There was published in Peking some time ago, a new book by a Moslem named Li T'ing Hsiang, which is not without interest as showing what an intelligent Moslem of the present day contributes towards the revival of Islam in China. The book is a collection of strange stories from the Koran and other "reliable histories," and is given a title which may be translated "Marvels recorded for exhortation to goodness." In his preface the compiler says: "Among men there are always a few at the extremes of wisdom and foolishness, but most of the people in the world are average people. In general it is the nature of men to be good and not evil, and it is men's inclination or disposition to love the good and hate the evil; if people are exhorted in accordance with this nature and disposition, there are none who may not be made good. The True Lord gave the Books and sent the prophets and made all the worthy and superior men on purpose to exhort people to goodness: but the minds of men are unstable and they often dislike what is old and delight in anything new. As regards the Koran and the Traditions and the books of the sages, men look at them in a cursory manner without finishing them, and in their reading they get tired and sleepy: if they see fiction or stories of something marvellous they are alert with double energy; their feelings are easily worked up to weep or pity, to sympathise or to be angry with the characters of the story.

As it is my duty to help in instructing and reforming people I have looked among my old books and selected some wonderful
stories with the purpose of arousing people from their lethargy, and I have made this book and called it 'Marvels recorded for exhortation to goodness.' The book is made up of selections from the Koran and other reliable histories, and although the stories are wonderful yet they are true, and while extraordinary, they are only a few of others equally so. They are all concerned with our religion and will serve to stir up the good in men's hearts and to reprove their evil thoughts: it is my wish that those who read this book may not regard it as an ordinary story book."

The book contains 50 selections, of unequal length and of differing values; as fables with morals something might be said for them; but when we are assured that they are "true" and that some are extracted from the "incomparable Book", every jot and tittle of which is perfect and to be believed, then we feel that they give a lamentable exhibition of the credulity and the standard of intelligence expected of the Moslem readers of China in this age of world-progress in other ways. A few selections are herewith given in translation to indicate the value of the book, and to show one of the latest methods of arousing interest and strengthening the faith in the Moslem religion in China.

1. Exalted Virtue Commands Submission.

A good man named Abdullah was traveling in company with other merchants on a trading trip, and as they came to a thicket among the hills those who were in front saw before them a lion asleep on the path; they were all afraid to proceed but turned back and fled. Abdullah was behind and as he came up he saw them fleeing and asked what was the matter, so they told him about the lion. Abdullah dismounted from his beast and walked up to the lion and took hold of it by the ear and said; "Begone! begone!" The fierce lion got up, and with head bent down and ears drooping, it wagged its tail and went off. The other merchants greatly wondered at this and asked Abdullah how it came to pass and he answered: "The Prophet said: 'If a man can fear God and cultivate himself to the utmost sincerity, then all things will obey his command: man is the most noble of all between heaven and earth, and the most intelligent of all creatures; if he is a perfect man, why need he fear a lion, which, although fierce, is only a beast.'" When they heard these words, they all acknowledged the loftiness of his virtue.

Comment. Men and all things in creation exist by the decree of God and are subject to the commands of God: but prophets
and worthies only are able to have perfect manhood and to be in harmony with God so as to completely follow all the commands of God; as they do this, all beasts are bound to respect and obey them.

2. Life Lengthened by Caring for the Starving.

In the time of the prophet Musa (Moses), there was an Israelite named Naibuer who was wealthy and liked to do good deeds and give alms; at 50 years of age he was still without a son on which account he was grieved and could not sleep at nights: his wife told him that the prophet Moses could prevail with God and he ought to go and ask for his interest in the matter of getting a son. The man followed this advice and went and besought Moses, who granted his request. After prayer, Moses said: “God will give you a son, but his life will be cut off on the day of his marriage”.

In his joy at the promise of a son, Naibuer forgot the sorrow contained in the prophecy, so did not speak of it. In due time a son was born, for which the father gave thanks and offered sacrifice and made a great feast to which relatives came with their congratulations.

When the son was grown up, Naibuer’s wife advocated an early marriage, to which the husband agreed, so with befitting ceremony the boy was betrothed to the daughter of a wealthy family and the day fixed for the marriage; it was then that Naibuer told his wife of the prophecy of Moses, on which she was greatly alarmed and wept unceasingly. Her husband said to her: “It is Fate; do not worry lest you make God angry; we can only submit.”

On the appointed day Naibuer was outwardly joyous with the guests, but in his heart he was much troubled. During the feast there appeared a student of the Book who, because his travelling money was all used up, had been three days without food and he could hardly walk but just crept up to the door and asked for food; Naibuer saw and pitied him and personally hastened down the steps and assisted him into the hall and quickly gave him food. When the man had eaten, in gratitude he secretly prayed for his benefactor and his descendants, desiring that the succession might continue without break: God granted this request and decreed added life to the son.

