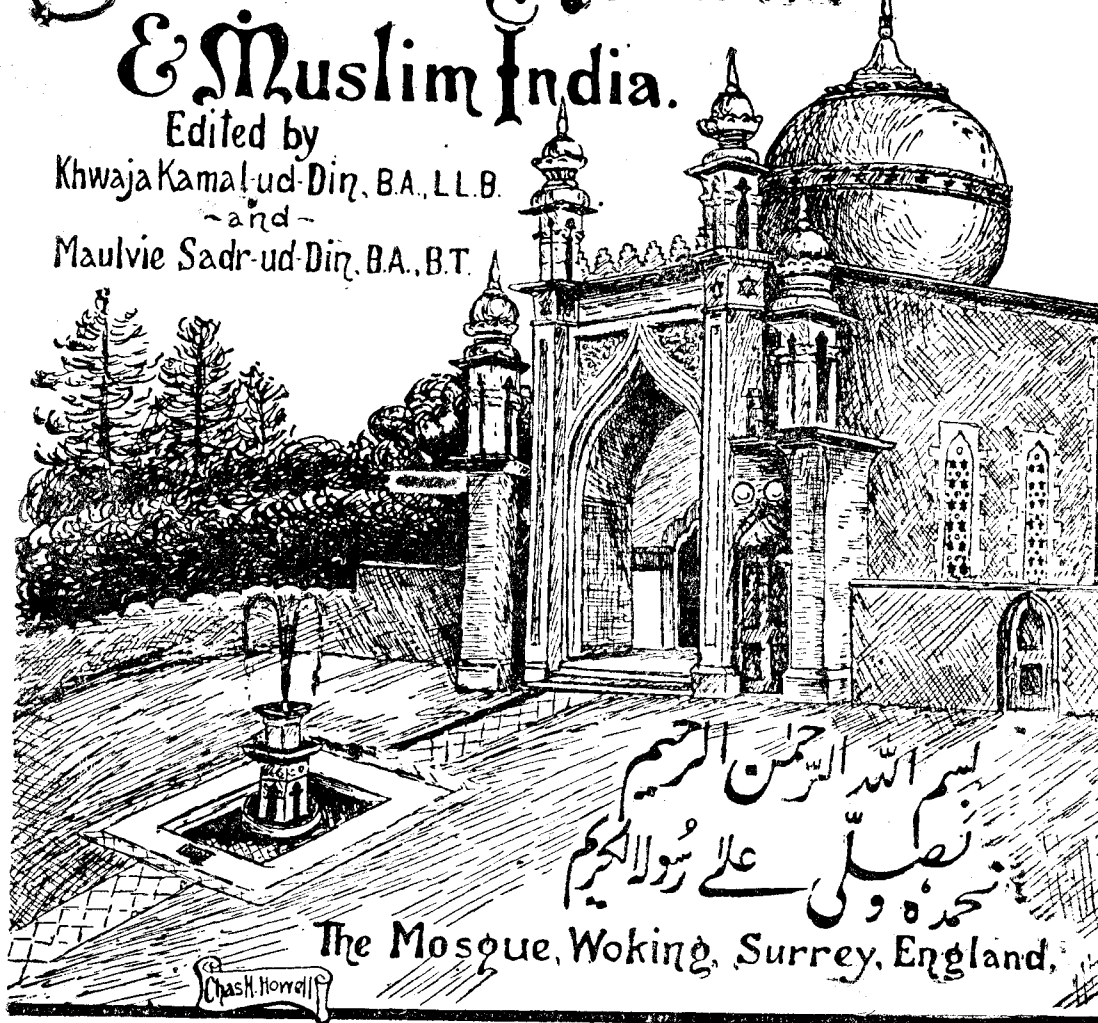


Islamic Review & Muslim India.

Edited by
Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, B.A., LL.B.
-and-
Maulvie Sadr-ud-Din, B.A., B.T.



The Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.

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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN.

THE HOLY QUR-ÂN. Containing the Arabic text, with English translation and commentary. By MAULVI MUHAMMAD ALI. 10 × 6½, cxv + 1,273 pp. Woking: *The Islamic Review*.

"We have here in an attractive form and bound in flexible leather cover the first English translation and commentary of the Qur-ân by a Moslem theologian, President Ahmadiyah Anjuman-I-Ishaet-i-Islam, Lahore. The Arabic text, written by expert calligraphists in India, accompanies each verse. The commentary is based on the authentic traditions of the Prophet as interpreted by Moslem *savants*. A preface of 90 pages discusses the special features of Islam as disclosed in the Qur-ân and the authenticity of the book. A detailed exposition of the prominent features of the study of the Qur-ân is reserved for a later volume."—*Literary Supplement, The Times*, 25th October, 1917.

"THE HOLY QUR-ÂN."

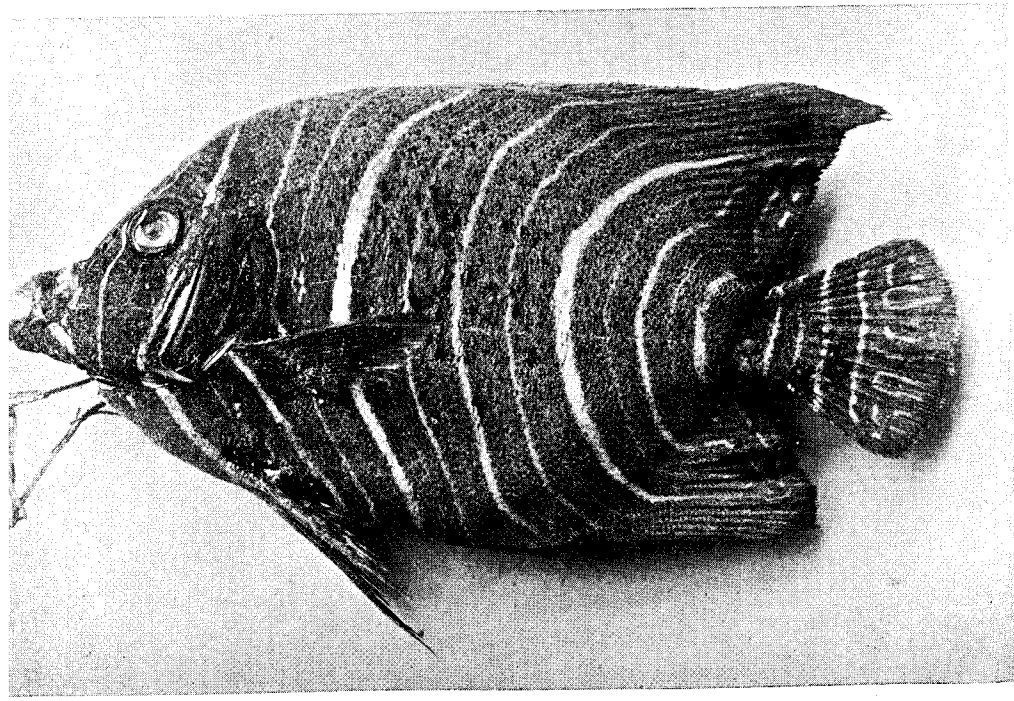
"'If men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Qur-ân,' said the Prophet, 'they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others.' I must confess that, without going quite so far as to accept this view of the matter, I have always found a fascination in looking through occasional chapters of the Koran—'Qur-ân' comes awkwardly from the pen, even though it may be the more correct form—and have often felt that there was something lacking in editions prepared by Christian editors. The lack is removed by the issue of a very fine edition, 'The Holy Qur-ân,' by a distinguished Muslim, Maulvi Muhammad Ali, of Lahore, who has devoted seven years to its preparation, which comes to me from the 'Islamic Review' office, in the Muslim settlement at Woking. It gives the Arabic text (which, I am sorry to say, is of no use to me) in parallel with the translation; the commentary is remarkably full and interesting; the preface is both a summary of Islamic teaching and practice and a history of 'the Book'; and—even in war time—the thinnest of thin India paper, gilt edges, beautiful type, and a limp green morocco binding make the volume an unusually sumptuous one."—*Westminster Gazette*, 12th November, 1917.

