

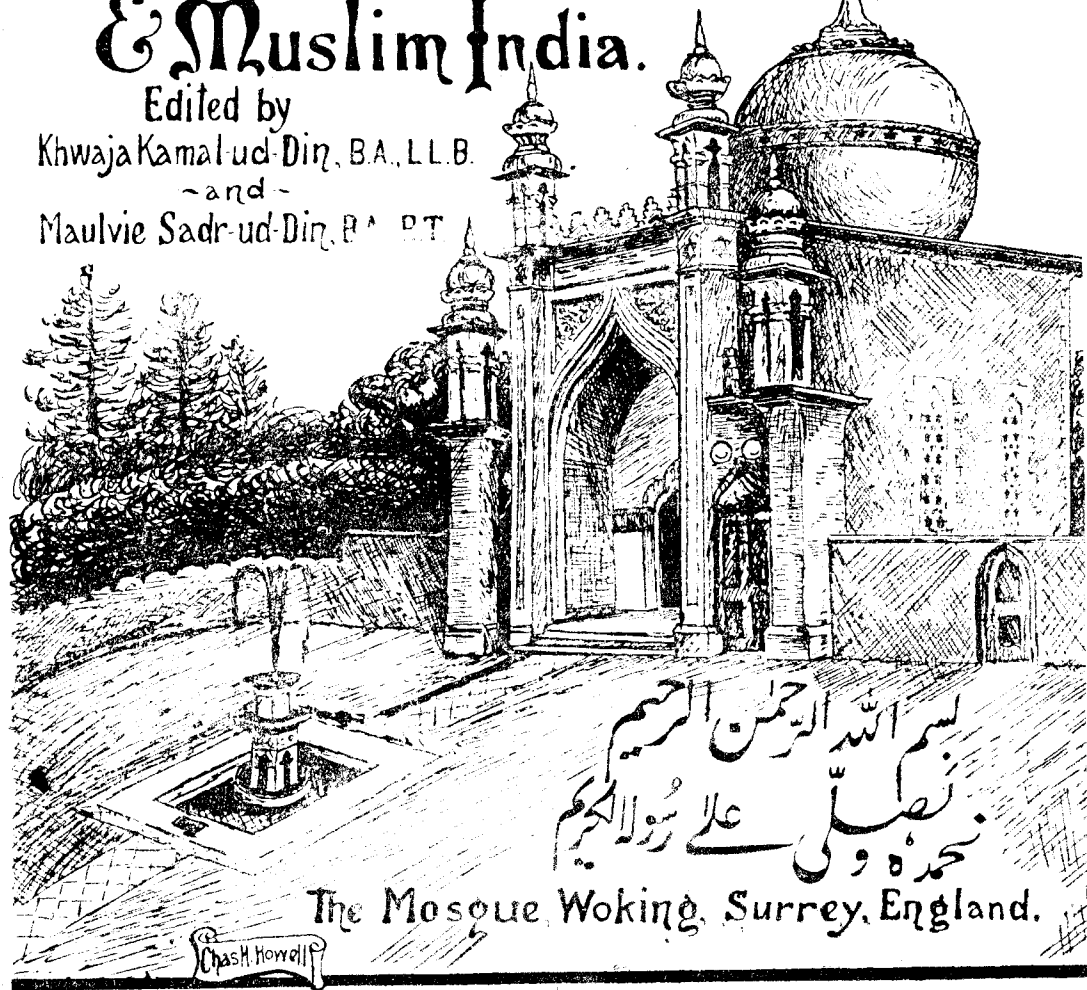
Islamic Review & Muslim India.

Edited by

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-and-

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نُصَلِّ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُحِبُّهُ

The Mosque Woking, Surrey, England.

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PRICE SIXPENCE.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

ISLAMIC REVIEW

AND

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[No. 4

DECLARATION

I, Albert Armstrong MacLaughlin, son of the late Rev. Alexander MacLaughlin, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I will adopt Islam as my religion; that I worship One and only Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc.; that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha ill-Allah

Muhammad al rasul-Allah.

A. A. MACLAUGHLIN, Capt.,

Age 47.

R. of O.R. Munster Fus.

A MUSLIM MEMORIAL

LONDON MOSQUE TO MARK INDIA'S HELP
SUGGESTED BY LORD HEADLEY

To the Editor of the DAILY GRAPHIC.

SIR,—Some weeks ago I had the honour of communicating to the War Office and the India Office a suggestion that the Government should mark our appreciation of the fidelity and bravery of our Indian friends by erecting a mosque in memory of the heroic Muslim soldiers who have fallen in defence of our Empire, and now lie buried in the land they have died for and as well as in other places far distant from their homes. From the courteous replies I received I feel confident that the Government fully realizes the propriety of such a course, and all of us who know the affectionate nature of our Muslim brethren will understand that such recognition will be most highly prized and be the means of forging yet another link in the chain which so happily unites us to our great Eastern Empire. Similar recognition should be shown in the case of the Sikhs and other Hindus so that no feelings of jealousy may be aroused.

There are excellent reasons why this matter should be taken in hand now and not at the conclusion of the war. I realize that general war relief funds cannot be applied to such a memorial, nor do I suggest it in any way. I want the mosque erected at the expense of the nation, and am anxious that the Government should vote a substantial sum for the purpose. I shall be very glad to have any suggestions from your readers so that we may be able to assist the Government in every possible way.

Faithfully yours,

HEADLEY (El Farooq).

Royal Societies' Club,
St. James's Street, S.W.

March 15th.

WHAT IS DOGMA ?

By LORD HEADLEY

IN a recent letter to a friend, who is a clergyman in the Church of England, I wrote to say that "in the Islamic Faith there is nothing of the intolerance and bigotry, born of dogmatic teaching, we find elsewhere." In his reply he asks me to define what I mean by "intolerance" and "dogmatic teaching," and further asks whether Islam is not just as dogmatic in its teaching and intolerant in its practices as any other religion. In reply to the letter, which is most kindly and tolerant in spirit and intention, I have endeavoured to show what dogmatic teaching really means.

Christianity teaches me that God is almighty and omnipresent, omnipotent and all-merciful; above all, before all, infinite in love and purity. I am told that He created all things in heaven and on earth, and that He made man, the greatest of all His wonderful works, in His own image. *All of which is in accord with Islam.*

But Christianity further tells me that He had an only Son, and that, being dissatisfied with the doings of the human race—the weaknesses of which He, as the Maker, was fully aware of—determined to propitiate Himself by killing that only Son, who was also Himself and the Holy Spirit: the ruthlessness of the action being fully in accord with the old heathenish idea of sacrifice to propitiate an angry Deity—all of which is *not* in accord with Islam.

Muslims think that all men and women who believe steadfastly in God, surrendering themselves to Him and cheerfully submitting to all His chastenings and trials, and do their duty to their neighbours, i.e. *all* their fellow-creatures, will be saved. In those very observances of God's commandments lies salvation, and we do not think that atonement is necessary, because God can *directly* and instantly forgive transgressions when we ask Him with true repentance. From earliest years it has always seemed to me that God must be so great and so infinitely removed from all feelings of passion and resentment that He can only look upon us all with the loving eyes of a Father; knowing that we are the work of His hands, and that even as we have come from Him unto Him we must return.

Any idea that He should vent His anger (at our little wanderings from the path set for us) on His Son in order to put things straight always reminded me—even when I was quite a little boy—of a petulant girl smashing in the face of her best doll because some of the sawdust stuffing came out of one of its legs. When I abandoned all hope of ever reconciling myself to a blind belief in what I considered to be a made-up religion, worked up in the dark ages to suit certain purposes and bring about certain political and other results, and took to believing in God alone, I felt my feet touch solid ground for the first time.

I suppose the future salvation and happiness for our dear ones is the greatest and far the most important matter we have to think about. Christianity affirms that no one who does not believe that Christ was God and who does not accept the atonement and mediatorship, the efficacy of the sacraments, and the Trinity, can be saved. Islam makes no such dogmatic assertion with regard to salvation. Allah made us, we belong to Him, and to Him we must return. A belief in the teachings of the divinely inspired prophets, Moses, Christ, and Muhammad, is enjoined, but salvation depends—so we think—on complete love for Allah and surrender to His wishes, which of course teach us kindness to all our fellow-creatures. Surely such a religion cannot be called “dogmatic”?

Over two years ago, when I openly confessed the Muslim Faith, some of my relations wrote assuring me that if I did not believe in the Divinity of Christ I *could not be saved*. In reply I pointed out that, so far as I could see, the Divinity of Christ was not so important as that other question: “Did Christ give God’s messages to mankind?” We believe that he was the divinely inspired Prophet, and that he did give the messages which were followed up, later on, by the revelations to the equally divinely inspired Prophet Muhammad, who also delivered what he was told to mankind. Looking at the question of belief, I cannot imagine that the All-Merciful One would punish me with everlasting damnation for my inability to accept the teaching of a certain religious sect—to wit the Christians; but I can quite believe that He can and will punish me for all my misdeeds. My friend asks: “Are you not yourself intolerant of cant, humbug, bigotry, lies, deceit, meanness, cruelty, slander, etc.?” Yes, certainly, but there is no need

of intolerance towards a religion in which all these are condemned. Islam and Christianity *both* condemn them, but here comes the difference: Islam does not deny salvation to those who do their duty to God and their neighbours, whatever they may think on other subjects; but Christianity positively affirms that salvation is impossible without the atonement, a belief in the Divinity of Christ, the sacraments, and the Trinity, and here is where the dogmas of Christianity stand out in such marked contrast to the simple and charitable tenets of the Muslim Faith.

I quote yet another portion of my friend's letter:—

"The only non-dogmatic statements I can imagine are such as these:—

"There may be a God, or there may not.

"Christ may possibly be divine, or He may not.

"God may consist of one person, or two, or a thousand.

"Muhammad may have been a prophet of God, or he may not.

"The Koran may be full of truth or error.

"Faith in God and obedience to Him may be requisite or not."

"Would a religion based on such 'beliefs' be worth having or worth propagating?

"The only non-intolerant religion would be one which would tolerate all kinds of persons, beliefs, and practices, and protest against nothing."

In reply to this contention, I may point out that Christians and Muslims alike are agreed in believing that there is a God who is almighty, and that we should love Him and obey Him, and be good to our fellow-creatures. Now mark where the divergence comes in.

The Muslim says: "I am contented with this simple Faith; Allah is always with me; without intervention I can approach Him at all times. He hears my praise, my prayers, and my supplications for mercy, and will forgive me my sins."

The Christian says: "No, this is not enough; I must have priests, sacrifices, sacraments, an atonement brought about by a temporary demise of God's only Son; I must have a succession of virgins and saints, and a Church which I will call the Bride of Christ to insure its stability in the religious world."

This is where, I say, dogma comes in.

In the elder branch of the Christian Church the way to heaven can only be decently and properly found for a man by a priest in the first instance ; then a saint is invoked, then the Virgin Mary, then Christ, and finally through all these channels the ear of the Almighty may be gained. The dying man has to receive extreme unction, without which he likes not to leave this world ; the sinner has to obtain absolution—always at the hands of some one else who is supposed to a greater or lesser degree to have access to the keys of heaven's door or gate. To my mind it is all dogmatic, man-made, and unnecessary. The Muslim belief recognizes no intervention or intercession, because we feel that, belonging to God, we are ever in His hands at every moment of the day or night.

