

The Moslem World

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EDITORIAL

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As this number of our quarterly goes to press, all Europe is still under the horror of the great war which has carried its disastrous consequences into every part of the world. We write *Anno Domini* 1915, but we seem to live in a mediaevalism of international hatred and of bloodshed on the battle field without a parallel in the long history of the sinful world. Has the shadow on the dial moved backward? All the earth seems to prepare for war, to awake up its mighty men and to proclaim, "Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong." Yet as in the days of Joel, the Lord is the Hope of His people and the Strength of His church. The only apostle of peace in time of war is the apostle of Jesus Christ.

Just as the Crusades were coming to a disastrous close, there was born on the island of Majorca, in 1236, the man who proclaimed the true method of warring the Lord's war, and through it became the first and greatest missionary to the Mohammedans. On June 30th, 1315, he was stoned to death at Bugia, North Africa. In June next will occur the six hundredth anniversary of his martyrdom for the Truth. When we consider how the European war has involved also the Moslem world, and has compelled Moslems everywhere, often unwillingly, to choose sides in this great conflict by showing their distrust and suspicion or by declaring their wholehearted loyalty to colonial governments, it is good to emphasise once more the message of this

Mr. Allan suggests that Arabic coins were first brought to Offa's notice in this way : Charlemagne, the French King, had received large presents of gold from the Caliphs el Mansur and Rārūn el Rashid. This gold was in all probability in the form of current coin. Charlemagne may have sent some of these coins to Offa, who desired to issue a gold coinage, and who copied those which he thought were circulated in the Carolingian Empire. There is no reason to suppose that the coin in question was struck for a special occasion, it is merely a specimen of Offa's gold coinage.

There are several mistakes in the Arabic legend on the coin, showing the engraver of the die was not an Arab and knew nothing of Arabic. The coin is clearly an imitation of the dinar of el Mansur, struck in the year 157 A.H.—774 A.D.

Yours faithfully,

HERBERT E. E. HAYES.

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AN INTERESTING DOCUMENT ON THE BAB

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URUMIA, PERSIA,

August 28th, 1914.

To the Editor of THE MOSLEM WORLD.

I FOUND the following memorandum among the papers of my father, the Rev. J. H. Shedd, D.D. The record was made sometime between 1860 and 1870, perhaps in 1861, when Dr. Cormick spent the summer or part of it in Salmas, where my father was then stationed, and they saw a good deal of each other. Dr. Cormick was an English physician, who for a number of years lived in Tabriz, having there a large medical practice and being much esteemed. The events referred to took place in Tabriz some time before the execution of the Bab in July, 1850, probably at the time of his first examination in Tabriz. Probably no other European had an interview with the Bab, and certainly no other record of such an interview is extant.

DR. CORMICK ON THE BAB. PERSONAL INTERVIEW.

You ask me for some particulars of my interview with the founder of the sect known as Babis. Nothing of any importance transpired at this interview, as Bab was aware of my having been sent with two Persian doctors to see whether he was of sane mind or merely a madman, to decide the question whether to put him to death or not. With this knowledge he was loath to answer any questions put to him. To all inquiries he merely regarded us with a mild look, chanting in a low, melodious voice some hymns, I suppose. Two other sayyids, his intimate friends, were also present, who subsequently were put to death with him, besides a couple of government officers. He only once deigned to answer me, on my saying that I was not a Mussulman and was willing to know something about his religion, as I might perhaps be inclined to adopt it. He regarded me very intently on my saying this, and replied that he had no doubt of all Europeans coming over

to his religion. Our report to the Shah was at that time of a nature to spare his life. He was put to death some time after by order of the Amir i Nizam, Mirza Taqi Khan. On our report he merely got the bastinado, in which operation a farash, whether intentionally or not, struck him across the face with a stick destined for his feet, which produced a great wound and swelling of his face. On being asked whether a Persian surgeon should be brought to treat him, he expressed a desire that I would be sent for, and I accordingly treated him for a few days ; but in the interviews consequent on this I could never get him to have a confidential chat with me, as some government people were always present, he being a prisoner. He was very thankful for my attentions to him. He was a very mild and delicate-looking man, rather small in stature, and very fair for a Persian, with a melodious, soft voice, which struck me very much. Being a sayyid he was dressed in the habit of that sect, as were also his two companions. In fact, his whole look and deportment went far to dispose one in his favour. Of his doctrines I heard nothing from his own lips, although the idea was that there existed in his religion a certain approach to Christianity. He was seen by some Armenian carpenters, who were sent to make some repairs in his prison, reading the Bible, and he took no pains to conceal it, but on the contrary told them of it. Most assuredly the Mussulman fanaticism does not exist in his religion, as applied to Christians, nor is there that restraint of females that now exists.

Yours truly,

W. A. SHEDD.