THE HOLY QUR-ÂN: containing the Arabic text, with English translation and commentary by Maulvi Muhammad Ali. *The Islamic Review* Office, Oriental Road, Woking, 1917. 10 by 6½ in., 1392 pp., preface 95 pp.), lists of abbreviations and proper names, table of transliteration of Arabic words, explanation of Arabic words and phrases, text, English translation, commentary, index.

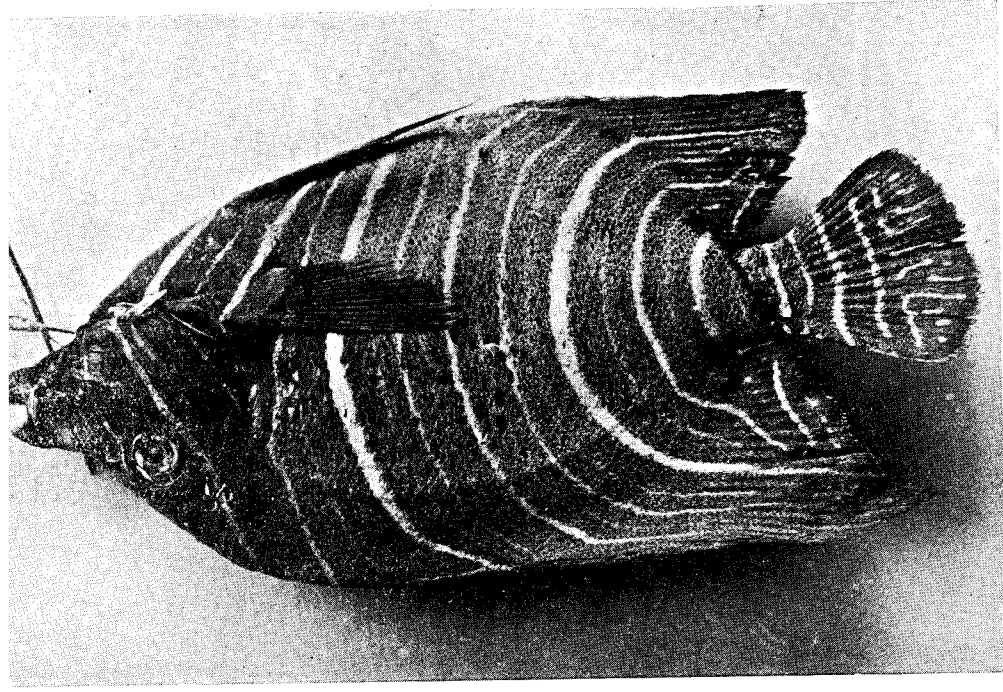
"To the clearly printed Arabic text are appended a translation, as literal as possible, and a commentary. The book is printed on thin paper, handsomely bound in flexible leather, and is altogether exceedingly well produced."—*The Athenæum*, December, 1917.

"The Mohammedan law is binding upon all, from the crowned head to the meanest subject; it is a law interwoven with a system of the wisest, the most learned, and the most enlightened jurisprudence that ever existed in the world."—EDMUND BURKE (*Impeachment of Warren Hastings*).

"... The Qur-ân, the miracle to which Muhammad himself so often appealed as proof of his Divine mission, and a miracle indeed it seems. For the Prophet, though cultured, was illiterate, and there is no reasonable room for doubt that a large part at any rate of that strange flood of eloquence so purely seen came to him in states of trance. The book is like no other book on earth. Explanations of the mystery of its existence have been suggested by the sceptical, but none explains it. It remains a wonder of the world."—MARMADUKE PICKTHALL.



The tail fin bears marks " Lá Iláha Illallah " —There is no deity but



Here the marks look like " Shán Allah " —Glory of God. *—Ser p. 101.*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

ISLAMIC REVIEW

AND

MUSLIM INDIA

VOL. VI]

APRIL 1918

[No. 4

THE HOLY QUR-ĀN

With English Translation and Commentary, printed on high-class India paper, and bound in green flexible leather, *is now ready. Price 20s.* Prospectus and sample pages sent free on application. For Press comments see second page of the cover.

Friday Prayers with Sermon are held at 1.15 p.m. every Friday at 111 Campden Hill Road, near Notting Hill Gate Station, and Lectures are given in English at the Mosque, Woking, every Sunday, and at 111 Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, W., every alternate Sunday¹ at 3.15 p.m. Muslims and non-Muslims are all welcome.

¹ April Sundays, 14th and 28th.

NOTES.

WE promised to give in our April number a full report of our doings at the London Muslim House, which we note as follows:—

The interest of those who frequent this House has now become of a very permanent character. Owing largely to this we even receive inquiries about Islam from quarters as yet inaccessible to our call, and we have extreme pleasure to record that answers to these are always followed by the most desirable results. The lectures which are delivered by Khwaja Kamaluddin are so arranged as to give in a systematic manner the synthesis of Islam in its cardinal principles. Lectures were also delivered by him at the following institutions on the kind invitation of their organizers.

We have great pleasure to note that the voice of Islam finds hearers amongst those to whom no existing religion could give satisfaction.

At the Spiritualists' Circle, Wimbledon:—

2nd January	...	...	Spiritualism and Islam.
16th January	...	...	Goal of Humanity from Muslim Point of View.

At the two Scarsdale Studios, for which our best thanks are due to Mrs. Hall Simpson for her kind invitation:—

24th January	...	...	Lessons Learnt from the Atoms.
31st January	...	...	Spirituality.

His lecture on the 10th February was delivered at the Galleries, 7 New Bond Street, under the auspices of New Light Centre Church, at the invitation of its organizer, Dr. Miller. The lecture, which is reproduced elsewhere, was listened to by a large and appreciative audience. On 3rd March he delivered a rather important lecture on the "Proofs of the Existence of God," before the Atheists' Association. On the 17th of the same month he spoke at Ealing on "Brotherhood in Islam."

It is a healthy sign to find that our new Muslim brothers have begun to work with us in the cause of truth. Our readers who have received their June, 1916, number are not quite unfamiliar with Mr. Habeebullah Lovegrove, who seldom misses an opportunity of familiarizing the simple yet beautiful features of Islam to his circle of friends. We feel heartily pleased, too, that his utterances are always listened to by an appreciative audience. He delivered two lectures in January, before the Ealing and Battersea Spiritualists' Circles respectively, which created a great interest for Islam amongst the members. Mr. Salman Schleich, secretary of the London Muslim Society, also addressed on "Universalism in Islam," at Ealing. He laid a clear case of Islam before his audience and was very impressive.

Adhesion to Islam.—We are glad to announce that another lady has embraced Islam during this month, and a soldier from the front did the same.

HOLY PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY

WE give below the full text of the address delivered by the Right Honourable Syed Ameer Ali, M.A., C.I.E., P.C., on the occasion of the Holy Prophet's Birthday, on December 26, 1917, at Prince's Hotel, London.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I have been asked by your President to say a few words at this celebration of the Nativity of the Prophet. May I say that it was quite fitting that the function should begin with a recitation of a chapter from the Qur-án. Most friends of Islam are acquainted with the history and life-work of the Arabian Prophet. It is not necessary, therefore, for me to say more than a few words to indicate the place the religion he preached occupies in the religious and spiritual development of humanity. To form a fairly just estimate of any religion it is essential, I venture to think, to have some idea of the older cults which it displaces or assimilates. My loyalty to the Islamic faith, if I may be allowed to say so, does not spring from the fact that I was born in it. As a student of Comparative Religions who has studied with some care the tendencies of most religious beliefs, I have formed the