It seems to me but a repetition on a large scale of the threats the mendacious but well-meaning parents of bygone days used to hold out to children in the hope of securing their obedience. The priest—direct successor to the "clerk" or "cleric" of the Middle Ages—keeps his hold on the credulous people by threats of the Bogey Man who is the angry God above waiting to pounce upon them. This angry God is represented as a sort of Cerberus (who, by the way, is supposed to have had three heads), who has been partially appeased by one great sacrifice but still requires more—the further sacrifice being that of the intelligence and the heart. Notwithstanding all the horrors and cruelties of this awful war, which has turned so many into atheists, I still believe in the justice and mercy of God, but I could not do so if I thought He would condemn human beings to everlasting torment on account of any matter of mere opinion or conscience. I say to my own children : " You know what I think, and I have explained matters to the best of my ability ; if, after this, you choose to believe that the Virgin Mary is the Mother of God, or that Christ was God, I shall not love you any the less, though I shall be rather sorry."

And when it is said to them, " Follow ye that which God hath sent down," they say, " Nay, we follow the course upon which our forefathers walked." What ! though their forefathers were utterly ignorant and devoid of guidance.—THE QURAN.

WHAT IS ISLAM ?

Islam is a simple Faith. A belief in One and only God (Allah), possessing all the conceivable good attributes and absolutely free from all frailties, is its first principle. Those who follow Islam are called Muslims or Musalmans, but **not** Muhammadans. They worship One God—the All-mighty, the All-knowing, the All-just, the Cherisher of the Worlds, the Master of the East and the West, the Author of the heavens and earth, the Creator of all that exists. The God of Islam is Loving and Forgiving, but also just and swift in reckoning. He is the Friend ; the Guide ; the Helper. Every place is sacred to Him. There is none like Him. He has no partner or co-sharer. He has begotten no sons or daughters. He is free from passions, and is indivisible, impersonal. From Him all have come and to Him all return. He is the Light of the Heaven and the Earth, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

The Prophet of Islam was Muhammad, whom the Muslims must follow. He was the last Prophet, and finally and faithfully preached and established the doctrine of the Unity of God in a way that it can never now be shaken by any amount of progress of rationalism. Those who believe in the doctrine of the Unity of God are expected to respect His servant and messenger who established that doctrine. Muhammad is highly revered by all the Muslims, but is recognized as a man as are other Prophets, like Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc., who are all respected by Muslims as righteous persons sent down by the loving God to guide His children. All the Prophets, whether of the East or the West, the North or the South, brought the same common message from the Creator, but their followers afterwards altered or corrupted it until Muhammad came, who left behind him an uncorruptible book.

The Gospel of Muslims is Al-Quran. It teaches man how to hold direct communion with his Maker, and also how to deal with his fellow-beings as well as God's other creatures. It has enjoined, "Be constant in prayer, for prayer preserveth from crimes and from that which is blamable, and the remembrance of Allah is surely a most sacred duty." But it has also said, "Blessed are they who fulfil the covenant of God and break not their compact ; and who join together what God

hath bidden to be joined ; and who fear their Lord and dread an ill-reckoning ; and who from a sincere desire to please their Lord are constant amid trials, and observe prayers, and give alms in secret and openly out of what We have bestowed on them ; and turn aside evil with good ; for them there is the recompense of that abode, gardens of eternal habitation, into which they shall enter, together with such as shall have acted rightly from among their fathers ; their wives and their posterity and the angels shall go in unto them by every portal (saying) Peace be with you ! because you have endured with patience " (Sura xiii. 20-24).

Al-Quran is a book which has withstood the ravages of time, and stands to-day, after more than thirteen centuries, word for word and letter for letter as it came out of the mouth of the Prophet Muhammad. There are hundreds of thousands of Muslims who know the whole of it by heart. It is an uncorrupted and a living book, and the religion it preaches is a living religion.

There is no Priesthood in Islam. There is no intercession, no redemption, no saviourship. Every soul is responsible for its own actions. Islam points out both the ways—the one which brings to God, and that is *good*, the other which leads away from Him, and that is *evil*. No one can carry the burden of the other. Sincere repentance secures forgiveness. " O My servants, who have transgressed to your own injury, despair not of Allah's mercy, for all sins doth Allah forgive, gracious and merciful is He " (Quran, chap. xxxix. 54).

Islam does not recognize any difference of sex in piety. Whether males or females, those who act rightly get their salvation. It does not lay down that human beings are born sinners or that woman was instrumental in the "fall of Adam." The holy Prophet has said, "Paradise lies at the feet of mother."

Islam forbids impurity of every kind. Cleanliness, both of body and mind, is essential for a Muslim. Physical cleanliness is a natural concomitant to the idea of moral purity, for no man can approach Him Who is All Pure and Clean in a state of uncleanness. All intoxicants are forbidden, so is gambling and the flesh of the pig. Suicide is practically unknown among Muslims.

Islam enjoins prayers, fixed alms to the needy, fasting,

affection to parents and kindness to all creatures—even animals and birds.

Islam encourages rationalism and scientific research by declaring that sun and moon and all the elements are subservient to human intellect and will in a great measure, and man can utilize them if he discovers the secret of those laws according to which they work.

The Universal Brotherhood of Islam has been joined by many English men and women of different grades in society. A British Muslim Society has been formed which has Lord Headley as its president, Mr. J. Parkinson as its vice-president, and Mr. Sims as its assistant-secretary. The Russian nobleman Yourkevitch, the French Viscount de Potier, the Egyptian Princess Saleha; Capt. S. Musgrave, Lieut. Barry Gifford, Mr. Basheer Muller, Major R. Legge, Prof. N. Stephen, Prof. H. M. Léon, M.A., Ph.D., LL.D., Prof. Ameen J. Whymant, Ph.D., Litt.D., Mrs. Clifford, Mr. Dudley Wright, Mrs. Howell, Miss Potter, Capt. A. A. MacLaughlin, Mr. Flight, Madam Bloch, Mr. and Mrs. Welch, and Mrs. Rose Legge are some of its members. The Brotherhood, being universal, is open to all, and anybody who would like to join it can either attend the Friday Prayers at 12.45 p.m. at 39, Upper Bedford Place, London, W.C., on any Friday; or Sunday services held at 3.15 p.m. at the Woking Mosque; or send a written declaration to the Imam of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, who will always be glad to answer any inquiries. Islam claims to be a rational faith, and undertakes to satisfy the reason and conscience both, so criticism is encouraged and every effort made to answer questions satisfactorily.

DECLARATION FORM.

I _____ <sup>son
daughter
wife</sup> of _____
of (address) _____ do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I adopt ISLAM as my religion; that I worship One and only Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His messenger and servant; that I respect equally all prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc.; that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha ill-Allah,

Muhammad al rasul-Allah.

N.B.—Please address all inquiries to the Maulvi Sadr-ud-Din, B.A., B.T., Head of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey.

CHILDREN AND DOGS

By MAULVI MUHAMMAD ALI ILLA, LL.B.

So strong has been the barrier of national prejudice in the history of humanity that for long ages religious truth itself, which is to-day freely recognized as the common property of humanity, was looked upon as national monopoly. India with its elaborate caste system and with its sacred scriptures sealed to the whole world with the exception of a few chosen Brahmans, the unfortunate Sudra, a true Indian by birth, being looked upon as guilty of a heinous crime if he allowed his unholy ears to receive the sacred words of the Vedas even by chance, may be looked upon as an extreme example ; but the same spirit was at work everywhere. Every nation had its own prophets, and the traditions which grew up round the name of each prophet limited his mission to a particular race or a particular country. Perhaps the absence of easy means of communication between nation and nation made it to some degree difficult that the mission of a prophet of one nation should have within its scope the regeneration of another nation, but the result, no doubt, was the growing up of a strong barrier of prejudice between the different nations, and truths of general interest thus remained confined within narrow bounds.

Jesus Christ came with a broader view of religion, a larger conception of humanity, but even he was unable to break the strong barrier of national prejudice and to sweep off the narrower views of religious truth. He broke many of the Jewish prejudices, condemned outward piety and laid stress on purity of the heart, but the barrier of national prejudice was too strong for him. His beautiful Sermon on the Mount contains many a gem of rare quality, and many a noble precept in theory even if not very practicable, but he was unable to jump over the wall which separated the Jew from the heathen, the Israelite from the non-Israelite. In that very sermon, the high idealism of which cannot even be set before one as a goal that may be attained at some distant period, being so opposed to the practical, the union of humanity, the real idealism of human life, receives a treatment quite opposed to the whole tenor of the sermon. There we find :

“ Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye

your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you" (Matt. vii. 6).

What is *holy* and who are the *dogs*? Let the Gospel explain itself:

"And behold a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, *It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs*. And she said, Truth, Lord; yet *the dogs eat of the crumbs* which fall from their master's table" (Matt. xv. 22-27). *Italics are mine*

The non-Israelites are thus the unholy *dogs* to whom the holy Gospel is not to be preached. This is made clearer elsewhere: "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. x. 5, 6).

Thus Jesus not only limited his mission to the house of Israel, but he even directed his followers to do the same. They had nothing to do with the non-Israelites. To this restriction which Jesus himself imposed on his own mission, he remained faithful the whole of his life, not a single non-Israelite being admitted either into his discipleship or into the fold of Christian brotherhood so long as he was there. How, then, did Christianity make such wide conquests among the non-Israelites? It was Paul who made a departure from the established practice of the Master; yet his actions were not unwarranted. The disciples had seen that Jesus had at first refused to pay any heed to the ills of the woman from Canaan, yet her entreaties melted his heart when, instead of appealing to the brotherhood of humanity, she put herself in the position of a dog and requested the fallen crumbs to be thrown at her. Jesus had then acceded to her request, and the disciples saw that though the Master was not willing to give the children's share to the non-Israelite dogs, yet he had not refused to them the crumbs that fall from the master's table. Put in brief, the position is that the non-Israelites were not to be received as brethren, but that they may be admitted

as dogs. This was a great stride forward, but it was not and could not be the final word. A way was opened for religious truth to be preached to others than members of the chosen race, though the chosen race still stood above the others, their relation to each other being the relation of children and dogs. Paul might have had this position in view when, finding the Jews inaccessible, he directed his attention to the heathen who, like the Canaanite woman in the Gospel, were ready to receive the crumbs :

"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you : but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts xiii. 45, 46).

Such was the origin of the spread of Christianity among the non-Israelites. Paul set up this movement, and he very probably justified his action by Jesus' kindness to the Canaanite woman, when, like the faithful dog, she was ready to receive the crumbs which the children rejected. But once the course of the channel was diverted and the food made palatable to the heathens by introducing the leaven of the new faith into the old idolatrous religions, the Israelite element in the new brotherhood became more and more insignificant, until Christianity became a world-wide movement. Yet, notwithstanding its extension to all the nations of the world, it has not been able to infuse the true spirit of brotherhood, the idea of equality among all the members. That idea has not been realized even within the precincts of the church, the dominant or older members taking up a position somewhat resembling that which was accorded by the Master to the members of the chosen race.

