAM
 MRS. DAVID O. MEARS
 MRS. WILLIAM H. GREELEY
 MRS. WALTER FITCH
 MISS ELIZABETH MERRIAM
 MRS. CHARLES A. PROCTOR
 MISS ETHEL D. HUBBARD
 MRS. GEORGE E. SOPER
 MISS CLARA P. BODMAN

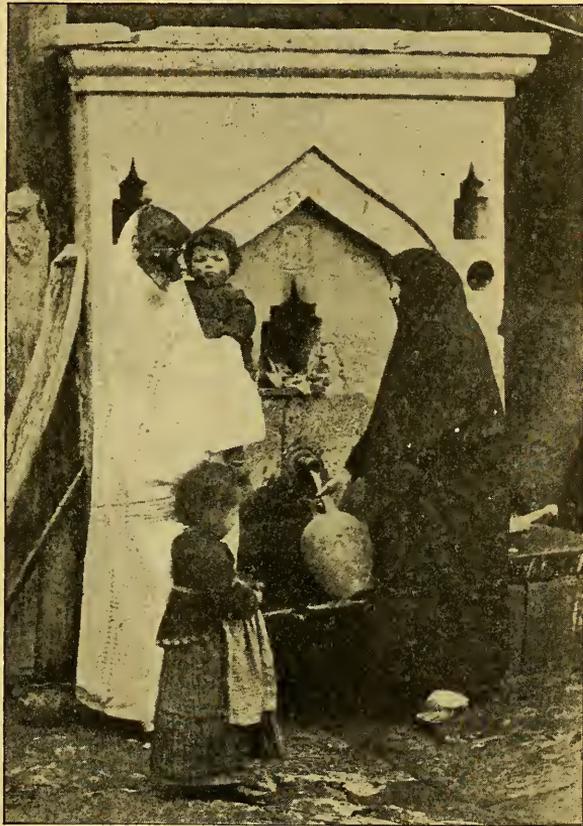
WOMAN AND ISLAM

BY ELIHU GRANT

Professor Grant, now at Smith College, is well fitted by his residence in the East to present this subject to our readers.

THERE were no Mohammedan women in the days of the early Christians. Islam or the religion of Mohammed may be said to have begun about six centuries after the Christian era. It speaks well for the early influence of Mohammed that the first Mohammedan woman was his own wife Khadija. And the religion seems to have been very creditable as long as she lived. Khadija was perhaps the first to encourage Mohammed to take his own experiences in deepest seriousness and she may well be called the Mother of Islam. As long as she lived she was the only wife of the Arabian prophet. After her death a great change came over the man and his followers. This was a change that especially affected women and determines the fate of tens of thousands of women to-day. For Mohammed yielding to his

polygamous passions, and, worse than that, identifying them with the will of God, determined to allow four wives apiece to Moslems and to reserve to himself the special indulgence of many more



MOSLEM WOMEN DRAWING WATER

than four. Following the jealousies that are always aroused when such vicious attention is given to sexual matters, it became the customary demand upon women that they go veiled and be secluded so far as possible from masculine view. This is logically in keeping with polygamous conditions. For the loyal husband of one wife is the protector of all womankind, but the lustful connoisseur is the enemy of woman. Thus



A MOSLEM FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR WITH HIS FAMILY

the practice and permission of the prophet menaces woman everywhere where any sect of Moslems is in control. Some devotees of that faith consider that the highest obligation of the faithful is the close following of the deeds of the founder. This is similar to the attempt in our religion to follow the precepts and practice of our Founder. When such ardent devotion is given it makes all the difference in the world what the private and public life of the founder was like. In some religions we deplore the fact that the believers do not follow closely the example of the leader. In the case of Moslems we congratulate many of them that they do not follow too closely some of their leader's practices. In thousands of tents and houses there is but one wife.

But still another evil is widely permitted that takes away some of the praise where there is apparent monogamy. We refer to the easy and often cruelly employed privilege of divorce by which a man may practically tell his wife that she is no longer wanted. He then takes another. Such marriages in tandem amount to the vice of polygamy except that they are not so expensive.

One must not suppose that all Moslem womanhood is crying out under the sense of intolerable injustice and woe. No such thing. The worst slaveries are oftentimes endured unconsciously or even willingly. Moslem women would usually be scandalized at the thought of any change from the age-long burdens upon them which we deplore.