conviction that Islam forms in fact, as its teacher insistently proclaimed, the culmination of religious development. In saying this I do not wish for a moment to depreciate the older creeds. Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Mosaism, and Christianity have all done good work, and personally speaking I have great respect for the systems they represent. Each of these creeds came into being from the necessities of the times, but they had all to assimilate largely the existing beliefs which they were expected to supersede before they could make their way into the hearts of the people. I may mention, for example, the Christian system. If we look back to the previous history of Christianity we will find an illustration of what I am venturing to say. The religion of Jesus was preached on the shores of Galilee at a period of great luxury and self-indulgence. He taught the gospel of humility and love. Unfortunately his ministry was short, and his work was mostly confined among a small following. Not until his teachings had been moulded into shape by a Jewish philosopher imbued with neo-platonism, and not until a large part of the earlier beliefs had been incorporated with the Galilean teachings, did it make any headway among the neighbouring nations. I suppose you know that five centuries before the appearance of the Galilean Teacher a great Egyptian king devised a system by which he intended to reconcile two different races and creeds, viz. the Egyptian and the Greek. But his task was rendered easy by the fact that both were built on common beliefs. Among the Greeks the worship of Zeus, Demeter, and Dionysios was prevalent; whilst the Egyptians worshipped Osiris, Isis, and Horus. They both believed in a God who had suffered for the atonement of humanity and had risen again. The task of Ptolemy, the founder of the Serapean cult, was thus made easy. The worship of Isis took hold of the imagination of the Egyptian and the Greek world, and afterwards spread throughout the Roman Empire. Those who have watched the services at St. Peter's in Rome and listened to the litanies sung there are easily carried back to the gorgeous ceremonials and the moving rites which were wont to be performed at the devotion of "the Mother of the Gods"—"Sweet Isis, the haven of rest and refuge," as she was called by her worshippers. The shaven priests, the acolytes, the virgins carrying incense-burners all remind us of the worship of Isis. It was only when

Rome had incorporated into the Christian cult the old rites that it began to spread into the Roman world. Muhammad came at a time when the nations of the earth were groping in darkness and every thoughtful man was in search of a mooring. Islam is the one creed which has not incorporated the pagan conceptions in order to facilitate its progress in the world. The personality of Muhammad is no less remarkable than his religion. He brings us into close touch with our God. There is no intermediary in his system to stand between man and his Maker. The governing principle of his creed is that man should approach God through his own devotion and service. He preached that service to humanity was the best service to God. He did not say, "Leave all and follow me," as it was said six centuries before him. His exhortation was: "Devote yourself to your children, be respectful to your parents, and devote yourself to your God's work. Your mother brought you up; you owe a duty to your mother, and your father has a claim on you, and you have to look after your indigent relations, and the poor have a right over you."

One thing further I must tell you. I have told you about his teaching to serve humanity and God. But what makes his voice appeal most strongly to us is that it is the voice of a man. His is not a mythical figure. He has nothing in him which is wonderful and supernatural. His simple human voice calls us to our simple human duties.

Just look at the picture we find in the traditions. He is seated in the mosque clothed in white, surrounded by his disciples. A traveller from a distant country rides up and alights from his camel and asks, "Who is Muhammad?" One of the disciples answers, "Here he is." "I have a question to ask you, Muhammad. Have you brought us a message that we are all equal?" He says, "Yes." Then he is asked, "Have you brought a message from God that we should treat each other equally?" "Yes," was the reply of Muhammad. The stranger bends on the stretched hand and adopts the faith. These were the sort of persons who approached him, a man of the utmost simplicity who, in power commander of all his peoples, yet lived the simplest life. All his biographers agree in describing him that "His hands were most generous, his breast most courageous, his tongue most true, protector of the poor, sweetest and most agreeable in conversation. Those who

saw him or heard of him loved him. He was taciturn, but did not forget what he said. A model of self-denial, he sympathized with every one, especially with the poor in sorrow. The meanest would catch his sleeve and ask him to redress his wrong. Such was the man Muhammad."

MOHARRAM ¹

COLD moonbeams shed their misty light
 O'er a saddened world ;
 To sound of deepest funeral dirge
 Islam's banner is unfurled.
 With slow and measured step 'tis borne
 Aloft amid the throng,
 The emblem of a mighty hand
 E'er raised to right a wrong.

In bygone days its silken folds
 Waved proudly in Iran ;
 From continent to continent
 The Arab symbol ran.
 Its path was marked by victory,
 The triumph of the right,
 Till darkest Afric's heathen lands
 Were bathed in purest light.

That day of happiness is gone ;
 No more in ecstasy borne,
 The banner heads a sobbing throng
 Whose duty is to mourn
 The loss of him beloved by all—
 A hero without stain,
 Whose noble sacrifice has made
 The world ring with his name !

With open hand he gave his all :
 His little children dear,
 Brothers, friends—helpless women too,
 Clinging to him in fear.

¹ The ode commemorates the tragedy of the Martyrdom of Imam Husain, the grandson of the Holy Prophet, who fell on the field of Kerbela in the month of the above noted name.

Unflinchingly, nor moaned nor wept,
 Secure in his just cause,
 He nobly fought and nobly died
 To save Islam's great laws.

At the memory of his martyrdom
 Anew the passions rise ;
 A bitter, sobbing, wailing cry
 Goes up unto the skies ;
 With each new year the latent grief,
 Pent up, breaks out again,
 And Heaven returns the impassioned cry,
 Hosain ! Hosain !! Hosain !!!

AMINA ETHEL M. POPE.

SECOND-SIGHT AND SUPERSTITION

By LORD HEADLEY

" For now we see through a glass, darkly ; but then face to face."

AT first sight it may appear that in linking together the above words I imply a connection between them ; this, however, is very far from being the case, for second-sight and superstition are as far apart as the poles. According to my present lights the possession of second-sight implies a condition favourable to the reception of messages or inspirations or impressions from sources usually inaccessible to our ordinary understanding and normal senses. The condition is at present found in certain individuals who are only " gifted " at indefinite times when they are rendered receptive and capable of using their mysterious and, at present, uninvestigated powers.

Superstition is a state of mind induced by a dread of the unknown, and is the direct outcome of " bogy-land " teaching. The fear of an angry and ferocious Deity backed up by a devil with a red-hot trident has for ages past served as a means to an end. Superstition is for the wilfully ignorant, and may be regarded as a portion of the dregs of heathendom and idolatry which faith and science will shortly sweep into oblivion.

Second-sight is as different from superstition as wireless telegraphy is from the three-card trick or fortune-telling.

I have purposely rather enlarged on the foregoing because there are undiscerning people who jumble all they cannot

understand into one brain receptacle which they label "superstition."

There is a very excusable tendency to throw discredit on supernatural happenings because so much dishonesty has been shown over and over again in playing upon the superstitious feelings of the ignorant; especially has this been in evidence where priestcraft, ever mindful of the loaves and fishes, has extorted heavy worldly remuneration in return for a belief imposed on false pretences and a promise of future happiness. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon this point, as the employment of the terrors of the unknown and the bogies of the infernal regions have been used as the most effective levers in securing temporal advancement and power for ages before the Christian era, and will continue to be effective until people abandon superstition in favour of a true belief in God and surrender to His will.

Those who are gifted with what is called "second-sight" are not superstitious; they are merely receptive of communications which cannot reach the great majority of their fellow-men. One of the best men I ever met was "gifted" in a very happy way, and all he saw at certain times was of the most harmless kind. Dear old soul: he was only a very humble peasant, but his ignorance and simplicity were lost sight of when one knew the absolute sincerity of his honest heart and his loving trust in his Maker.

He often used to greet me with "Have you seen the fairies?" He had both seen them and heard them, and I have only met two other persons similarly fortunate. I may say that my old friend was a total abstainer, and had been so for many years; the good old man was incapable of telling a lie, so I can only believe that at the times when he saw and heard what most people look upon as impossible and absurd his condition was similar to that of St. John before he wrote down the Revelation. Whether we look upon this condition as being due to hypnotic hysteria or "second-sight" or hallucination we must, I think, eliminate all consideration of alcohol as a contributing cause.

I would now ask if it is possible to believe that St. John was in a normal state when he saw and heard what he describes in the Book of Revelation? It seems abundantly clear that he was in an abnormally excited state of brain sensibility or irrita-

tion or that he was in a hypnotic trance. He saw and heard all that he relates, but he was at the time gifted with second-sight, which alone enabled him to understand and record what was told and shown him.

He says : " I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and last," etc. The divine seems to have been fully conscious of his condition and aware that scepticism might arise, so he was careful to state his condition : " in the spirit," which might have meant in a state of trance or of slumber, when visions or dreams might well come to him. It reads like the outcome of a trance, in which, as I know from experience, it is possible to make notes, and this may account for the irrelevant relation in the 6th verse of the 6th chapter : " A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny ; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."