The realization of the idea of the absolute brotherhood of the human race and of a perfect union of all nations was reserved for the *last* of the prophets, who brought the ennobling message to the whole human race, that in the kingdom of heaven all were children, and none was a dog :

"O people! be careful of your duty to your Lord who created you *from a single being* and created its mate of the same kind, and spread from these two many men and women ; and be careful of your duty to Allah, by whom you demand one of another your rights, and to the ties of relationship ; surely Allah watches over you " (Al-Quran iv. 1).

How completely does he demonstrate the unity of the human race. All people, the Arab and the non-Arab, the Muslim and the non-Muslim, the black and the white, the learned and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, the great and the small, have one origin, and there are ties of relationship among them all. They are members of one human family so far as their rights to each other are concerned. Allah is their Lord, of all of them, in whose great presence all the smaller distinctions of creed and colour, of rank and position, of wealth and power, sink into mere nothingness. The whole world is a single family and there are ties of relationship among them all. This is the vast brotherhood of humanity which was never preached in the world before the advent of Islam.

Are, then, the distinctions of race and tribe to be utterly condemned. Do they serve no purpose? Here is the answer of the Quran :

“O you men! surely We have created you, of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful of his duty; surely Allah is Knowing, Aware” (Al-Quran xlix. 13).

The principle of the brotherhood of man is here again laid down on the broadest basis. The whole human race is addressed and told that all men are, as it were, members of one family. Yes, there are distinctions of races and tribes and families, and these are necessary distinctions for the growth of the human race. Yet these distinctions, we are told, should not lead to estrangement from, but to a better recognition of, each other: “and made you tribes and families that *you may know each other.*” For what is the origin of the invidious distinctions of race and colour? Only want of knowledge of the good qualities of others, which results in lack of sympathy. If different nations tried to know each other, the ties of brotherhood between them should get firmly strengthened. There is one more point to which attention is drawn in establishing this vast brotherhood of humanity. We are all children, no doubt, but some would necessarily excel others. What is to be the measure of greatness and eminence in this vast brotherhood? It cannot be colour, it cannot be wealth, it cannot be racial or national or due to particular domicile: the only criterion is thus described :—“*the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful of his duty.*” Carefulness to duty, or moral

greatness, is thus made the true measure of greatness, and this is the only Utopia which can be turned into the practical ; nay, it has a practical existence in the Muslim world, the brotherhood of Islam being a living brotherhood still, though it has not the perfection of the earlier days.

And who was this great benefactor of humanity who swept off all distinctions of colour and race, and declared all to be children in the kingdom of God, neither despising and hating any one as a dog, nor excluding any one from the benefit of truth, the common property of humanity? Not an advanced philosopher of the Europe of the nineteenth or twentieth century, but an unlearned Arabian—an *Ummi*, as he is repeatedly called—who lived thirteen hundred years ago in a desert country, where philosophy and knowledge had never set foot. As the Jew and the Christian denounced the non-Jew or the non-Christian as a heathen or a barbarian, the Arab called the non-Arab an *ajam*, a word meaning a *foreigner*, as well as a *camel*. Arabia itself was shut out from the whole world, its people refusing to have any social intercourse with even the adjacent nations. Yet it was in this country, and among this people, that the basis of the brotherhood of humanity, of the oneness of all nations, of the unity of the human race, was laid. This is, perhaps, the strangest feature of all. The greatest truth shines forth in the darkest corner of the world. This was to show that what worldly wisdom had failed to discover, was brought to light by the divine ray serene.

From the first that the holy Prophet announced his message, he knew of no distinction between the Arabs and the non-Arabs. The Lord of the Arabs, or the Lord of the Ishmaelites, is a phrase quite unknown to the Islamic literature, whereas its sister phrase, the *Lord God of Israel*, is of frequent occurrence in the Bible. The Quran announces from the first a *Lord of the worlds*, the father of all. And accordingly the prophet was *Rahmat ullil-alamin*, a mercy for all the nations. And the ennobling message which he brought was for the regeneration of the whole human race: "And We have not sent you but to all the men, as a bearer of good news and as a warner, but most men do not know" (xxxiv. 28).

Thus was laid down the basis of that vast brotherhood which will one day unite all the nations of the world as brother and brother. *Insha Allah!*

THE WAR AND GOD

THIS war has given rise to many thoughts in different minds. It is a world conflagration, and has therefore set the whole world a-thinking. Those people who are religiously inclined say that material civilization is responsible for all this butchery, this upheaval in society, this misery, this loss of property and of such men who would have proved a great intellectual asset to humanity. Promising youths from universities have gone to the battlefield to be murdered. Men of genius have shared the fate of cattle—they have been slaughtered. That slaughter and murder continues. Passions are rising still higher. Even that heavenly gift of God to man—intellect—is being used in its worst form. All the ingenuity of man—"civilized," enlightened, educated, rational man—is directed towards inventing more murderous instruments either for offence or defence. Religious men piously say that all this is the work of the devil. But there are men in this world, and mostly in the Christian part of it, who pertinently, or impertinently, ask where is, then, the Being whom Christianity teaches to be All-Love? They say either He is *not All-Love*, or He is *not All-Powerful*. If he were both All-Love and All-Powerful He would have surely stopped this inhuman butchery of human beings—He would have surely sent the devil into the deep sea, never to rise again. There are many in Europe who have begun to question the mercy of God. There are old parents whose only son has been killed: they question the mercy of God. There are young girls whose "best boy's" brains have been blown out by a rascally sniper: they question the mercy of God. There are devoted wives whose husband has been bombed, and has left a large family of youngsters behind: they question the mercy of God. The population of Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, Poland, the rich champagne country in France have suffered. Kings have lost their kingdoms and their crowns, millionaires their money, dukedoms their only heirs. All these question the mercy of God, so it will be worth while to see whether this war, or such other catastrophes, do really make it impossible to believe in a merciful and powerful God. As humanity cannot now believe in fiendish and bloodthirsty gods or God, people begin to think that there is no God at all when they in their

judgment find it difficult to believe in a merciful God. This is a sort of negative argument, and it will be better to deal with it as it is. It is much easier for theologians to deal with the problem of the existence of God now that even the scientists have admitted the existence of an uncreated, infinite, eternal, indestructible thing. Before this, the sceptics used to shout out "Who created God?" Now they can themselves be put the same question, "Who created matter?" The existence of God is more self-evident than the existence of matter in relation to the creation and working of this universe.

But I will in this article only endeavour to show that the present war does not compel us to question either the mercy or the might of the Creator of this universe. To come to a right understanding of the present situation from a religious point of view, it will be necessary to consider (1) The Nature of God, (2) The Working of the Universe. Now, as to the Nature of the Supreme Being—Supreme Force according to Buddhists, and Supreme Matter according to materialists—different people have different ideas. To call God the Supreme Force or the Indestructible Matter is only to take a very limited view. When we go into the secrets of the universe we are forced to acknowledge that "Force and Matter" even together could not shape this universe, which works with mathematical precision, without the help of some intellectual Being. Study only the structure of an eye, and you will find that it has been arranged on the most refined and advanced principles of optics: its cornea, humours, and lens properly and ingeniously converging the rays to form an image—its iris, like the diaphragm of a microscope, shutting out stray light, and also regulating, as in a photographic camera, the quantity admitted. Surely this eye was not created or evolved at random! And what about the will-power of living creatures—the reason of man—or, in the case of the eye, the feeling that the image reflected produces? While the lens of a telescope or of a camera reflect the image they do not feel, they do not see, the eyes send a thrill into our very soul when we see anything beautiful. Unless the Creator Himself felt and willed, how could such a propensity be put in Matter or Force as to develop or evolve a feeling, willing, seeing creation? Surely human nature in this advanced age cannot bow to any power or any matter which is inferior to itself, which cannot

will, cannot see, cannot feel? During the time of the intellectual infancy of Man he was inclined to be superstitious. Whatever was strange or strong impressed his imagination and inspired him with awe. Who knows but that other animals might still be inclined to the same? Who knows but that they might still believe man to be the lord of all the universe? Man after some time, through experience, got rid of his superstitions as regards surrounding things, but he clung to the same ideas as regards objects far removed. From Nature-worship he came to Star-worship; but this belief also gave way to a more reasonable belief. The final stroke to star-worship was delivered by the final religion—Islam, when it proclaimed that God has made even sun and moon subservient to man. This was such a mighty advance that the full significance, the full import of it, has not yet been realized by men of any other faith than of Islam.

Even European professors get a shock when they hear of this grand proclamation of Islam. They say that man is but an insignificant atom in this universe. His very existence depends upon the heat of the sun. How can he dare call the sun his servant? But with a little more progress of science and human intellect they will perhaps better realize the significance of the announcement delivered by Islam over thirteen centuries ago. Even now we make the sun grow for us our delicious fruits and our nutritious grains. An Indian man of genius has invented a stove and makes the sun cook his food for him. When we have more perfected our Zeppelins and aeroplanes we shall be able to remain always in the sun if we so feel inclined. We shall tear open the veil of the clouds. We shall be able even to stop, as it were, the "setting" of the sun. When we find him at one place inclined to go down, we shall fly to the part of the globe where he does not show that tendency for the time being. Thus we will make the sun always smile upon us. We are stronger than the sun. He has no will-power. He has a fixed course. He cannot defy us; we can defy him if we develop that intellect which God has given us. Surely he should worship us—not we him. By the progress of reason, when man came to realize his own potentialities, when experience taught him that he could rule the world, and yet he had no doubt as to the fact that he himself was extremely helpless—that he never created any-

thing in this world, that even his intellect through which he could rule the world was not his own—the air he breathed, the food he ate, the water he drank, all these he found supplied on this globe not by himself but by some One else—then, while he discarded all those goblins and gods who had extorted his fear and veneration, who had, in his, the then belief, determined events by their fitful passions or whims, he at last bowed his head low before one Almighty Being who “rules the universe according to reason, and therefore according to law”—who rules even the man.

But as to the nature of that Being, other religions, and specially Christianity, have formed such opinions and beliefs that are not only against reason, but that give rise, on such occasions as the war, to doubts and scepticism. To the Jewish people God is a Personal Being, a mighty King. It is rather surprising that although their grand and majestic genius evolved the idea of a God of high attributes, they could not conceive of a Deity beyond a tribal sovereign; they could think only of a God of the Israelites. The Christians worship a Man-God. They attribute passions to Him; they say that He has begotten a son—there are people who say He has begotten daughters. To Christians, God is “Love.” They call Him “Father,” and believe Him to be such a father whom they would not like much in their own society, i.e. a father who should fulfil all the desires of his children and spoil them. When Christians call God “Love” they mean to express the idea that He would rather *sacrifice* His “only son” and *suffer* Himself than see men suffer or receive the consequences of their sins and crimes. Thus when they see thousands of men butchered by one another, homes and countries desolated and ruined, they begin to say that God is not loving. When it has been told them by their religion that God was willing even to suffer Himself for them, they ask, “Why does He not now, without the least suffering and trouble to Himself, stop all this bloodshed, all this destruction?”