Naibuer went about that day with heavy heart, and could not sleep the whole night, but listened for the dreaded news; but,
on the day following there was no sickness, nor yet on the next day; so he enquired of Moses who asked God what was the reason why the expected had not happened, and God told Moses that he had been pleased with the sincere and good action of Naibuer in saving the starving, so he had granted the prayer of the student. Moses reported this and Naibuer praised God and hereafter was still more zealous and earnest in well-doing.

Comment. The giving of a single meal may be a very small matter and I would not deceive anybody by implying that it can in itself confer lengthened life for the giver; the Way of Heaven is not so easy as that. But when a man had been without food for three days he was in extremity, and although one meal may be but little, yet in this case to get it meant life, and not to get it meant death; hence a meal in such a case was the saving of a life. Moreover when Naibuer saw the man in such dire necessity he hastened to his relief and assisted him up the steps, his outward actions thus testifying to the sincerity of his heart. The Book says: "If you are compassionate to men, God will be compassionate to you"; and as this principle is true there can be no doubt about the lengthening of days told in this story.

3. The Story of Samson.

In the main this story follows the Scriptural account, but differs where Samson is captured and his body is cut up and his head is kicked about as a football; his heart was taken out and hung over the city gate. Although his body was dead, his soul was still conscious and he prayed to God saying: "O God Thou art the Compassionate: save in this bitter extremity; Thou art the Just, give blessing to the good and calamity to the evil; Thy great power is omnipotent, with Thee art the commands of life and death. When I was alive I left undone many good things, and I now pray that Thou, O God, will give me back my body and restore my life." God answered his prayer and gave a thousand times more strength than he had before: he gave a great shout at which the walls of the city fell down and the people were terrified; the opposers were all destroyed and the rest submitted. Samson then thanked God for His grace, and day and night cultivated virtue and worshipped unceasingly, and had years added until he died at the age of eighty-three years and four months.

Comment. The heart of man is difficult to fathom; even in jesting one should be on one's guard, and the closest conversation between husband and wife often has a way of leaking out, so
that one cannot be too careful. As a man Samson was lacking in wisdom and discretion so he came to grief at the hands of an ignorant but scheming woman. Yet the sincerity of his virtue was such as to move God to restore him to life in order that he might destroy the enemies and restore lustre to the correct Faith; so Samson may rightly be numbered among the prophets.

4. A Dead Priest Recalled to Life.

The Appointed Prophet Jesus in his travels came to a certain village and tried to instruct and reform the people who said to him that as he called himself a special prophet he ought to be able to show them some miracle. Jesus asked what they would like him to do, and they said that there was in the neighborhood a grave of a priest who had been dead over 1000 years, and if Jesus could call him back to life they would believe. Jesus said that God was all-powerful and this was only a small matter: so he went with them to the grave and after making two obeisances he lifted his hands in prayer and the grave opened and the dead man, whose name was Tulabu, came out of the cavity and knelt down before the prophet and repeated the Kalima—"There is no deity but God and Jesus is His Prophet." Jesus said to him: "You died as a Buddhist priest (probably priest of idolatry is meant but the term Buddha is used) over 1000 years ago, and now you have attained to the correct Faith: in your ordinary life you must have done something good, will you tell us what it is?" The priest puzzled over it for a time, then remembered and said: "When I was alive I was one day passing a mosque and stepping inside I saw a student of the Book who in weariness had fallen asleep leaning on the table under the lamp, and the Book was thrown on the ground; I cleansed my hands and lifted the Book up to the table and quietly retired without the student having awakened." Jesus said to all around: "Listen to this. Tulabu was a man on the wrong road, but he did one good act with the sincerity of which God was pleased, and therefore today he is called forth to life again and has attained the Faith." The people were all moved to repeat the creed that there was only one god and Jesus was the Apostle of God, and they all followed the holy Faith.

5. Salvation by Grace, not by Merit.

The angel Gabriel told Mohammed that in a cave on a certain island there was a devout man, an Abid, who had praised and worshipped God unceasingly for 400 years. The Prophet greatly
admired and asked what was the outcome of such devotion. The
angel said that in the afterworld God told this man that he would
have to enter heaven relying upon His grace upon which the Abid
replied that such was not in accordance with the Koran which said
that the world was a place in which to accumulate merit in order
to enter heaven; he had been working for 400 years, and if he now
simply depended upon God's grace, what was the good of all his
merit? He could enter heaven by means of his merit. so
why should he rely upon grace? God told him he could
go on trusting in his merit, and as the man proceeded toward
heaven he suffered much on the way from the heat of the sun
and from thirst, and at length meeting a man with some water, he
was so desperate that he parted with the merit of 200 years in
exchange for some water. Some time after drinking the water he
wanted to micturate but was unable to do so and suffered great
agony; he then saw a doctor and in exchange for relief he gave
his remaining merit of 230 years, and arrived at the gate of heaven
with nothing to his credit, when he became conscious of his
mistake and prayed God for forgiveness. God reminded him
that he had parted with all his merit for common things which on
the earth had been given to him freely, and after all he had noth­
ing of his own to trust to to enter heaven. On the man begging
for forgiveness and mercy, God forgave him and he was permitt­
ed to enter heaven, entirely by the favour of God.