This entirely unconnected reference to every-day commodities evidently got into his notes as the words were being uttered by people arranging household affairs, and have nothing whatever to do with the context. To my mind this is strongly indicative of the genuine character of the whole narration.

I propose to make a distinction between visions and trances, which one cannot prove by external evidence, and actual occurrences which are very extraordinary, and can hardly be placed in the category of remarkable coincidences.

I will take a few of the visions first and endeavour to describe them as shortly as possible, and without the slightest attempt to exaggerate anything I saw or heard or thought I saw or heard.

I was walking along a country road one bright moonlight night when there suddenly appeared in the southern sky the most marvellous vision of a being so wonderfully formed that I cannot to this day reproduce its splendour. It resembled a large figure in the brightest frosted silver, and appeared to be of colossal size, and to be poised only a few hundred feet above the earth, and about a mile from where I was walking. I was so astounded at the extraordinary magnificence of the apparition that I first pinched my arms hard to make sure that I was not asleep. I then shut my eyes tight and opened them again quickly ; but no, there was no possibility of mistake : there was the beautiful silvery figure floating in the clouds ; and though after

I had walked about two miles it disappeared for a short time, it reappeared again before I arrived indoors ; and I saw it again quite plainly before I went to sleep that night, as it appeared in the corner of the room in which I slept. It is now some five years since this vision appeared to me, and I have never seen it since, nor have I received any intimation as to its real significance. The notes made at the time put it beyond doubt that I really saw, or firmly believed I saw, the magnificent apparition, and one circumstance I recall which strengthens the idea of the reality : I remember going down on my knees and thanking God for His mercy—since the vision might well have been taken as a summons from this world.

The next visitation I have to describe was not so much an appearance as a direct instruction in clear tones of something I was required to do. I had been subjected to very rough treatment at the hands of very rough and dangerous assailants, and was, as I thought, at the point of death, when I bethought me of a test, and with my right hand, which had been badly injured, I felt the pulse of my left wrist. To my utter surprise my pulse was normal, about 60 to 64, and this notwithstanding the fact that I had been defending myself against severe odds for many minutes, and undergoing effort which should have given me a very accelerated pulse. This is an absolute fact, and I cannot to this day understand it, because it is so entirely contrary to experience and, to my mind, miraculous.

Whilst I was thinking and wondering what it all meant, a clear, low voice recited some lines close to my ear, and I was asked to repeat them, which I did quite easily. Feeling unaccountably anxious not to lose the exact words, I took out a pencil and wrote these lines down word for word as given to me by the voice which seemed to be quite close to my right ear. I can most positively declare that I did not myself think of or compose those lines. I thought them beautiful, but whether they are so or not—and I still think they are—I should have obeyed the distinct though unspoken order to write them down in black and white just as they were dictated to me. So much do I think of those simple verses, and so much comfort have I received from them, that I now repeat them for the benefit of those who may feel, with me, that comfort is sometimes sent direct and in our darkest hours to those who need assistance very urgently, and in the hours of deepest affliction. The two

opening verses are my own composition, and when I had decided to publish the imparted verses, which I did about four years ago in a little book called "Thoughts for the Future,"¹ I endeavoured to make these opening verses to some extent worthy of those far grander lines which, as now, I placed in inverted commas to show that they are quotations and not my own:—

HYMN OF PRAISE.

The deepest love for Thee and Thine
 Refulgent in my heart shall shine;
 Thy slightest wish shall ever be
 My care throughout eternity.

Thou art my God, my Love, my King;
 Without Thee could not anything
 I now enjoy be mine to-day,
 And I should not have lived to say—

"O Blessed God, Almighty King,
 Open Thy heart and let me in;
 I know Thy grace, Thy power, Thy love,
 Although Thou dwellest in Heaven above.

"Thy glorious prophets, led by love,
 Directly sent from Heaven above,
 Did strive to show that only one
 Great God above in Heaven shone.

"With Moses, Christ, and Mahomet,
 O may our steps towards Thee be set;
 Of mortal birth they all proclaim,
 Thy one eternal, glorious Name.

"And when of life is known the source,
 Dark evil will have run its course;
 No mysteries will then appear,
 For we shall be with God most dear.

"Death then no more shall touch with fears
 Our hearts, or from our eyes draw tears;

¹ "Thoughts for the Future," 1913. Walter Scott & Co., Felling-on-Tyne.

Great Allah, God, our Lord and King,
Will banish every thought of sin.

“Jehovah, Father, we must now
Record the noblest human vow :
To struggle here as Michael strove
Successfully in Heaven above.”

That there is a hidden meaning, not only in the above lines but in the manner in which they were conveyed to me, I have no doubt whatever, though I have only once since received a communication in the same way ; and that was when composing a little set of verses for the same publication, “ Thoughts for the Future.” These lines occur about the middle of the set, and are as follows :—

“THAT THOU ALONE MOST MERCIFUL
OUR FATHER DEAR DOST REIGN ;
AND THAT WE MUST ALL TIME THROUGHOUT
FROM OTHER GODS REFRAIN.

“No other must approach to Thee,
However great and pure :
No savour of idolatry
Can Thy dear heart endure.”

In the present day there are certainly many evidences of idolatry, and to my mind these lines have a strong significance.

I can give two other instances of a quiet pulse after almost superhuman effort, and as I took down the particulars at the time of the occurrence, or immediately afterwards, there is very strong presumption that I was not mistaken through hallucination or hypnotic hysteria.

But I will now pass on to the consideration of another class of supernatural manifestation which took place when I was undoubtedly in a highly excitable and irritable state, but still quite sufficiently intelligent and on the alert to understand all that was taking place around me. On one particular occasion, when feeling extremely miserable and discontented, I had the greatest possible desire to see my father, who had then been dead nearly twenty-five years. I think I expressed the wish aloud ; it was night-time, and the room was quite dark. Almost immediately a faint unearthly light shone upon a coffin which

unseen hands were carrying rapidly into a space at the foot of my bed ; unseen hands took out the screws and removed the lid, and there I saw my dear father lying much as I had last seen him a quarter of a century before, only he was shrunk almost to a skeleton. I sat up in bed and looked my hardest, and felt quite sure that I was looking at a real coffin and real dead body. Whilst I looked I became aware of a curious but indefinite change which was slowly taking place ; there was a slight movement of the grave-clothes and a very gradual shifting of the limbs and body, which seemed to fill out, though so slowly to me, the solitary and anxious watcher, that I almost called out in my impatience. After perhaps half an hour a very great change took place, for the body became like that of the newly dead, and to my intense wonder and delight life came back and the eyes opened. The grave-clothes disappeared, and my father sat up, and, without showing the least astonishment at our meeting, smiled at me and nodded his recognition. All this time the mysterious light continued to shine quite brightly on my dear father, but the moment he had nodded and smiled the light went out and I was left in complete darkness, but with the happy conviction that my father was himself happy and that he was pleased to see me. I had not much difficulty in interpreting the meaning of this vision, which was of such extraordinary reality and brightness that it has left an impression almost, not quite, as vivid as that left by the vision I described first of all. I feel sure that the intention was to set my worried brain at rest on the subject of my remorse at not having been a more obedient and satisfactory son, as well as to prove that all things are possible to God, who can completely restore an old body just as easily as He can give life to a completely young or non-existent body, i.e. by creation.

I now pass on to another kind of mysterious happening which, though there is apparently nothing very much to be gained by its taking place, is nevertheless so remarkable that it deserves very close attention.