The first thing that Islam did was to correct all such derogatory notions that ascribed to Allah (God) fatigue, suffering, sexual passion, or any humanly sentiment. According to Islam, God is not in the least human. He is not personal. We cannot really refer to Him by any of the pronouns He,

She, or It. It is but the paucity of our human language that we use a pronoun which we consider to be the highest or best. In reality, God cannot be referred to by He, She, or It. God does not get fatigued; He does not go to sleep; He never suffers; He is neither love nor anger. The first principle that Islam laid down as regards God is "*Laisa ka mislihi shaian*" (There is nothing like unto Him). When we say that He is loving, hearing, seeing, knowing, willing, we do not mean to say that He has senses as we have, or as any creature has. When we say that He is living, we do not mean to say that He breathes or is indebted for His life to the air, or that His heart palpitates as ours does. When there is nothing like Him, all the qualities we attribute to Him have a significance of their own. Thus we can call Him "Father," meaning that He is our Creator; He brought us into existence. But we cannot say that He actually has begotten us—or anybody. When we say that He is loving, we do not mean to say that He is actually infatuated or that He would suffer Himself for us. Islam has an attributive name of God which has no equivalent in any other language. It has a higher significance than the word "Love" has. Islam calls God "Al-Rahman," and means to signify by that word that God is so loving and merciful that He provided all needful things for His creatures long before they themselves needed them. If it were possible, it would have been better to give distinctive names to God, as there are two in Arabic, like Allah and Al-Rahman.

But the expressive power of man is limited, so he has to use the same words to express the attributes of God which he uses for his own qualities. Islam's conception of God is that He is possessed of all conceivable good attributes—He is an Ideal Being. He is not only merciful, loving, compassionate, but He is also just, wise, and powerful. So when we expect love from Him, we should also be prepared to expect that His love will not be at the expense of His justice or wisdom or might. If we do not follow the laws laid down by Him we shall not escape punishment. This is the reason that when a Muslim prays, he prays for the strength to keep on the right path and for the sense to avoid the wrong path. Anything in the universe which breaks the Law is punished, and very often punished with the full weight of the might of the Great

Master. So Islam mentions KAHR as one of the attributes of God. It also calls him JABBAR. But with such attributes of God it is also necessary to be impressed with the fact that these attributes may have an evil significance when used in respect of man; they have no evil significance when used in respect of Allah. Man or anything in the universe has no CLAIM upon the mercy of God. We had no voice in our creation. God created everything according to His own will. So an ant has no right to ask why she was not created an elephant, and an ordinary ape cannot say why he has not yet reached that stage of development to which, according to Darwin, a certain species of ape has. It is the will of the Creator or Evolver that one creature should have reached up till now only to the stage of ape, while another to that of man. In the same way, when anything ceases to keep its physical form—when death overtakes a living being, there is no reason to doubt the mercy of God. When a gardener cuts off or destroys those plants he had himself sown the seed of, it is simply because he does not find any more use for them, or they have failed to fulfil the object for which the seeds were sown. So the Fashioner of the Universe knows best which individual or which nation is worthy to be nourished and which to be decimated. That nation which is being destroyed has no right to complain, as those plants which are destroyed by a gardener have no right to complain. The gardener might have been destroying some plants to improve the garden as a whole; so God might have been destroying a nation to improve the world—i.e. an act which to all appearance may seem to be a cruel act may really be an act of love and mercy.

As to the second proposition—the Working of the Universe—the scientists and theologians alike believe that it is on set principles. Whether all things here have been separately created or have been evolved one from the other, nobody doubts that the working of the whole universe is according to definite laws of mathematical precision. A wise Creator and Designer has not only created and designed this universe on marvellous principles, but also rules it with reason and law. We may or may not understand the underlying law, but law there undoubtedly is for every phenomenon in this universe.

It is only an imperfect mechanic who sets up a machine which requires constant meddling. The mighty, the all-seeing

Designer of the Universe did not leave flaws in the design of the universe. Nay, He kept in view all the potentialities He was creating in every piece, all the developments He had in view for every item. So the sun revolves, the moon travels in a fixed course, the earth rotates. Through heat, the distribution and growth of vegetables is accomplished; vegetables and grasses supply the fodder for sheep, and sheep the protoplasm for man. The great Creator has left no room for constant intervention by Himself—so perfect has been His designing power—in the laws and principles upon which the whole universe works. God has not to work up every year the seasons on this earth. He has made the earth's axis of rotation inclined to the plane of her orbit of revolution round the sun, and that gives us our seasons. Everything works according to fixed laws. Besides God no one else can disturb those principles. Man is subject to them, as other creatures are.

What is man in the economy of this gigantic universe?—only a speck, even if that. Then what right has man to complain against the mercy of God if he finds that at any particular period the world is not going as he would like it to go? Draper has beautifully said:—

“But in thus ascending to primordial laws, and asserting their immutability, universality, and paramount control in the government of this world, there is nothing inconsistent with the free action of man. The appearance of things depends altogether on the point of view we occupy. He who is immersed in the turmoil of a crowded city sees nothing but the acts of men, and, if he formed his opinion from his experience alone, must conclude that the course of events altogether depends on the uncertainties of human volition. But he who ascends to a sufficient elevation loses sight of the passing conflicts, and no longer hears the contentions. He discovers that the importance of individual action is diminishing, as the panorama beneath him is extending. And if he could attain to the truly philosophical, the general point of view, disengaging himself from all terrestrial influences and entanglements, rising high enough to see the whole globe at a glance, his acutest vision would fail to discover the slightest indication of man, his free-will, or his works. In her resistless, onward sweep, in the clock-like precision of her daily and nightly revolution, in the well-known pictured forms of her continents and seas, now no longer dark and doubtful, but shedding forth a planetary light, well might he ask what had become of all the aspirations and anxieties, the pleasures and agony of life. As the voluntary vanished from his sight, and the irresistible remained, and each moment became more and more distinct, well might he incline to disbelieve his own experience, and to question whether the seat of so much undying glory could be the place of so much human uncertainty, whether beneath the vastness, energy, and immutable course of a moving world, there lay concealed the feebleness and imbecility of man. It is only the point of view that has changed, but on that how much

has depended! A Hindu philosopher has truly remarked, that he who stands by the banks of a flowing stream sees, in their order, the various parts as they successively glide by, but he who is placed on an exalted station views, at a glance, the whole as a motionless silvery thread among the fields. To the one there is the accumulating experience and knowledge of man in time, to the other there is the instantaneous, the unsuccessive knowledge of God."

Now that we have formed some idea of the nature of God, and of the working of this universe as set or evolved by Him, we are in a position to see whether this war or such other cataclysms negative the existence of a God of Mercy or not.

We have seen that the idea of an anthropomorphic or personal God whom Christians call Father, or All-love, is untenable. We also know that man has no right to claim that the whole course of this world should have been designed in his favour and should be at his bidding. But what we find is that God, through His mercy, selected man to form the highest unit in the economy of this world so much, so as to be able to bring even the glorious sun to serve his purpose and to do his work. An insignificant creature like man has become His vicegerent on earth. Surely man himself had nothing to do with his own evolution, and it was only through the mercy of God that he reached to this stage. No other living creature, neither an elephant nor a whale, was given that intellectual power. It was the plasmic cell of man which was gifted with such potentialities as to evolve, slowly and systematically, on settled principles, into a full-fledged man who soars aloft to the very regions of heaven. Besides this, what do we find in the organism of this world?—this, that there is a continuous struggle for existence. Upon the *death* of one creature depends the *life* of another. When we eat mutton, or even a cabbage, we surely destroy a "life." Cannot a sheep, when we kill it, cry out against the cruelty of God for allowing us to kill it? Cannot a blade of grass, in the same way, cry out to God of His cruelty for allowing a sheep to graze upon it? If a sheep or a grass cannot grumble, then how can we if one of us kills the other, or if we allow a lion to tear us to pieces?

In my opinion the very principle that the death of one gives life to another is meant to impress upon us the mercy of God. It indicates to all those creatures, including ourselves, who live, that we live on sufferance only because of the mercy of God. Take the instance of man. He, in spite of his intellect, of his

medical inventions, is not the longest living creature in the world. He can never be sure of his life—not even for a minute. The venerable Persian sage Sadi has said that man should be thankful to God twice every time he breathes, as when he breathes out the air he sends out the gas which would have poisoned him, and when he breathes in he gets into his body the life-giving oxygen. Keep in view how every second of your life fatal accidents are possible, and then you will realize how it is only because of the mercy of God that you are living.

God has been pleased to give you, to a certain extent, a free-will. You can make or mar your destiny. The Divine Book so divinely says:—

“And every man’s fate have We fastened about his neck: and on the day of resurrection will We bring forth to him a Book which shall be proffered to him wide open: ‘Read thy Book: there needeth none but thyself to make out an account against thee this day.’”

“For his own good only shall the guided yield to guidance, and to his own loss only shall the erring fall; and the heavy-laden shall not be laden with another’s load. We never punished until we had first sent an apostle.” (Al-Quran.)

If we have taken into our head to kill each other, to devastate flourishing countries, why should we blame God for it? Surely God has made this world large enough for all of us to live comfortably if only we were to live amicably—without greed or avarice. If we do not, we go against His command, and we must get the punishment for our transgression. And who doubts the fact that this gigantic war is a well-deserving punishment of the arrogant and haughty people of Europe who considered it their right to trample down weaker people. The very instruments which Europe invented to dominate over Eastern people and to exploit their countries are being used in destroying its own people and in devastating its own countries. Can, then, God be blamed for this? Must not He be just and loving to all His creatures? Why should He make a difference between the natives of the West and of the East? Why should He not punish one for the wrong done to the other? Why should He not teach the proud and the conceited not to think much of their material strength, which can be made to destroy itself? Why should He not teach people not to treat the weak with contempt?

Circumstances have arisen that the very people who were looked upon with contempt by Europe are being now supplicated for help and assistance to resettle the affairs of that conceited and arrogant continent. All notions of *prestige* and superiority have been set to the wind. Those nations that were most proud of their might, and most arrogant of their superiority, stand most in need to-day of the help and assistance of those "contemptible" people, and have stretched forth their hands in supplication. This war has no doubt set almost the whole world aflame. But it is the result of the passions and actions of man himself. God is surely not responsible for this calamity. In fact, no evil falls on men but it is worked out by themselves. It is never a reflection upon the mercy or goodness of Allah. He does not like evil. He is merciful and good. Evil is due to our misuse of the powers and capacities given to us. Allah likes us to live in amity and goodwill with our fellow-men. He has given us intellect to secure the comfort of one another. He has given us powers to establish ourselves safely on this earth. If we use that intellect in inventing instruments to destroy each other, why should we blame Him for that? Or if we are overtaken by the greed of dominating others and of depriving them of their land or property, why should we blame God for it if some of us get killed in our efforts to satisfy our avarice? And if people of the West do not leave off their selfishness and arrogance, if they do not alter their attitude towards other nations, there are, I assure them, more severe calamities in store for them. No doubt this war is an evil, but it is the result of their own misdeeds. Evil falls upon men as a punishment for their misdeeds. But even punishment is not due to any desire of vengeance on the part of Allah. The punishment, too, is actuated by the mercy and goodness of Allah. If retribution overtakes a people, it is meant to give them a lesson for the future or to make them an example of warning to others.