Other stories of the fairy and fabulous kind are included in
the collection, including that of the man who was changed into a
women for twelve years and was changed to a man again, all while
his wife was cooking some fish; this being because he doubted
that Mohammed could have gone to the heavens and back in a
single night. Another story is from the "Arabian Nights" and
tells of the man who understood the language of his domestic
animals, and had to beat his wife for her importunate curiosity.
Perhaps enough has been given above to indicate the scope of
this new book and the fresh effort to stimulate the Moslems of
China.

ISAAC MASON.

"The Mohammedan has every right to expect that we should
make serious efforts to enter into his ways of thinking, before we
demand that he shall listen to us."

DR. KARL MEINHOF, African Mission.
About one third of all the Mohammedans in the world live in British India. The majority of them are of the Sunni sect, so that the downfall of the Sultan of Turkey and of the Sheik-ul-Islam was a serious blow to multitudes in India. The Moslems of India have however remained remarkably loyal to the British throughout the Great War and since.

Recently there have been very serious outbreaks between the Hindus and Moslems in India. They seem determined to offend one another, Moslems slaughtering kine in front of Hindu temples and Hindus parading with their music before Mohammedan mosques. The British keep the peace as far as possible, but incidents are constantly occurring.

Years ago there was serious rioting in Calcutta owing to a mosque being demolished. It had been built on a piece of land leased from a Hindu, and when the lease expired the ground was cleared for other purposes. After dusk when work had ceased the Mohammedan masons got together and rebuilt the mosque in one night! The next day there was serious communal rioting. At last the Government got the heads of the two communities together and made peace. The land was restored to its rightful owners and the mullahs proclaimed that no mosque was to be built on rented land. What would India do without a neutral Government?

Much Christian work is done among the Moslems of India, but it ought to be much more developed, as India affords probably the greatest opportunity in the world for this work. It is even said that it has in some parts declined owing to the demands of the mass movements among the outcaste population. But it is interesting to learn that outcaste converts have proved themselves keen sellers of Scriptures. In the autumn of 1926 they had a week’s campaign, in which missionaries joined them, and many thousands of Gospels were sold to Moslems. In a British regiment the sweeper boot-boys sold about a hundred Gospels and Testaments to British soldiers!

Dr. Zwemer’s Conferences throughout India this winter will doubtless greatly stimulate the work. The “Missionaries to Muslims League” has now 567 members, most of them working
in India. Its little monthly paper is always instructive. Mr. Isaac Mason of Shanghai will forward subscriptions, 2 Rupees a year equals $1.50. There are about thirty members of the league in China, and they are given the first day of the month in the prayer circular.

Great changes are coming over the Moslem world. Afghanistan, formerly one of the most bigoted of Moslem lands, is now ruled by a progressive Amir, who is said to discourage the killing of heretics. The great changes which have come over the Turkish Republic are well known. Mustapha Kemal has turned the eyes of the nation towards the West as the Dowager Empress did in China twenty years ago. In Persia there is a modern movement which may make mission schools impossible. The Government is demanding that the Koran must be taught in all schools, and other regulations make Christian education very difficult. "Modernism" is infecting the minds of thoughtful Moslems in Egypt, and books written by two Egyptian Professors had to be suppressed by the Government on account of their modern teaching.

Mohammedans frequently interrupt Christian preachers in towns and villages in India. In a large city where the present writer worked the daily open air preaching never ended without controversy with Mohammedans or Hindus. An Arya Somaj preacher was employed to preach a few yards away. Once when preaching in a village the writer was interrupted by the village policeman who was a Mohammedan. He did not like a reference to the sacrifice of Isaac. He said that Ishmael was the intended victim, but Abraham had not the courage to kill him, so Ishmael exhorted his father to do the deed. Ishmael was the hero of the story. Another time a Moslem demanded to know on the back of what bird did Jesus ascend to heaven. It showed great ignorance not to know that it was on the back of a goose. And so preaching to the crowds in an Indian bazaar was a task full of pitfalls. And the crowd nearly always sided with the heckler.

Another time while shewing a picture of the father running to meet the prodigal son the preacher was rebuked by an unexpected Moslem for shewing a picture of God. To prove that he did not so regard it the preacher tore up the picture. That only produced the rebuke, "Now you have lost your temper," which is always considered in India to conclude the argument in favour
of the other side. So the dejected missionary went away, but a young man followed him to his tent, expressed approval of what had been said and accepted Christian literature.