Some years ago I was staying at a French watering-place trying to recover after a serious illness which had been brought on mainly by worry and anxiety. One night I noticed that the carpet in my bedroom had a special pattern woven into it representing a spray with seven ivy leaves. I did not think very much about it at the time, though it was noticeable

because the spray came exactly on the spot where I used to kneel for prayers. One day I joined a party to drive to an extensive wood a few miles away from the town, and there in the garden of a little hotel where lunch was served was a sprig of ivy growing close to one of the gates. I collected it, and was surprised to find that it was the only particle of ivy anywhere in the hotel grounds; rather strange, but by no means wonderful. Some days afterwards I returned to England and went to stay with a relative in one of the Midland counties. No one could have known of my projected visit, because it was arranged quite unexpectedly, and I did not know myself till the last moment. No sooner, however, had I presented myself than a servant came in and said, "Please, sir, there's a man wants to see you; he's on the terrace." I went out, and there stood a man with a broken nose whom I had never set eyes on before. He was poorly dressed, and was evidently a tramp of sorts; he was well mannered, and having saluted me, he dived into a side pocket and pulled out a spray of ivy, which he presented to me with the remark, "You will know all about that, sir, and what it is for." I questioned him, but could get nothing from him except that he was tramping to the next town, where there were some races on the following day. I looked at the spray and found it contained seven ivy leaves, no more and no less. I have that spray now, and can show it to any one who is interested in these strange events. I must mention that I was quite a stranger to the county, and indeed to my relatives' house, so that there could be no possible chance of that tramp, who called himself Bart Kennedy, to have known anything about me or my affairs. The man was in no great hurry to depart, for I found him some hours afterwards sitting on the grass outside the front gate, and I gave him half-a-crown in addition to what I had previously donated—hoping thereby to expedite his departure, as I was seriously concerned lest my aunt might think the man was some undesirable hanger-on of mine—perhaps a betting man! Rather more than a year after this my dog Mickey, a most beautiful wheaten Irish terrier, was having a game in the front garden of my house, where some hedge-clipping had been going on; he suddenly selected a large piece of ivy and brought it and laid it at my feet. Be it observed this was the one and only time he ever brought anything to me, and when I picked up the spray

I found it had seven ivy leaves—no more and no less. More than ever wondering, I put by the spray, and still have it safely stowed away as a memento of what I feel strongly is very much more than a coincidence.

I am glad to be able to point out that this story of the seven ivy leaves can be vouched for by an absolutely reliable witness, so that I have not only my own unsupported evidence to offer. I am, however, glad to think that if my word holds good in one story of improbability there is a fair chance of my being at least listened to when relating another equally unusual experience. I think none of those who know me at all well would suspect me of deliberately making up fairy tales or even exaggerating any occurrence which may be at all out of the common. I have a large store of notes taken on purpose to do away with the distressing feeling one sometimes has of fearing lest one's narration may be exaggerated or imperfect in some detail, and in my next lecture or article I shall hope to deal with certain cases which are so absolutely weird and inexplicable that they cannot fail to raise a discussion as to the possibility—I myself look upon it as a certainty—of intercommunion between the good and bad spirits of other worlds; beings Socrates would have called his demons or "familiar spirits," beings I have alluded to as Angels and Satan's imps.

Almost immediately after writing the above, i.e. on the 25th of November 1917, I was little short of astounded to find in one of the offices of my house a spray of ivy which had worked its way in through a broken pane of glass. On reaching out my hand to gather it, I found that it had been partially severed by the sawing action of the broken glass, and that the piece consisted of the stem and seven leaves. I am keeping this along with the others, and in this case also I have a witness to the accuracy of what I am recounting. The immediately previous occurrence, when my dog Mickey gave me the seven leaves, was about two years ago.

What seems so strange is that in some of the above described occurrences the *reason* seems clear and intelligible and in others most obscure. In future articles I shall hope to give accounts of other mysterious events which present even more difficulties, but which no doubt admit of explanations.

A MUSLIM'S PRAYER

Written in Arabic metre.

*Mífáeeelan, Mífáeeelan, Mífáeeelan, Mífáeeelan.*¹

WITH all my heart, with all my soul
 I love, I praise Thee, Lord of all.
 Allah, my one, my only God,
 This is my Faith, this is my call.
 Creation shows Thy wondrous signs,
 Why should we search for miracles?
 A blade of grass—a wonderment
 Which human art can ne'er approach—
 Thy Providence for every one,
 To which none has a special right;
 Thy table shows no precedence
 For yellow, red, or black or white:
 All that we need, all that we want,
 Thy bounty has supplied around.
 Tenfold rewards for one good act—
 Thy countless blessings have no bounds.

Thou art the Lord of Judgment day,
 To pardon sin we crave Thy Grace;
 We worship Thee, and for Thy Help
 To Thee alone we turn our face.
 Guide us in paths direct and right,
 The paths of those who have been blessed,
 But not of those who earn Thy wrath,
 And not of those who are misled.

KHWAJA.

¹ Cr Agar Aán Túrke Sheerázi badeest Árad dila mára.—HAFIZ.

A MIRACULOUS FISH

"There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—SHAKESPEARE.

ON the 12th June 1917 a fish flung itself into the boat of a fisherman fishing in the sea near Zanzibar. It was caught and sold for three cents. It was bought for food. The purchaser when preparing it for cooking noticed that

The tail fin bore marks akin to writing.

He naturally stopped cutting up the fish and examined the marks carefully. To his "utter amazement," says the *Ceylon Independent*, he read the Arabic words LA ILAHA ILLALLAH on one side of the fin, and SHAN ALLAH on the other.

The first are the Quranic words meaning "There is no deity but Allah" (God). The second means "Majesty of Allah." The possessor of the miraculous fish took it to show to his neighbours. A Mussulman bought the fish for 500 rupees in view of the fact that the Quranic inscription was there. Photographs of the fish were taken, and as the news spread a mass of people of different faiths flocked to see the sacred curiosity.

It was taken to the British Residency, where it was examined by experts. The markings were quite pronounced. Chemicals were used to test whether they were natural or not, and after thorough examination it was definitely established that the inscription on the fin was natural.

In Zanzibar the fish is known to be of the *Ghuruna* species, which is very common in the seas there, but of course without the Quranic writing, which is particular to this very fish.

The technical name of the genus to which the fish belongs is *Semilunar Holocanthus*. One of the species, Lamarck's *Holocanthus*, possesses this peculiar trait, that the attachment between the sexes is very strongly developed, so much so that if one of them is captured, its mate will haunt the fatal spot, and even fling itself ashore or into the net in the eagerness of its search. In the case of this miraculous fish it did fling itself into the fisherman's boat and was thus captured. So perhaps it was looking for its mate. The fish is ten inches long and measures five inches across at its broadest. The owner of the fish has refused an offer of 30,000 rupees (£2,000). It is in safe custody. The photographs are being sold by thousands.

Eye-witnesses of the miraculous fish sent descriptive letters

and photographs to the ISLAMIC REVIEW Office at Woking, and also to the Central Islamic Society Office at 158 Fleet Street, London, E.C., by the very next mail when the fish was found. The descriptive letters of Mr. Séf bin Sulaiman and Mr. Muhammad Husain Ali Bhai are dated 20th June 1917. The photos bear the seal of A. C. Gomes & Son, Photographers, Zanzibar.

The description and photos of the fish have appeared in several papers since. The latest perhaps is in the *Royal Magazine* of London of February 1918. Photos can be had from H. H. Abdul Ali, Fourth Cross Street, Pettah, Ceylon.

The *Royal* gives a photo by H. J. Shepstone which has the inscription "Shan Allah." It contains the following :—

"There is no suspicion of anything in the nature of a fake about the matter, and the mystery is so complete that no explanation of the strange phenomenon is forthcoming. It has been eventually decided to have the fish preserved, and it has since been placed on public exhibition. The Arabic lettering is perfectly plain, and the discovery has caused wonderment throughout the Muhammadan community of Zanzibar."

This is a sceptical age. We live in materialistic Europe. But now that there is no shadow of doubt as to this wonderful miracle we, in spite of the scepticism or materialism of the age, cannot close our eyes to it. It is a sign of the time—a bold and undeniable sign—an opportune and definite sign. It is more than a writing on the wall.

A Persian sage has said :—

*"Mard bayad ki girad under gosh
Gar navishtast pund ber divar"*

(i.e. "Man should take to his heart

Even if an advice is written on the wall").

The world generally, and Europe particularly, should not neglect the sign given by Providence through this miraculous fish.

From the deep sea this little fish came to deliver man a sign. There are many people in Europe whose hearts have become dead to the majesty and glory of God because of the terrible conflict which is raging between three-and-twenty States of the world.