Certainly Allah is all-powerful. When we claim the powers of free-will for ourselves, surely we cannot refuse it to our Maker. He can, if He cares, change the whole phase of the universe. He can, if He cares, stop the war this minute. But why should He? Heaven knows that our free-will is very limited; shall we like it if it is altogether curtailed, and we are

left no chance of making any more mischief by the wrong use of that heavenly gift which we prize most, and which is a token of greatest favour and mercy of Allah to us? It is by that gift of free-will that we dominate over this world, that we make even the sun work for us as a slave. Should we consider it, then, to be a mercy of God if we are deprived of it? I, for one, would much prefer to undergo a punishment for the occasional misuse of my free-will to my being deprived of it altogether. Muhammad has taught us that our punishment, too, is only because of the love of God for us. He considered his sufferings to be a proof of God's mercy and love, which he saw in everything. On his death-bed Muhammad (may the peace of Allah be upon him!) said, "By Him in whose hand is Muhammad's life, there is not a believer afflicted with calamity or disease but God thereby causes his sins to fall from him, as leaves fall from the trees in autumn" ("The Miracle of Muhammad").

Even as to this war we can see that it is not an unmixed evil. An English publicist has said that there is no man or woman in these islands who does not feel better for this war. He thinks that the whole population will come out chastened by its fire.

If Europe gets rid of its arrogance and conceit ; if it comes to realize that the materialistic basis of its present civilization is not sound, that might is not right, that the difference of longitude and latitude in the *habitat* of people and the difference of colour of their skin do not create any limitations in their human rights of liberty, equality, and fraternity ; if Europe gives up its greed of material gain, if it gives up the exploitation of the countries of such people who are materially weak, if it learns to entertain brotherliness towards all nations, whether weak or strong, large or small, Asiatic or European, coloured or discoloured—then this war will prove a blessing in disguise.

Be it so ! Through the mercy of God may a better Europe be reshaped after the present chaos ! May other continents profit by the lesson given to Europe ! May the future civilization be based upon ethical and religious principles so that solemn pledges between nations and nations, people and people, and also between people and their governments, be respected ; that weak nations be not trampled down by materially stronger nations ; that the property and land of one be not coveted by

another; that earth hunger and territorial aggrandizement as well as the passion to rule and tyrannize be killed; and that universal brotherhood between nation and nation, man and man, be established which, even if it did not stop war for ever, would make it less cruel and barbarous and more heroic and noble.

This gigantic affair has gone beyond the control of human power. Let us all pray that lasting peace may come, whether it comes in one year or ten; and that Allah in His mercy may forgive us our transgressions and guide us on the right path, so that we may secure prosperity and harmony for the future generations.

AL-QIDWAI.

WHAT WAS THE RELIGION OF THE HOLY PROPHET JESUS CHRIST?

THERE are many texts in the New Testament that explicitly represent the religion of the holy Prophet Jesus (may Allah shower His blessings on him!). Let us turn, for an instance, to St. John xvii., which describes the deepening anxiety of the holy teacher at the approach of the horrible form of persecution to which he was subjected. The anxiety for the right understanding of his mission was no less than for his personal safety. Like all other prophets, he placed the establishment of the truth before everything else. What occupied the uppermost place in the heart and mind of the prophet at the time when he was face to face with death must be accepted as *the truth* for the spread of which he was commissioned.

Let us learn that truth. According to St. John, Jesus said, when he was going to be arrested for crucifixion:

“And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”

This was absolute truth. This constituted the religion of the holy Prophet Jesus Christ. He realized and taught that eternal life must be the outcome of right conception of God which inspires good actions. He therefore made “the knowledge of the only true God” identical with “life eternal,” for the former is the only essential to the latter. This is the strongest form of emphasis that could be laid by him on the doctrine of the One-

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ness of God. Eternal life, life of bliss and happiness on this earth and in the life to come, is the one yearning of the soul. And at the moment when Jesus thought that his end was near he spoke out distinctly for his people what was the way to get eternal life. He plainly and earnestly inculcated a belief in the only true God. This rational belief is again inculcated in verse 17 of the selfsame chapter, which runs thus :

“Sanctify them through Thy truth : Thy word is truth.”
And again in verse 26 :

“And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it : that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

The same is found in verse 6 :

“I have manifested Thy name unto the men.”

St. Matthew and St. Luke ascribe the same truth to the Prophet of Nazareth. “Master, which is the great commandment in the law?” elicits the following important answer :

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

“This is the first and great commandment.

“And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

“On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” (St. Matthew xxii. 37-40.)

These teachings, which were set forth in clear and forcible language, excluded completely not only idolatrous beliefs but also belief in the Trinity. If we have to worship and love One God with *all* our heart, and *all* our soul, and *all* our mind, there can be no room left for another deity. Besides, the truth is absolute and universal. All the true prophets of God must have preached the truth, and nothing but the truth. The fact that the teachings of the Prophet Jesus were identically the same as those preached by the other prophets was a convincing argument as to the truth of his mission. The line of argument he took up meant not only to prove that the Unity of God was the ONE object of the ministry of all the prophets, but also that he himself was not an impostor as Jews proclaimed, but a true prophet. After proclaiming the Unity of God, Jesus Christ

added about himself the qualifying words "whom Thou hast sent," to impress upon his followers that he was only a messenger of God and must not be deified. Jesus emphasized the point finally, because he knew that people had been misled before and had deified prophets.

Lord Krishna and Lord Ramchandra had been worshipped in India not as "sons of God," but as gods themselves. Buddha was adored as "*the Sinless One* conceived through some supernatural agency."

Unfortunately, the followers of Christ also refused to respect his final instructions and began to worship him as a deity. At this deification how grieved must be the soul of the holy Prophet Jesus who took every precaution against his being worshipped by announcing that he was but a messenger of God. He is free from any responsibility for what his followers do, for he discharged his mission to the best of his ability. He was perhaps anticipating such a departure on the part of his adherents when he addressed his God thus :

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name" (St. John xvii. 12).

The only method of pleasing the soul of our holy Prophet Jesus (may Allah bless his soul !) is to believe in what he inculcated ; and that is very explicitly given in St. John xvii. 3, as shown above, and which can briefly be put in the following words :

"There is no deity but God, and Jesus is but His messenger."

This is similar to what was preached by the holy Prophet Muhammad : *La ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad ar-Rasul-Allah*, i.e. there is no deity but God, and Muhammad is a prophet of God.

The holy Prophet Muhammad left no room for mistake, and made the formula of *La ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad ar-Rasul-Allah* the essence of Islam, and it is repeated every day by every Muslim child, man and woman, high and low, Easterner and Westerner, and it constantly reminds them of the fact that Muhammad is not to be worshipped as a god, but is to be regarded only as a prophet, and that the only object of worship is the ONLY TRUE GOD, whose Unity was proclaimed not only by Muhammad but also by Jesus, Moses, Jacob, Isaac, Ishmael, Abraham, and, in short, by all the Prophets (peace on them all!).

BISMILLAH

PRAISE be to Thee my God, Lord of the Worlds!
 O merciful, compassionate art Thou!
 The King of all on day of reckoning,
 Thee only do we worship and adore.
 To Thee, most merciful, we cry for help;
 O guide us ever more on the straight path,
 The path of those to whom Thou gracious art;
 On whom Thine anger falls not then nor now,
 The path of them that from Thee do not stray.

MUSHTARI BEGUM.

Bijnor.

SIN-BEARERS

By JOHN PARKINSON

MAN is a social animal. He likes company, the company of his fellows. He is biased to a particular feeling for those of his own blood first; followed by those of his own nation; next those of his own race or colour. He is moral. The social instinct creates a standard of morality; only by such can the fabric hold together, whether clan or nation. The beginnings of the social state, binding families and tribes and nations and races, lie far back in the dim and distant past, the unwritten history of the world. The habits and customs and the total superstructure of knowledge had their origin in the primeval lore of the savage. The man who chipped the first flint knife or arrow-head and kindled the first fire was the founder of the science that gave mankind the superiority over the rest of the animal kingdom in combat, and in counteracting temperature in varying seasons and climates; the pioneer of inventions which in the twentieth century drives the commerce and factories of the world, and destroys man himself with deadly torpedo and terrible 15-inch gun. The man who fashioned the first canoe by fire and flint axe from the stem of a tree and boldly launched it upon the waters, was the founder and harbinger of modern exploration and the world-wide commercial activity of the nations by means of railway and mammoth liner. The man who first turned his eyes to the heavens and recognized the movements of the heavenly bodies, and thought on their aim

and object, their origin and destiny, was the herald of the world's master thinkers. Those were the beginnings, and they were small. Thought grows and accumulates, it cannot help itself—such is its nature. Thought creates thought and adds problem to problem in a never-ending series. Generation after generation collects facts and adds new data. As experience widened and reason grew more keen and critical, the wheat was sifted from the chaff, the good from the bad, the correct from the incorrect. Man became better and prouder and nobler, and walked more upright. So man grew and developed mentally and spiritually, and reared the mighty mansion of civilization, rich with the labour of centuries and adorned with his noblest ideals, his most perfect aspirations, yet bearing with all the marks of his lowly origin and his mental fallibility. The beginnings always reach back to the struggle and strivings and mental actions of our savage ancestors long before Bel and Odin and Marduk or Ea wielded the thunder or cast the lightning, or churned the ocean into ungovernable fury.

As might be expected, the beginnings are veiled in mist, hidden in the deep recesses of antiquity, for the art of writing was not, and memory was only forming in the crucible of Time.

Speculations are rife, and theories in plenty have been expounded, on the actual process of development of various customs and beliefs. Into these we need not at present enter: the origin and development of stone worship, the worship of plants, fire, serpents, and the sun and heavenly bodies, nor of totemism and animism. Suffice it, they arose and developed, and many of the customs and ritualistic practices which accompanied them remain in a modified form. Myths arose, and spread and clashed with the meeting of the nations and intermingled in the world-play of race and empire and the movements of the peoples. Man in the early stages of his intellectual progress read and described all natural phenomena in terms of his own character and activity. He personified them. He peopled the universe of nature with spirits, even as present-day ontologists of extreme views people the aerial and ethereal spaces with disembodied, dematerialised phantoms. Only early man had less of them; so he brought into existence the Sun-gods—Mithra, Apollo, Adonis, Attis, Osiris, Horus, Marduk, and Krishna, and moulded them in his own image and attributed to them his own passions. So he peopled clouds and

hills and vales and streams, and the ash-tree Igdrasil, the oaks of Dodona, the bo-tree of India, the mistletoe, the Arician grove, the slopes of Helicon, and the crest of Olympus became sacred to him, the dwelling-place of his deities.

When the wind howled or sighed the divine Maruts rode upon its bosom, or the chariot of Mars seemed scudding through the drifting cloud, or the lyre of Orpheus gave heavenly music to the ear. The blue sky was personified and deified in many forms, as Dyaus, Indra (also the sun), Brahma, Zeus, and Odin. The dawn violet-tinted became a nymph flying before the embrace of the Sun-god, as Eos, or Dahana, or Daphne; the Moon, Selene, Artemis, or Pallas the blue-eyed maid of Greece, or Diana the huntress. The Earth became Prithivi, Demeter, and Hertha.