It is hard work preaching in India with all sorts of people in the crowd. We ought to pray for our brethren there. We Friends of the Moslems in China would do well to enlarge our interests, join the "Missionaries to Muslim's League" and pray systematically for our brethren in all the Moslem Fields.

Herbert J. Molony.

"The whole theory of Islam is that it, the latest sent of all religions, does not so much abrogate Christianity with its Books, as specially and categorically deny both as wilful corruption and lies."

Canon W. H. T. Gairdner, B.A.

An emergency meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society of Friends of the Moslems in China was held on November 5th. Mrs. Bailie and Miss Garland of the Kansu Moslem Committee met with Bishop Molony, Dr. Darroch, and Mr. Drummond to discuss the question of printing Mr. George Harris' Arabic Poster. The poster was shown and explained by Miss Garland. After a short discussion it was decided to get estimates for the printing in full size (30 by 42 inches) in gold, red, and black, in Chinese and Arabic. The number of bilingual tracts to be printed is 3,000 and in Arabic alone, 2,000. Arrangements were also made to print some handbills one-sixteenth the size of the larger poster, bilingual 6,000 and Arabic 4,000. It was also planned to print a series of tracts in folder form of questions and answers, in Chinese and Arabic; 5,000 each.

Enquiry was made on behalf of Mr. Harris regarding "The Throne Verse" and translation thereof which he was asked to make for the Committee. The manuscript was produced but the Committee was not clear what was intended to be done with it. The matter was referred to Mr. Harris and Mr. Isaac Mason.

Since the above meeting of the Committee an order has been placed for the printing of the posters and tracts.
PERSIA.

A report is at hand of the workings of the Intermission Literature Committee for all Persia. It shows a "goodly number of books and pamphlets printed and in circulation, and an even larger number in the press and in preparation. Twelve were actually printed seven are in the press and more than ten ready to be printed." In these lists of books published, in the press, and in preparation the committee has tried to carry out as far as possible the suggestions both of the Hamadan Conference and of the Zwemer Conference last summer (1926). The lives of Christ, the commentaries, the church history, and the Bible Dictionary are all along the line of the Hamadan Conference suggestions. The story parables, picture cards, illustrated books for women and children, and the emphasis on illustrations in all our work are results of the findings of the Zwemer Conference. Since these two conferences there has been a tremendous increase in the sale of Christian literature throughout Persia. The whole report is gratifying in the possibilities that are presented to workers among Moslems. Is China so far different from Persia?

SPRING MEETING.

At the fall meeting of the Executive Committee it was decided to have an annual spring meeting to be held in Shanghai. It will be for the Society and all friends who are interested in the evangelization of the Moslems in China. At that time problems will be discussed and plans for the future will be arranged. Definite notice of the date and place of meeting will be sent out later. The committee on arrangements would appreciate any suggestions in the way of problems to be discussed, speakers or program. Send these as soon as possible to the secretary, Rev. C. L. Pickens, 43 Tungting Road, Hankow.

Word has just come from Mr. Mason that he has nearly completed the revision of "Chinese-Moslem Terms. We hope that by the next issue of the "Newsletter" we can announce the finished book. Many have contributed additions to the old work so that this new edition should be useful to all those in Moslem centers.

The new year, 1928, has arrived and with it a call for renewal of the yearly membership. We hope that you feel your 1927 membership has been of value to you. We hope that this year you will make it a Life Membership. What is accomplished by
the Society depends on the cooperation of each individual connected with it. Let our prayers be more earnest and our support hearty for 1928.

Ramadan, the Moslem fasting month, and the Christian Lent both begin on the same day this year, February 22nd.

FOR PRAYER

Let us pray especially for the forthcoming second annual meeting of the Society which is to be held this spring in Shanghai. Pray that there will come from it a more earnest spreading of the Gospel among the Chinese Moslems.

Let us continue to pray for the forthcoming Missionary Conference to be held in Jerusalem from March 24—April 8, 1928, especially for that section which deals with Moslem evangelization.

Let us continue to pray for the Conferences of workers among Moslems in India, being held by Dr. Zwemer.

Let us pray for the new literature program being carried out in Persia and in China.

NEW MEMBERS

Miss Ruth Marsh          East Orange, N. J., U.S.A.
Dr. Stanton             London, England.
Rectory Guild, St. Paul’s, Rock Creek, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
Women’s Auxiliary       "    "    "    "    "    "    "

The membership fee of the Society is $1.00 a year or $10.00 for a life membership. Remittance should be sent to the Rev. C. L. Pickens, Secretary, 43 Tungting Road, Hankow, Hupeh, China.

Edited and published by Mrs. C. L. Pickens, 43 Tungting Road, Hankow, Hupeh, China.