There were many people like Mr. Zwerner who heard the

death-knell of Islam through the din of the war. When the Dardanelles was being attacked, Mr. Zwemer wrote with his accustomed bigotry and fanaticism in his most misleading and truth-perverting organ, which he deliberately and mischievously calls *The Muslim World*:-

"The Muslim world has been divided. The whole of Africa has passed away from Muhammadan rule. As we are sitting here, your boys are battering through the Dardanelles :—

‘Uplifted are the gates of brass,
The bars of iron yield,
So let the King of Glory pass—
The Cross is in the field.’

... God in His Providence has divided the responsibilities of the Muhammadan problem among the nations of Christendom, absolutely, finally, irrevocably."

We tried to open the eyes of such fanatics and materialists to the folly of their delusions and conceptions. But they were too materialistic. So here comes a sign in a materialistic form, but with a spiritualistic message.

Their materialistic eyes can behold the writing on the fin of the fish. They can read the message—LA ILAHA ILLALLAH. There is no deity but Allah. This is the fundamental formula of the Islamic faith.

It is a message to all that the final triumph is for Islam.

Christ was a man. He is no more. To those persons who worship him or his cross the fish brings a message from the deep blue sea, uncontrolled by man, a message that neither Christ nor Cross are worthy of adoration. There is only ONE worthy of adoration, and that is ALLAH—the ever-living, the self-subsisting, the omniscient, the omnipotent God, the Creator and Cherisher of the black and brown, yellow and white people of every country, creed, and age.

When a Muslim gave this very message he was called biased towards his own faith.

What can be the excuse now when a fish from the deep sea brings this message? The message is universal. If the fish had cried out the message it would not have been so universal. Now it has reached the four corners of the world. All who have eyes to see can read it on the photo of the fish, even if they cannot see the fish itself.

LA ILAHA ILLALLAH is the clarion call to all the people of the world.

"There is no deity but Allah" is the message to all, whether they be Muslims or Christians, Jews, Parsis, or Hindus. The message has come miraculously. It is Providential.

The inscription on the other side of the fin of the miraculous fish is not less significant. It is "*Shan Allah*." It reminds the world of the glory, work, and majesty of Allah. The "King of Glory" is He and no other. Christ and Muhammad both were His creatures, His children, His servants. So are we all. Our nearness to Him depends upon the evolution of our spirituality. We can all become His "sons," as were David and Christ. Nay more, He becomes the eyes, the hands, the tongue of him who becomes His beloved by his piety, his righteousness, by his goodness to the creatures of God—men, animals, birds, all.

In the message "*Shan Allah*" there is a great warning. In this world-turmoil which we are witnessing to-day there is a great lesson. Instead of its being a proof of the cruelty of God, as some take it to be, it is one of the signs of His majesty and glory. Muhammad said that if any evil befalls man, it is always due to his own actions. It is a punishment from God to chasten him, or to give others an object-lesson. The world, more particularly the Western world, had become too materialistic. Europeans were proud of their own ingenuity and inventions. They were self-satisfied by the increase of their wealth, through which they could secure every luxury and comfort in living, eating, drinking, etc. Those that were well-off never cared for their poorer brothers and sisters.

The Western peoples had developed in them an arrogance and a conceit quite unworthy of the children of Adam, who was "made of dust."

Then came this catastrophe, the result of men's own blunders and bunglings. That ingenuity and those inventions of which they were proud proved to be disastrous for human lives—the lives of their own sons, even of their own women and children. Those instruments of destruction, even more terrible than those, which they had used against men without those deadly weapons, are now being used against themselves. The luxuries which they thought were vital necessities of

life had to be given up. Those who could not live without sweets had to appreciate the position of those humble poor people who never tasted sweets. Those who had exploited weaker peoples and less developed countries, and had drained their wealth and material, began to find their own money and resources put to flames. In short, the material, ungodly, atheistic civilization, which dominated others by its might and money, by the ingenuity and cunning of its devotees, and which dazzled the eyes and elevated the heads of its possessors, has proved self-destroying.

The inscription of "*Shàn Allah*" is a warning against that civilization.

Nature works in its own way. It shakes the mightiest mountain, it bends the proudest man. God's majesty is self-magnifying. Everything in the universe is a witness of His majesty. He is the Cherisher of the East and the West alike. He can punish even the mightiest and strongest.

Those people who really desire peace and security should see that Europe gives up its conceit and arrogance, its irreligiousness and atheism, its immorality and oppression, its materialism and money-worship.

In Europe the materialism has reached to this pitch, that those few people who are devoting themselves to establish the belief in the after-life, those who are trying to develop a life of spiritualism, are ridiculed and laughed at. They are jeered even at those first steps towards spiritualism which they are taking.

There is no doubt that every material atom in this universe is a witness of the glory of God. But even the whole universe does not reflect the glory of God to that extent as does the mind of a spiritual man. The fish has come to remind men of the majesty, the work, and the glory of Allah.

The sum total of the message and warning brought by the miraculous fish of Zanzibar is that man should not bow to any deity but Allah, the God of Islam, and that even in the direst adversity he should not close his eyes to the majesty and glory of that One God.

It is a warning to those people who persist in their belief in the Trinity or Duality, or in the multiplicity of God; to those people who persist in their arrogance and conceit, who look down upon their brother man if he is different in colour or

inhabits another country ; to those people who indulge in luxuries at the expense of their poor brothers and sisters, who exploit weaker nations and their lands, not to forget that there exists a King of kings of might and majesty, who is the *Rabbul Alamîn*—the Creator and Cherisher of all. The miraculous fish is a beacon to all to come to One Allah, to unite together in one cord of brotherhood under Him, and then to see His majesty, then to see how all selfish strifes end, how peace is guaranteed, how prosperity reigns. The secret of all spiritual edification for man lies in his belief in LA ILAHA ILLALLAH.

There is no religion which has presented before the human mind such an elevating and edifying conception of God as Islam. Therefore the miraculous fish has come with the Islamic formula. It has demonstrated that it was not only in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet that the birds and stones repeated his soul-stirring message, but even to-day mute nature bears testimony in Quranic words to the truth of the Islamic creed, the creed of universal beneficence. Where is any other faith the basic formula of which is substantiated by Providential signs in the twentieth century?

The sign given by the fish is undoubtedly miraculous. The hardiest sceptic himself cannot deny it. It is impossible to explain it away. The writing on the tail of the fish is, as the *Royal* says, phenomenal. Its capture was also non-accidental, as it flung itself in the boat. That it was caught and sold at a place where the Arabic characters could be read shows Providential design in it. The phenomenon has been announced far and near. The photos have also been widely circulated. The materialists cannot ignore the sign. To the spiritualists it is nothing but God-sent.

The women of Europe have still a scintillation of spiritualism in them. Let them ponder over the sign and give a serious thought to it. Let them act as mothers—mothers of goodness and kindness, charity and righteousness.

Let them be mothers guiding their erring sons again to the right path, curing them from the diseases of arrogance and pride, alcoholism, avarice, exploitation and aggrandisement, and reclaiming them from such superstitious and demoralizing beliefs as the Trinity, the atonement, the transubstantiation, towards LA ILAHA ILLALLAH.

If the miraculous sign remains unheeded the world shall see greater catastrophes than the present war. Nature herself has given the warning. If that is neglected, then Nature will use her own mighty hand to punish the culprits. Natural commotions, diseases, and disasters will complete the ruin of this civilization, even if its own devotees leave it half-destroyed. The Western world is moving at a terrific pace towards a deep abyss. LA ILAHA ILLALLAH IS THE ONLY SHELTER. ISLAM IS THE ONLY REFUGE.

It is not only for the non-Muslims that the fish has a message. There is a message for Muslims also—a message of encouragement, of hope, of promise.

Since the last few years—more particularly since 1908—the Muslim world has been involved in terrible trials. The circumstances have been not in their favour. Anti-Muslims have been jubilant over the situation in the Muslim world. Muslims themselves have felt uneasy, depressed. The outlook is still gloomy and dark. The atmosphere is charged with thunder and lightning. The future is not very bright. Muslims feel disheartened—even despondent. But the Holy Qur-án says:—

La tagnatu mine rahmatillah

("Never despair of the mercy of God").