When drought came, or famine, flood, hurricane, defeat or pestilence, the gods were angry, for they were jealous gods, and man had somehow neglected them, and vengeance was being wreaked for the fall. Man knew, from daily experience, that by a timely gift the anger of a friend might be turned aside and an enemy might be bought off. What more natural, therefore, than that his gods also might be propitiated in a similar way? What more natural than that an agricultural race should offer the firstfruits of their labour, fruits or flowers, or meals or wine; for a pastoral race to offer the finest of the flocks—a lamb, a ram, a goat, or a bullock; to the warlike conquering race to offer as a sacrifice the finest example of manly beauty or the fairest of the captives? As warlike nations were the most powerful, and the founders of empires, their mode of worship was bound through time to be recognized as the best and highest, so human sacrifice found an accepted and pre-eminent plane.

So man arrived at the stage when he recognized to a certain extent his own shortcomings. He was advancing in the ethical path. He was concerned about his physical and material welfare, his household, his goods, his cattle or his fields, but he was also beginning to be concerned about his spiritual welfare, present and in the future. Sin, breaking what he believed to be the divine law or laws, was a menace to his conscience. He was seeking means of salvation, but by propitiatory sacrifice, ablutions, magic and other practices, principally by making others suffer in his stead.

"8. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

"9. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him *for* a sin offering.

"10. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, *and* to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

"21. And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, *and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat*, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.

"22. And the goat *shall bear upon him* all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness." (See Leviticus xvi.)

So the scapegoat Azazel bore into the wilderness the sins of the people, or, as the Mishna has it if my memory does not fail me, carries them with it over a precipice. So each family among the Adivi let loose a sheep to wander at its own free-will a perpetual scapegoat. So the Badagos at every funeral let loose a scape-calf to bear the sins of the deceased. Azazel probably stands for the Goat-god = Capricornus, the winter sun. The "messengers" or "scape-goats" do not seem to have been offered to any god in particular, although the ceremony was common in various forms to many peoples and in many lands. The victim being fabled to be divine, received divine honour, becoming by the ceremony really a god. This deification of the sin-bearing victim is seen more plainly in the cults of the various Sun-gods, when a human victim is offered as a propitiation on the altar. In Mexico, under the Aztecs, human sacrifices were offered to a number of deities, the most important festivals being those of the Sun-god in his dual character of Huitzilopochtli (the spring and summer sun), and Tezcatlipoca (the winter sun). As the sacrificial ceremony is typical, I give a summary from the description of Prescott: A year before the ceremony, a captive distinguished for his beauty, and without blemish on his body, was selected to represent the god, Tezcatlipoca. Tutors instructed him how to perform his part with grace and dignity. He was arrayed in a splendid dress, regaled

with incense and a profusion of sweet-scented flowers. When abroad he was attended by a train of royal pages, the crowd prostrated themselves before him, and did homage as the representative of their deity. A month before his sacrifice, four beautiful girls were selected to share honours of his bed, and with them he continued to live in idle dalliance, feasted at the banquets of the nobles, who paid him all the honours of a divinity. The day of sacrifice arrived. He was stripped of his gaudy apparel, bade his fair partners adieu. One of the royal barges transported him across the lake to the temple. As the procession wound up the sides of the pyramid, the victim threw away his chaplet of flowers and broke in pieces his musical instruments. On the summit he was received by six priests. They led him to a sacrificial stone, a huge block of jasper, with its upper surface somewhat convex. On this the prisoner was stretched. Five priests secured his head and his limbs; while the sixth, clad in a scarlet mantle, emblematic of his bloody office, opened the breast of the victim with a sharp razor of itztli—a volcanic substance, hard as flint—and, inserting his hand in the wound, tore out the palpitating heart. First holding it up to the sun, he then cast it at the feet of the deity to whom the temple was dedicated, while the multitudes below prostrated themselves in humble adoration.

We may note the outstanding doctrines again. The victim was an atonement for the sins of the people, as in the case of the scapegoat. The victim was identified with the god, became God himself. As Robertson Smith says, "the theanthropic character of the victim comes out most clearly." It was still further extended in the feast following the majority of those sacrifices. In that connection with Tezcatlipoca the aristocracy ate at the sacrament the limbs of the victim. The special act of ritual cannibalism was after the sacrifice of a captive taken in war. The body was delivered to the warrior who captured him, and was by him made a special dish at a banquet given in public to his friends.

In the sacrificial ceremony of the Khonds we have a modification or variation of the ritual due to filtration through a different medium or civilization. The human victim was sacrificed to Tari, the Earth Goddess. The victim, according to the account of Macpherson, died for "all mankind"; if

not a volunteer, he or she (women were offered as well as men) must be "bought with a price." The rite lasted three or five days. On the first day the long hair of the victim was shaved off. On the second, he was carefully bathed, newly clothed, and taken in procession to the sacred Meriah grove, where he was fastened to a stake, seated and anointed with ghee, oil and turmeric, garlanded with flowers and worshipped by the assembly. On the third day he was given milk to drink, and the final act of the ritual began. The victim was either fastened to a cross of which the horizontal bar, pierced by the upright, could be raised or lowered at will, or placed in the cleft or split made in the long branch of a green tree, so as to grasp his neck or chest, the open ends being tightly closed so as to imprison him in the wood and make, as it were, a cross of which his body was the upright. It being essential the victim should *not resist*, the sacrifice being assumed to be voluntary for the sins of all mankind, his arms and legs were broken, or the legs only if the arms were secured. In some cases the end was attained by drugging either with opium or datura. The priest wounded the victim with an axe and the crowd then cut him in pieces, the head and intestines being saved. These, after being washed, were burned to ashes along with the body of a sheep. The ashes were spread over the fields, or laid as paste over the houses or granaries. There were many local variations.

In heathendom all over the world the act of sacrifice, either human or animal, was common, the victim by the act becoming "sacred," taking the attributes of the god. Closely connected was the Eucharist or "Sacrament," wherein the flesh and blood of the victim were sacramentally partaken by the worshippers as representing the actual flesh and blood of the god. In later usage, as civilization advanced, bread and wine, or bread and water, were substituted, being transformed ritually by the words or magic of the priest into the actual flesh and blood of the slain god; the partaker thereby becoming one with his god, and acquiring divine favour strength, courage, and other blessings.

"53. Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

"54. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

"55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

"56. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." (See John vi.)

Here we have the same ritualistic and mystery language attributed to Jesus, the very repetitions and continual stress marking its origin. Something similar appears to have occurred in the feasts or sacraments of Dionysos and Mithra. In that of Mithra, as described by Cumont, we have repeated ablutions of the neophytes as preparatory, and by abstinence and austerities. The celebrant consecrated the bread and water, which he mingled with wine. (In the Mazdean service Haoma took the place of wine.) A loaf of bread and a goblet of water were placed before the mystic, over which the priest pronounced the sacred formula. These love-feasts are evidently the ritual commemoration of the banquet which Mithra celebrated with the Sun before his ascension. The rite appears to have been weekly, and was not originally Western or even Mithraic, but of ancient usage in Asia.

The act of ritual cannibalism must have originated at a period when cannibalism was common, especially the eating of captives slain in war, so that the partakers might acquire the courage, strength, and power of the slain. No priesthood was likely to be able to force a tribe or a nation morally opposed to the eating of human flesh into such a practice, nor were they likely to adopt it of their own accord; not even a savage would conceive of offering to his god what he himself revolted at. But once initiated, it survived long after the people rejected cannibalism as a purely religious rite. In later or higher states of civilization, as we have seen, bread and wine replaced the flesh and blood, the scapegoat ousted the human sacrifice. The scapegoat also passed away, and the Sun-god himself was fabled to have been crucified to save mankind, being resurrected on the third day and raised to heaven; taking his place again in the pantheon as the Saviour of mankind and the Mediator between his devotees and the supreme god or gods or the Council of Heaven. Osiris and Dionysos die and rise again, inspire chastity or self-purification, take away sin, and judge the dead at the last judgment. Bel, Marduk, Zeus, Helios, Artemis, Herakles, Khonsu, and Horus, were all entitled mediators or saviours, or held part of the attributes of such.

So has man been anxious for the salvation of his soul, and in his march of progress, physically and intellectually, he has adopted many devices to secure it. He has sacrificed the fruits of his toil and his cattle, and even his children, to propitiate his gods, and delivered up on the altar of atonement his fellow-man. He has assumed Sun-gods and Demi-gods and God-men as saviours and as mediators to die for and to intercede for his sins. He has been always anxious to escape suffering himself, and in his eagerness to prevent it he has made others suffer, and assumed that others suffered for his benefit, and the very beliefs cramp and dwarf his soul. By no such method can man attain salvation. Islam has swept that myth away. Only by his own efforts can his emancipation be obtained—by a purification of his life, a striving for the highest, a complete surrender, complete submission to the Divine that pervades the universe and guides conduct; so ruling his action and training his character that he will be without fear and without reproach. In all things a good and faithful servant.

"Strive always for the highest, you will gain the highest seat,
And have the half-moon's silver as a covering for your feet."

ISLAM AND THE AFRICAN

By DUSÉ MOHAMED

THE wonderful progress of Islam on the continent of Africa, which produced such consternation among the Christians there, resulting in the famous Kikuyu Conference, is to be found in the great simplicity of the Faith and the rational appeal it makes to humanity at large.

It has been claimed by so-called "authorities" that Islam is a non-progressive religion only suited to primitive peoples, and in this way these "Informed" writers account for its marvellous reception on the "Dark Continent."

The fact of its success is, however, to be found in its easy approach, and the absence of that mystifying element which characterizes many other religions.

The Muslim missionary's method is simplicity itself. He comes without any of the appurtenances which other religious teachers deem necessary. His sole paraphernalia consists of the Holy Quran. He arrives at the outskirts of a village, seats

himself under a tree, opens the Book, and proceeds to read. At the five appointed times he does his prayers, returning to the Book during the intervals—it must be borne in mind that he neither speaks the language of the people, nor is he supplied with food. In due course some straying villager arrives; he watches from afar the actions of the stranger, subsequently returning to the village with tidings of the new arrival. The Head Chief collects the Elders and they approach the missionary in a body. By signs they ask him whence he comes and his business. He informs them, also by signs, that he is a Servant and messenger of God. They inquire whether he needs food, and on his replying in the affirmative a messenger is dispatched to procure a substantial meal. The Chief requests the missionary to return with him to the village, which invitation he invariably declines.

A day, perhaps two, passes—meals being brought to the tree of the missionary in the interim—and the Chief pays a second visit. The missionary is again importuned to honour the village with his presence; he accepts, and is lodged in the kraal of the Chief. It must be understood that an African Chief is regarded by his villagers with the highest possible respect—a respect bordering on veneration. He is not only the head of the village, but the head of the family, and almost all African peoples live under the patriarchal system. His people are his children, and he is consulted on every matter of importance, social or domestic. It therefore follows that the position of the missionary by reason of his residence within the compound of the Head Chief becomes one of importance, and being a Holy man, the villagers regard him with awe.