A little Moslem girl, five years old, of whom we knew was very much distressed because a strange man had seen her face. Once when I strayed in a Moslem cemetery too near a corner where a group of veiled women sat I was followed with curses as I beat a retreat, though my distance seemed to me ample.

At another time while watching a procession of Moslems in the festival of the prophet Moses, I was standing in a crowd when I was suddenly made aware of an obscure group of women who shouted the warning, "*harem*," to me. Though there were Moslem men standing as near as I they probably dreaded my contaminating presence more because of my strangeness. But I rather think that in sheer mischief they wished to disturb me and see my discomfiture. Many of them are likely to be more like playful, spoiled children than mature women. But the formal chasm between the sexes is very considerable in Moslem lands as in most Oriental countries. It is most apparent in the cities, less so in the country villages, and least of all in the deserts.

It is only fair to distinguish between those Oriental customs which bind equally all women in that part of the world, and are as native to the Christian women of Asia as to any others, and those additional disabilities and ignominies which are peculiar to Islam. Moslem women are less free and probably less developed to-day than were the women in Arabia and Syria, say, in the days before Mohammed.

Moslem doctrine does not deny to women religious capacities and functions, but in the majority of instances Mohammed's practice has in effect blasted woman's hope of any development beyond the individual mind of that one who controls her worldly station at his will.

To turn now from these considerations to more general ones about the people of Mohammed, we can see how the women would be implicated

in the facts we observe. One will not live long in lands where there are both Christians and Moslems among the native people without noticing that the mass of the population, whether of one faith or the other, shares a common life in many customs, traditions and even beliefs. The problem is a deeper one than the mere opposition of two faiths. It roots in the impulses and lore of ancient peoples living for ages in much the same

environment and mixing their own degrees of ignorance and superstitions. Neither the Bible nor the Koran are the familiar authorities of tens of thousands whose legends and customary rules of procedure go back to primitive times. It is just as in our own country where there is a great body of lore and unconscious tendency that is heathen rather than Christian and that dates back, when investigated, to the barbaric European tribes from which we are sprung.

A pretty good rule for missionaries is to seek to understand the springs from which flow many currents of that popular virtue and error which control the native peoples of their fields. And, furthermore, to recognize to what a degree similar things are true of us in America. They will see



A MOSLEM VILLAGER

that often hints are disclosed which will help to a sympathetic correction of the evil. It is well to be generous with a parish rather than superior, to be frank than too much on the defensive and to take the method of working together with one's neighbors for the perfection of the moral life. With such a method one will arrive more naturally and hopefully at a practical comparison between the Christian and Moslem systems. From the ground of native beliefs up through the comparative test of the greater world faiths is a more promising way than a wordy theological dispute imposed from the top.

While at times it may be well to join the usual position that the Moslem Allah and our conception of God form a basis of union, at other times certainly it would be well when in courteous discussion with thoughtful persons to enter upon a candid search for an adequate conception of the nature of the Divine Being. To expand a people's idea of God along the lines of experience is a very great service.

The thing usually asserted by critics of Islam is that it permits of no inner growth and expansion, that its thought, its rules, its life are fixed within rigid lines never to be crossed without a revolution. However there are parties of Moslems in India and other countries who claim the opposite, that is, that Islam may be greatly improved and yet remain true to its genius. These two parties again correspond to tendencies within Christianity and much will depend in the working of the analogy on the personal stand taken by the Christian who labors among them.

This leads to another point about Islam. There are very many sects or denominations among them and much historic dispute lies behind them. It is imperative to know about the particular kind of Moslem with which one deals, as almost any statement made about a given Moslem might be contradicted from acquaintance with some other sect or development of Islam. For example the Moslems of Turkey and those of Persia are bitterly hostile to each other in a number of points which may lead to fatal results in the very city of Mecca where pilgrims of both countries meet. Or further how different would be a member of the ancient party of Assassins or of the modern Babists, or a brother of Es Senussi and a member of the Young Turkish party. Yet these would all be reckoned as Moslems.

The nearest Moslem effect upon Americans is the Babist or Bahaist movement which claims the devotion of a number of American women. The leader of this new movement is a Persian who has lived at times in Haifa or Acre, in Syria, and who is called the Bab or the door, presumably to God or truth. His very humane code is beautiful and a number of women of our country are his devotees. It is for the women of America to decide whether the religious and social spirit of our land shall be genuinely Christian or whether it shall follow some non-Christian ideal.

A GIRL, after being for a time in a mission school, exclaimed, her face all aglow, "O, I did not know school was like this. I feel that I have spent all my life in a corner."