His help has been vouchsafed to Muslims before. His help would be vouchsafed to them again. But they must act according to the principles of Islam—according to His will, His command. One of the ways how Muslims can regain prosperity, as given in the Holy Qur-án, is —

Va'atasemu bi hablillahe jami'an va la tafarrequ

("Hold fast the cord of God and do not make schisms or sects").

There is the example of early Muslims. How they gave up their traditional enmities and *vendetta*. How they became brothers. How they helped one another. How they strove for their faith. How they fought for their principles. How they sacrificed the lives of their own and of their sons and brothers.

A belief in LA ILAHA ILLALLAH is a sure way to secure prosperity for the Muslims. But Islam is not Christianity. There is no superstition of blood atonement in Islam. Mere passive belief is no good. Islam does not recognize simple lip-loyalty to its formulas. It has no dogmas. It has no priests. Salvation is in the hands of Muslims themselves; they them-

selves are their own saviours if they obtain the mercy of their loving God by doing good deeds. According to Islam the service and adoration of God does not merely consist of repeating His name. It consists of doing good, for His sake, without any selfish motives, to His children, to our fellow-beings, our brothers, regardless of their colour or country or age or sex. Doing good to humanity, helping our brothers in their adversity or trouble, relieving them of their suffering, means the adoration of their and our common Creator and Cherisher.

If we do not feel pain when our brother is pained we are not Muslims—we do not believe in the God of Islam—in Allah. If we serve our own desires or passions, if we bow to the oppressors and tyrants, if we worship mammon, the ideal of wealth, the demon of brute force, then certainly we do not believe in LA ILAHA ILLALLAH. There is no deity but Allah. We have no claim to call ourselves Muslims. Islam is the religion of action, of beneficence to humanity, of love towards all Muslims of every country and race. LA ILAHA ILLALLAH is not an empty phraseology, any simple formula or dead dogma. It is an elevating, living, and beneficent principle. It demands action and service and sacrifice.

The fish brings us this message, that if we really and actively believe in LA ILAHA ILLALLAH and act according to the dictates of our august faith—the undying and unconquerable Islam—then we will see the SHAN ALLAH—the work—the glory—the Majesty of God. Then we will regain our lost greatness and prosperity. To non-Muslims LA ILAHA ILLALLAH is the only haven of safety, to Muslims it is the only rock of hope.

Let us all cry with one voice,

LA ILAHA ILLALLAH,

and also its necessary corollary,

MUHAMMAD ROSUL ALLAH.

There is no deity but Allah, and Muhammad is His servant - His messenger—most faithful servant—the last and final messenger who risked his own life for the good of God's creatures, who revealed to man all that man needed to be revealed for his prosperity in this world and salvation in the next.

MYSTIC SIDE OF ISLAM

TO BE AT ONE WITH GOD

THE following sermon was delivered by Khwaja Kamal-uddin in a Sunday evening service at the New Light Centre Church, The Galleries, 7, Old Bond Street, London :—

“ God sayeth, The person I hold is beloved, I am his hearing by which he heareth, and I am his sight by which he seeth, and I am his hand by which he holdeth, and I am his feet by which he walketh.

“ God sayeth, O man! only follow thou My laws, and thou shalt become like unto Me, and then say ‘ Be,’ and behold, ‘ It is.’ ”

(HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD.)

In these portentous words God spoke from the mouth of the Prophet Muhammad some thirteen hundred years ago. Whatever had been said in similes and metaphors or spoken in mystic language by those gone before him—Jesus, Moses, and other prophets—received lucid formulations in these simple words. These significant words put before the whole world in unmistakable accents the ultimate aim of the God-sent religion. All religions in their original form came from God, and were one and the same. Human interpolation came to cause divergence. They indicate that state of spiritual perfection in which all Godwards human progress culminates. Ever since the dawn of life the world has received, time and time again in human form, a practical demonstration of this phenomena. Muhammad, Moses, Jesus (may they be glorified), and many more of the blessed race of teachers, were raised to exemplify through the perfection of their lives the straight road to that goal. They did their part well. But alas! those who professed to follow them went astray. Some of the teachers were taken for God, although they were not free from all those infirmities which is the lot of all mortals. But for the clearest and most unequivocal expressions that came from the lips of Holy Muhammad—the best and final exponent of the unity of God—undoubtedly he too would have been worshipped as one equal to God. What in the way of the transcendental purity of the teaching he brought, the miracles he performed, and the

life he lived, the achievements of the Man Muhammad and the Prophet Muhammad seem to surpass the deeds of other guides of humanity. In the presence of these evidences, authenticity of which has always stood above impeachment, a character like Muhammad could not fail to have been accepted as "Fathers," if others were taken as "Sons," in a credulous world. But for his emphatic and oft-repeated denial to associate anything with his name save the title of the Messenger of God the Muslim world was saved the degradation of taking an exemplar for the deity.

Do not think our God is "a jealous God" if His unity has been the chief theme of the Qur-án. Belief in oneness of God creates the idea of equality and likeness between man and man. He whom you have taken as a god for some of his seemingly unique achievements becomes your equal, and his acquisition potentially comes within your reach. In his person a true ideal stands before you and opens a splendid vista of shining hopes and glorious possibilities before your eyes. Jesus used to do wonders—a common acquisition of the prophets—and he did not deny the capability of others to do the same. "I am only a man like you" (the Qur-án), so says the noble Expounder of the Unity of God. One may not reach the top of the ladder the prophet is standing upon, but his thrilling words dispel all clouds of doubt enveloping my capabilities, and open a gateway to hope and success. He assures me that he and I are potentially alike, sharing in each other's aspirations and desires, and equally subject to human shortcomings.¹ And

¹ The idea of prophethood should not be confused with the idea of the equality of man. The very verse in the Qur-án in which this gospel of equality of man was given to us makes prophethood and other human achievement as two distinct things :—

"Say, I am only a mortal like you; *it is revealed to me* that your God is one God" (xviii. 110).

Divine messengership—which prophethood technically means—i.e. to bring message of guidance from God to man for his uplift—is a divine selection, and therefore a gift and not an acquisition. It is deputation and not achievement, that it may be open to every one as the Qur-án says :—

"Allah best knows where He places His message" (vi. 125).

If the message has become complete and the guidance has reached its perfection, as Muslims believe about the Qur-án, the door on prophethood should become closed. It, however, should not be confused with power to receive revelations from God. To speak to God and to be spoken to by Him is a Muslim goal, and is open to every human being. The Qur-án reveals all that code of life which makes man recipient of this Divine blessing.

so did Jesus, but credulity and ignorance would ignore this patent fact and would father on him what he clearly denied. Jesus may or may not be a deity ; his utility to us as a pattern of humanity is next to nil if he is so, as nothing could make us Divine in that sense. In short, these prophets were evolved images of God and acted as pattern for others. They became Divine, but within the four walls of humanity. This is the main purpose of religion which has been so lucidly put by the Prophet in these words : "God sayeth, The person I hold is beloved, I am his hearing by which he heareth, and I am his sight by which he seeth, and I am his hand by which he holdeth, and I am his feet by which he walketh." There is also a report according to which Almighty God said : "*I loved that I should be known, so I created man.*" Hence the creation of man—or more properly of the perfect man—in the image of the Divine Being, is due to the attribute of love in Him. This attribute is the groundwork of mysticism in Islam.

How to attain that stage of spirituality so that I may become beloved of God. Can I ever endear myself to my God by offering to Him so many tributes of my lip-gratitude, by sitting in a circle and repeating so many formulas of faith in just words, and by counting His names on the beads of my rosary? They may help me in a way, they may help my mind to a certain limit, but beyond that they are of no avail, and even after the lapse of time the habit takes the better of me and the repetition of a formula becomes a mechanical work. The spirit and the soul which it created in me has departed. My sitting in a circle and counting of my rosary beads are like the revolutions of the Buddhist Lama's prayer-wheel, every revolution of which is taken as equal to so many hundred citations of the Holy Name. Thus they complete the numbers of the prayers they are supposed to offer to their Deity. Repetitions of prayers and incantations of Divine names is just a preparation ; but something more is needed to draw Divine love. Do we not see all around us that it is through attraction that things combine together and bring forth desirable results? It is through the law of affinities that these wonders manifest themselves in the world. Atmosphere is laden with rain-drops, but they are simply attracted to the sphere where the surface below is overgrown with trees. This phenomenon is one of the numerous evidences of the presence of Divine love which

pervades like the electrons the four corners of the universe. But we need a conductor in us to attract this spark of Divine love towards us. We need to have love to draw love. To be beloved of God, one has to love Him in the first place with all heart and soul. To the same effect "God saith," in the words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, "whoso seeketh to approach one span, I seek to approach one cubit; and whoso seeketh to approach one cubit, I seek to approach him two fathoms; and whoso walketh towards Me, I run towards him." Such is our God. His grace comes to us, but it follows our action hundredfold. Love Him, and you will be His beloved.