The missionary, whilst obtaining the rudiments of the particular language of the village he inhabits for the time being, also imparts a smattering of Arabic to the Chief and the members of his compound. The Muslim missionary also impresses his host with his earnestness, and this earnestness results in inquiry about the Faith; and as the missionary is by this time in a position to explain in simple language that “There is no God but God and Mohamed is the Prophet of God,” and that those who accept this declaration of Faith with all it implies have accepted Islam—leaves an indelible imprint on the mind of the Chief. Needless to say, the entire declaration being so simple, rational, and insistent, the Chief becomes

a convert, together with his family. In due course the entire village is converted, a special hut or compound is built which does duty as a Mosque, prayers are called in the regulation manner, and these villagers become most devout followers of the holy Prophet.

Now, there is hardly a village in any part of Africa which is unacquainted with missionary effort of some sort. For this reason the average African possesses some knowledge of that particular religion which it was the mission of Islam to supersede. But the puzzling intricacies attendant upon "the old order," which in no way resembles the teachings of its founder, has only mystified the "native" mind even as it has driven the educated mind of the West to materialism and a whole legion of other "isms."

It is too hastily assumed that the "mere African native" does not think. It is because he does think that he would rather remain a pagan, with his elaborate pagan ceremonial, than adopt a faith which mystifies without satisfying. Moreover, he is given practical demonstration that the "white man's religion," as he terms it, is capable of dual interpretation, and this dual interpretation is always in favour of the European.

The white trader, professing the religion in question, may rob a native with impunity, but the white missionary reads, "Thou shalt not steal," and impresses upon the African, with all the eloquence at his command, the excellence of this God-given precept. The European missionary discourages polygamy, but not a few Europeans outdo the African in the matter of female appenages, and the unfortunate offspring resulting from a multitude of irregular unions are for the most part despised by European and African alike. The European missionary teaches that all men are equal in God's sight; yet in the house of God the European occupies the place nearest to God's minister (?), and the "native," when permitted to enter God's house for white men, is relegated to the uttermost confines of the edifice.

"Love one another; for we are all brothers"! is the sublime pronouncement of the missionary; but, as already pointed out, the love and brotherhood does not even exist within the four walls of the building devoted to the service of the God of Love.

Hence, the African either embraces this religion from interested motives, or because he feels the spiritual need of something more elevating than his fetish worship, but those of this ilk invariably end their religious pilgrimage in self-delusion, or utter unbelief in anything but the fetish worship of their forebears; and this applies to many of the highly educated people of the coast towns. Of course there is a very large percentage of African Christians. These may be divided into two classes. Those, on the one hand, who inherited Christianity from slave parents or Boer influences at a period anterior to the advent of Islam in the west and south respectively; and on the other, those migratory tribes from the interior who come to the coast on the west or the mines in the south to seek employment. These, for the most part, adopted the dominant religion because it is the white man's religion, and on their return to the hinterland continue the interrupted practice of the faith of their fathers.

Directly, however, Islam is preached by its devoted missionaries, and the African sees that the Muslim teacher does not require a mission-house, that the equality and brotherhood of the faith is not a bastard, but a real equality, that the domestic life of the believer is not greatly disturbed, that from every point of view Islam is rational, it is straightway adopted, and the African Muslim becomes exclusive, abjuring his wooden gods, faithfully accepting the Quran as his guide in all things. In fact the religion of the African Muslim more nearly approaches the grand simplicity of Islam's infancy, shorn as it is of puzzling commentators, than is to be observed in any other quarter of the Muslim world.

The African Muslim's exclusiveness consists not only in his abstaining from the forbidden things of the Book, but also extends to such matters as education. Unfortunately, or fortunately, the average African Muslim of the interior is possessed of little book learning. He avoids the Christian mission school because his devotion to Islam is of so high a character, he fears that Christian contact with, or influence on, his children might result in their adopting a religion which he despises. He does not despise Christianity because it is the religion of Christ, for he is taught to respect the founder of that religion. His contempt is levelled at the

expositors and adherents of that faith for the reasons stated above. He bewails the fact that there are no well-equipped Islamic schools within his reach, because he knows that his children, owing to their lack of education, must be outstripped in the matter of worldly endeavour by the Christian children who possess greater educational advantages.

He is, however, compensated in a measure for his want of "book learning" by the esteem in which he is held even by the European Christians. European Christian merchants in Africa will credit a Muslim African with thousands of pounds' worth of goods, without security. But the same merchant would not give a Christian "native" credit, however well known, unless adequate security were furnished by the would-be creditor.

The word of an African Muslim is always accepted by the European Christian, but the honour of the average Christian African is a byword! This may appear curious to the superficial observer, but it proves how little faith the average European appears to have in the ennobling qualities of his religion. Of course this peculiar attitude of the European does not do justice to the Christian African. I have met and transacted business with African Christian ladies and gentlemen from the "Dark Continent" who were the soul of honour and probity, and I was honoured in numbering them among my friends. On the other hand, I have met Muslims of whom I was ashamed, because of their reprehensible conduct. Humanity being what it is, good and bad men will be found in all walks of life and in all religious systems.

The bad African Christian is the undoubted product of contact with the bad European Christian, and the African being naturally impressionable, not infrequently absorbs the bad teachings of the European, which he considers to be of a rather high order because of the elevated atmosphere of prestige in which the European envelops himself.

Islam, however, is Islam. It has, and is, carrying on the work and Word by a God-given method of peaceful penetration. We have no accurate statistics, but it is estimated that there are something like 20,000,000 Muslims on the continent of Africa; and year by year the number increases. The Christian missionary admits his inability to cope with this wonderful

conversion. For whereas there are many African Christians who have embraced Islam, there are no African converts from Islam to Christianity. The seed is sown and the cry ascends to the All-Merciful from a million African compounds: "There is no God but God! and Muhammad is the Prophet of God!"

NATURE'S PROBLEMS. NO. III

THE SWING OF THE PENDULUM: A FEW WORDS ON THE LAW OF PERIODICITY

By Professor N. STEPHEN

"Thus we go, to and fro;
So wags the world."

ANON.

IN the working of Nature there are certain phenomena, so persistent in their occurrence, so general in their application, and so universal in their effects, that they may be spoken of as Nature's Laws or Problems.

Two of these I have already put before you in these pages,^{*} and I ask you now to consider briefly another, no less evident, and no less important in its teaching, namely, The Law of Periodicity, of Ebb and Flow, which I referred to in my second paper as "The Swing of Nature's Pendulum." Here we have one of those instances which we can use as its own example, for the time of its existence has carried it through the periodic swing more than once. It has been known, forgotten, and known yet again, as civilization and knowledge rose and fell, with changing people, changing manners, and passing ages.

A little over a century ago this knowledge had been lost or forgotten; or at most the fact was recognized vaguely by a few students who thought it could have only a very limited application. But the studies and experiments of modern science have all tended to show that this Law of Periodicity is universal; the swing may not always be alike, in fact is seldom the same, being measured, in some cases by hours, as in the ebb and flow of the tides, in others by cycles of many years, as in the planetary and solar cycles, or in the periods of seismic and other great natural phenomena, many of which are not yet fully understood, being like a book as yet unreadable in parts, but full of interest; and so far as we can

^{*} ISLAMIC REVIEW, January and February 1916.

grasp its meaning, pointing to a still more complete knowledge of this law as likely to prove explanatory of much that is yet dark to us.

Ages ago, the existence of this law was recognized by priests, astronomers, and students. Even so far back as the earliest days of this world's history it was known to the philosophers of China and India, and by the Magi of Egypt and Assyria ; but unfortunately, much that they knew is lost to us of the twentieth century. I know there are many who may not agree with that view ; but who shall say what, or how much, has been lost in the destruction of so many ancient writings and manuscripts, as are known to have taken place ? I admit, that from what we do know, it would seem that most of these learned men (but not all) were led away on wrong lines, and instead of a careful study of the subject, used an imperfect knowledge—to add to their own importance and enable them to pose as PROPHETS, or as persons gifted with a power beyond that of ordinary mortals ; and to impose on those of less knowledge, by foretelling certain events, and setting up a claim to a power of penetrating into the future, such as they did not, and could not, possess, or ever hope to possess ; because, while it is inherent in human nature to long, for a knowledge of coming events, to peep, ever so slightly, into futurity, and to think and say, "If I had but known," hinting at unlimited advantages to be derived from such knowledge, it should be remembered that life is not all, or to all, a time of things to be desired ; that there are in it times of sorrow, and trouble, which we would gladly forget ; or at least are thankful to look back upon as past, rather than as that which is to come—things hard enough to look back upon, but still more terrible to look forward to.

So much am I impressed by this view, that it seems to me that if each individual of our race could know, early in life, all that the future had in store for him, or could our race foresee all that was in store for each individual member of it, a few—a very few—might be the happier. But, as a whole, "probably four-fifths of the people would live in misery and fear, and most of the other fifth would evade suffering and dread by suicide."

God, the Great, the Merciful, knew it would not be good for us to see too far into the future, so mercifully drew a veil 'twixt it and us. But if we know not what lies upon the farther side of that veil, this at least we know, that—

"Whoever with an earnest soul
Strives for some end, from this low world afar ;
Still upward travels, though he miss the goal,
And strays—but towards a star."

LYTTON.

It was doubtless a knowledge of this weakness in humanity, and the power such a knowledge, or pretence of knowledge, gave them over their fellows, that made so many of the early astronomers become only astrologers ; little better, in fact, than he fortune-teller of our own day.

We may note, in passing, that another reason for the claims

so set up, and, at the same time, the cause of the loss of so much of what was known, may be found in the fact that all scientific and almost all other knowledge was confined to the priestly class, who, so long as the people could be kept in ignorance, laid claim to a supreme measure both of power and wisdom, and to a position little short of divine. It is not surprising that when they found that position endangered, by such knowledge becoming the property of the people generally, they at once denounced that knowledge, and forbade any, except members of their own "privileged class," to meddle in those studies; and in some cases even destroyed such writings as had been preserved, and which embodied all that was known on such matters at that time.

Here, again, we see that the pendulum, having reached its lowest point, must upward swing again, and that knowledge, no less than truth, "when crushed to earth will rise again"; and so never were Nature's laws so carefully studied or so generally comprehended as to-day, when, though many frauds flourish, as they always will—for somehow "Men like to be deceived"—yet Nature's secrets are being won from her and earnestly, yet reverently, studied so that the truth may be known to all such as will seek and receive it.

Here we will leave these wide, I might almost say stupendous, fields of research, to glance for awhile at more familiar and more easily comprehended examples of this law, as seen in the things which come within the observation of the ordinary man quite as much as the student—though I must say he often declines to recognize them, or to learn the lessons they would teach.

To take first the most familiar example of Periodicity—Day and Night, Light and Darkness. Of course I am aware such periods are not of the same duration in all parts of the world, varying from hours to months; but their periodic alternation, which is the essential point in my argument, is universal, and, in far the greater part of the world, is to be measured by hours. Further, it will be found that the more closely these periods approach to the normal day and night of twenty-four hours' duration, the healthier, the stronger, and the more advanced are the people and nations living under such conditions.

The exceptions cover only a limited area, and relatively small number of people; and the result as seen in these areas, and people, goes far to prove that the more regular and even, the less violent and long, the swing of the pendulum, the better for all concerned.

One other point here. Science has given us the means of turning night into day by means of artificial light, but, like many of the so-called *blessings* of science, it is far from an *unmixed blessing*, bringing with it many temptations to violate Nature's law, which can never be done with impunity, or safety.

Closely allied to this we note the periodicity of the seasons, for summer and winter are but vegetations, day and night the time of growth and rest, of perfection and decay. Notice here

how universal and all-pervading this great law, how in writing of one illustration I am led into another—the swing of the pendulum as seen in growth and decay. Nature having once brought a thing to a perfect end, never stands still; her purpose accomplished, she suffers her creatures to pass again to rest and decay—but *not to destruction*. Leaves have their time to fall, flowers to wither, stars to set, but all to rise again in their season as the pendulum upward swings once more, and “sunshine follows rain.”

Just a thought on those words in italics, “not to destruction.” I heard a very eminent scholar and scientist once argue that destruction in its full meaning was an impossibility; that you can change the form or appearance of many things, but that nothing once created can ever be destroyed; all things springing from dust, only to return to dust and rise yet again in a never-ending cycle of change. It was a great thought, but I must not enlarge on it here, so we will leave it as a side-light and pass on to note that other phrase, “sunshine follows rain”—another instance of alternation. And, oh! how we English do grumble at the way Nature dispenses her sunshine and showers; instead of grumbling, think a little, and you will see it is mostly because we take too narrow a view.

I am a town dweller; to-day I promised myself a visit to the country: it rains, and in my disappointment I say, “What a nuisance! it’s always wet.” At the same moment, probably at the very farm I intended to visit, the farmer is thankful for the shower, or even downpour, so much needed by his crops.

Thus our judgment is warped by our desires, our estimate of a thing altered by our point of view.

“Let any two people be talking together—
The subject shall be just the state of the weather—
You will find it the same both with young or with old:
’Tis either too hot, or else ’tis too cold;
’Tis either too wet, or else ’tis too dry;
The glass is too low, or else ’tis too high;
Till, if both had their wishes just jumbled together,
The devil himself could not live in such weather.”

ANON.

Did you, my reader, ever pause awhile and try to think out what would happen if some of our wishes, made thoughtlessly or in ignorance, were granted to us?

For instance, we often hear such as this—

“Oh for a land of sunshine,
Where rain and cold are not;
And it is always summer,
Where winter cometh not!”

Here is a description of just such a land; it is taken from the book of an American writer, who at the time of writing resided amid just such conditions. He writes:—

“The climate here is always summer—for nine months on end the sun shines all day, and every day; and, for a month, we thought it an earthly Paradise; but in three months how sick we were, how weary, of the perpetual glitter. How we

longed for just one kindly rainfall to refresh the parched and suffering earth, no words of mine can tell; we would have given anything, all we possessed, or we thought we would, for just an occasional wet day."

So it is with humanity at large. The thing we have not is ever the most desired; the blessings we have, ever the least valued.

But God the Almighty, the Wise, knew what was best, and set up this great law of periodicity which brings to us change and variety—that change which is an actual necessity to a healthy, intellectual life; that variety which gives life most of its charm. What says an Eastern proverb? (excuse the crude translation): "He who never tastes a bitter fruit will soon hate the flavour of honey." He was a close observer who first wrote that; for you will find it is

"Variety, the very spice of life,
That gives it all its flavour."

COWPER.

Let me trespass a little longer on your time, though I have written almost enough to prove not only the EXISTENCE, but also the WISDOM, of Nature's ebb and flow.

Perhaps one of the most curious and little thought-of illustrations is the now well-established theory of the periodicity of disease, at first recognized only in a few diseases, but now generally acknowledged to apply more or less markedly to all of them. As Dr. W. J. Russell has written: "All diseases may be said to have three periods—(1) Latency; (2) Rising or developing stage; fever; (3) Falling or declining stage; and these may exhaust the disease; or, as in most cases, the two latter stages may alternate with each other for some time."

This is so you find in what are known as remittent diseases, such as typhoid, tropical, or hectic fevers, or, with longer and more marked periods, in those called intermittent—all too familiar examples of which are the various forms of ague, the very names of which are taken from the length of the period. For instance, quotidian ague, in which the fit comes on daily; tertian, every third day; quartan, every fourth day. The wise physician, knowing this, takes every possible advantage of the intervals to strengthen the parts attacked, or to exhibit such remedies as will enable the body the better to resist the next acute period.

Then we have the same fact in the alternating periods of labour and rest. And it would seem as if here we have a glimpse of something which suggests that Nature is herself subject to this same law; that Young's idea of "Tired Nature" (see "Night Thoughts") may be more of a scientific truth than he knew it for; but that is a thought big with possibilities, but too obscure for present discussion. Certain it is that all NATURE'S CHILDREN must have the alternate periods of labour and rest, or the result is a breakdown, mentally or bodily, or both.

A voice suggests to me that there are some who never labour, whose life is all rest.

I answer this is not so—is not true. The idea is a mistake, and arises from a misunderstanding of the terms labour and rest. That the very essence of this law is alternation, and that what may be labour in one case may be rest in another.

The most perfect form of rest is certainly seen in sleep, yet a man may have too much of that, and even be "tired of sleep." While people whose sole pursuit is pleasure, often seek their pleasure with as great and exhausting an amount of labour as any mere manual labourer ever experiences, and only too often pay dearly for it, for as

"Sure as night follows day,
Death treads in pleasure's footsteps round the world,
When pleasure treads the paths
Which reason shuns."

YOUNG.

Labour and rest; of all the examples I have quoted the one which Nature teaches in the plainest language, the one which she has specially caused this very swing of the pendulum to bring most suitably about—the day, and light, for labour, the night, and dark, for sleep and rest. Well may the weary say with Sancho Panza:

"Now blessings light on him who first invented sleep. It covers a man all over, thoughts and all, like a cloak! It is meat for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, heat for the cold, cold for the hot" (Cervantes, "Don Quixote").

No man can WORK WELL for long unless he also SLEEP WELL. Not that all require the same amount. Some seem able to keep well with five hours' sleep in twenty-four, while others cannot do with less than nine; but the "happy medium," seven, seems to be the more general. The measure may vary, but to all comes sleep.

"Sleep, thou repose of all things; sleep, thou gentlest of the deities; thou peace of the mind from which care flies; who dost soothe the hearts of men wearied with the toils of day; and refittest them for labour" (Ovid, Riley's translation).

REFITTEST THEM FOR LABOUR, that is the wonderful and beautiful thought. We hear at times of people breaking down, and dying, from TOO MUCH WORK. It would be more correct to say, FOR WANT OF REST. It is wonderful what an amount of work a man can do if he will but obey Nature's law and alternate his work with rest; but if he will work right on, defying the swing of Nature's pendulum, then he must pay the penalty and suffer, NOT FROM TOO MUCH WORK, but from WORKING WRONGLY, in defiance of Nature's laws. You may say, and I agree, that there are times of emergency when this cannot be avoided. Well, Nature is inflexible, but not harsh. She, like a friendly banker, lets you draw an overdraft, and if it be not too great, a similar extension on the other side will set things right. But this is a strictly limited privilege, and must not be pushed too far.

Fatigue up to a point may do no harm. Beyond a certain point it is certain to do harm. EXHAUSTION, CARRIED TOO FAR, MEANS LOSS OF POWER BEYOND RECOVERY. We may seem to recover, but there is a weakness left, and never again can we stand the same strain without a breakdown. Any trainer, either of men or horses, knows this, and will tell you it is not enough to know how to get the very best out of man or beast, but his greatest anxiety is to KNOW WHEN TO STOP—to recognize the signs which show the breaking-point, and to avoid over-training. Have you not heard both of athletes and horses achieving some wondrous feat, and ever after being spoken of as disappointing—for never again do they come near to the same level? Why? They have drawn too large an overdraft, and Nature has made them bankrupt.

So much for Nature and the law. How, then, do we as men receive and treat these facts? In answer, we may say there are four classes of men, roughly speaking—

1st. Those who, knowing nothing, stumble on in ignorance, coming to grief sometimes, and at other times getting on all right, simply by luck or chance.

2nd. Those who know, but simply let things slide; and when they come to grief, expect every one to be sorry for them; never thinking of the trouble, and sorrow, they may, and do, cause for others. These are generally made up of the selfish class, who live only for themselves and their own pleasure. Their motto should be—"No matter who sinks if I swim." Is there any injustice if they often sink themselves? I see none. They live only for their own ends, and the world is none the poorer when they happen to go under in the struggle.

3rd. Those who, knowing the laws, deliberately set themselves to fight against them. This class is greatly increased by the demands of our over-civilized and artificial ways of life, especially in large towns, where night is often turned into day, the improvements in, and cheaper cost of, artificial light having made it possible for us to continue our labours, whether at work or play far into those hours which Nature, by darkness, has set apart for rest. I have said before, and I repeat it now, I am convinced that the cause of the increased, and increasing, nerves and nerve diseases, and the large number of anæmic people we meet nowadays, is to be found in this turning night into day—this making, or trying to make, Nature's laws conform to our convenience rather than our convenience conform to Nature's laws, a course which always did, and always will, end in disaster. In Nature's laws (which is only a weaker way of saying God's laws) we have the only safe way, and if we will not walk in accord with them, Nature will take her revenge, and we shall have to pay the price in shattered nerves, broken health, feeble minds, and shortened lives.

Lastly, we have those who know and reverence Nature and God in Nature, wisely making the best of both periods

in the swing of the pendulum; working in season, playing in season, resting in season, knowing that

"Rest is not quitting the busy career,
Rest is the fitting of self to its sphere."

J. S. DWIGHT.

These are they who make the best of, and get the best out of, life; who labour with pleasure, who work with pleasure, and who rest in pleasure, and who, when comes to them, as it will to all, that last call to rest which ends the labour of life, shall "Sleep in peace, to wake in joy."

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

To the Editor of the ISLAMIC REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,

With your kind permission I should like to thank Mr. Padfield for his courteous letter in your March issue, especially as we seem to come to the same conclusion, and his letter may well be read as a more technical addition to my paper.

I would not like your readers to think I was careless, however, on such a subject, so I wish to say I was present as a guest, some time ago, at a scientific and physiological *conversazione* given by a certain university, and among the exhibits was one closely resembling a small jelly-fish, but without the markings generally seen in the fish; this the exhibitor claimed to be a scientific or artificial (?) production of protoplasm, the basis of life. As to the truth of the claim I say nothing, but, like the oft-quoted Scotsman, "I hae my doubts." Mr. Padfield admits there is room to differ, but for my purpose it was quite needless to discuss the question; because, *granting all that was claimed*, rightly or wrongly, the conclusion was the same, viz. that neither protoplasm nor any other *vital* matter had yet been artificially produced. The key-word, so far as I am concerned, is "Vital." As to the quotation, in order to avoid as far as possible any technicalities, I used only the first and last part. I must admit it would have been better to have marked the omission.

My aim in all these papers is to appeal to those whose knowledge of science is limited, and so to interest (if possible) as to make them, like Oliver Twist, "ask for more," or seek it in fuller and more able works than mine.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I am yours sincerely,

N. STEPHEN.

March 9, 1916.