But what is this love after all? A word on the tip of every tongue, a passion experienced by every soul more or less, but very difficult to be truly understood in relation to God. Arabic language has the remarkable beauty of describing exactly the significance of things which its words are supposed to represent. In it two words mean friendship and love, "Khullat" and "Hubb." The former means to be vacant and the latter to fill. A little reflection over the meaning of both of these would reveal the process of love. It demands emptying from one thing and filling with another thing. If your soul is love-lorn, then there is scarcely any room in it for any other object of adoration. How can you love God if your mind is already full of things ungodly? "There are some among men who take for themselves objects of worship besides Allah (God), whom they love as they love Allah—and those who believe are stronger in love for Allah" (The Qur-án, ii. 165). In these words man's love for God, which is the real basis of Islam—absolute submission to the Divine Being—is declared to be stronger than all other ties of love and friendship, including that which unites a man to his object of adoration.¹ In order that we might have our heart and soul permeated with Divine love it is essential that it were made absolutely vacant of any other object than that which appertains to our "Lord." Unless the heart is completely steeped in the thought of our God one cannot experience the blessings that come to men through that love of God. Let me be more personal. Have you ever genuinely loved some one? If you have, then think of the moments of your intensified passions,

¹ These words give a direct lie to the allegation that love of God does not form the basis of the religion of Islam.—ED.

of your love towards your sweetheart. Think of the moments when she or he, as the case may be, engrossed all your attention. You are by yourself, feeling the presence of your adored one; you begin to talk to this imaginary presence. You are believed to have gone mad. But it is not so. This condition is only an indication of the fact that your whole being is drenched in the thoughts of your love, that you constantly have an image of your sweetheart before your mental eyes. Have you ever intensified your love for God to that degree? If not, how can you expect Him to be your eyes and hands and other limbs and joints? When you feel you are absolutely so much gone over your devotion towards a mortal, a merely earthly being, you can easily find out the degree of your attachment towards a much higher Being. Do you not know that the best way to please your adored one is to totally subject your wishes to that person, to give up your way of thinking and adopt his or her mode of thought? It is that ultimate stage of love in which the lover totally annihilates his own self on the altar of the love for the object of his devotion.

Jesus did attain that ultimate and the highest degree of his love for the Father. He cheerfully bore every hardship that stood in his way and did not shrink even from going to the cross. Are we ready for such a stupendous sacrifice? Are we prepared to imitate him, to follow him in bearing our own cross as he bore his? I am afraid not! We are decidedly unprepared for such an eventuality, however voluble our tongues in singing loud pæans of praise to the love and glory of the Lord. The coward in us is trying every moment of our lives to avoid every little hardship or difficulty. That is why it has created ingenious devices of "Intercession," "Redemption," or "Atonement." These are, so to say, short-cuts by which a futile effort is made to reach the goal of salvation without having to bear the trials and sufferings essential to that end. Does it sound like loving God? Then why hanker after His love for you when you have never deserved it? Let me take another instance of man's anxiety to shirk genuine effort. I presume you have heard of the Philosopher's Stone in whose quest generations of men in Mediæval East and West wasted their lives, because the stone was supposed to transmute by just its touch the basest metal into sterling gold. Failure after failure has, however, brought home to us the absurdity of our belief in

the Philosopher's Stone in the matter of metals. But in other respects we are still duped. We are after the same quest in matters spiritual. Our coward shirks labour and wants to reap a good harvest—harvest without even tilling the ground. He is in search of another Philosopher's Stone, which he thinks he has found in the name of Atonement. "Actions are no good, law is a curse, but belief in the Cross miraculously transmutes the base into noble." It is the same old story of man's unwillingness to deserve after doing something, the same empty longing of the easy-going to have everything without doing anything. He is anxious to avoid the consequences of all his dirty deeds; he wishes to do whatever his low desires prompt him to do, but he wants to burden another in consequence; hence his belief in atonement. If the Philosopher's Stone is a mediæval-age myth, such beliefs as atonement, etc., do also come from the same source.

But we can convert our honest labour into glittering gold, likewise we are endowed with the fullest capacities to attain spiritual felicity and Divine beatitude, provided there is will to do and to make personal effort to gain them. If we could never believe in there being any Philosopher's Stone, then we must bear in mind that there is no reality in any theory or dogma of spiritual transmutation as well. If we sincerely desire to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, then, in the words of Jesus, we could only do so by keeping the commandments. Can we reasonably point out to ourselves a single expression of Jesus indicating his bearing the cross in order to absolve us absolutely from the consequences of our sins? On the other hand, his plain exhortation to us is, "If you wish to be worthy of my name, bear your own cross." He was crucified in order that he might bring home to us the lesson of individual personal service. This is the topmost stage of Divine love, in which the giving away of his life by the adorer is of no great consequence to gain the goodwill of the Beloved. But do not be misled by words; for this misunderstanding of words has been the source of endless waste of life on the altar of the Almighty in the form of human sacrifice so common in the religions of mythology. The sacrifice of flesh and blood is merely symbolic of the sacrifice of our soul, our volition which rules our flesh and blood. Kill all your personal passions, your selfish desires. Let your life and your death be for Him. Kill all those passions and inclinations that arise from flesh and blood. Subordinate your judgment to that of the one Most High. Let "Thy will, not mine," be the rule of your life. When you assume this atti-

tude of absolute self-surrender then you attain indeed the goal of Divine Love. How beautifully has the Prophet of Islam demonstrated this truth, "Mútú qabla anta mútú" ("Die before you die"), i.e. detach yourself from all those things which your soul and body conjointly demand before your soul is detached from your body; for in fact all these things are quite foreign to the essence of your soul.

It was this truth, this great principle, which was enunciated by John the Baptist: "I indeed baptize you with *water unto repentance*, but he that cometh after me . . . he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost *and with fire*" (Matt. iii. 11).

How true are these words! But to our great misfortune the coward in us did not realize their significance. There were those who thought and readily believed that a dip in water furnished the necessary absolution from sin and produced a new nature in us. They could not understand what baptism with water meant and what baptism with fire constituted. These worshippers of symbolism are even inconsistent in their beliefs and actions. If by baptism of fire they understood their belief in Jesus, then they ought to have baptized themselves in fire rather than in water. They ought to have poured hot embers on their head instead of pouring water. But this is all make-believe. John spoke the literal truth when he uttered those words. Why he used similes and parables was due to the immature intellect of the generation he was addressing. The words of Holy Al Qur-án and those of the Holy Prophet are an improvement upon old methods which put all truth before men in the simplest and easiest expressions. Al Qur-án expresses itself in the following on the subject:—

"Receive the colour (baptism) of Allah, and who is better than Allah in giving colour (baptism)?" (ii. 138).

When you desire to dye any fabric, you have in the first place to wash it and free it from all spots and stains. Similarly, in order that the linen of your heart be thoroughly dyed in the colour of God, then you must bear in mind that this process would never be successful unless you removed from it all blemishes the result of its being saturated in low, worldly desires. You have to use freely of the water which would remove all these blemishes. This water is of "repentance." Reflect on the words of John the Baptist. His baptism is baptism of water, i.e. of repentance—a preparation to receive colour of God, but the baptism of the Coming One was of dye or of fire: both mean the same thing, and both refer to the same Comforter who was to come after Jesus. When a piece of cloth is dyed it loses all traces of its original colour; likewise everything which is put into fire assumes the appearance and attributes of fire. This is the right form of the baptism in the Spirit of God. We do not need the blood of any other to wash off our past sins. We have to wash our own linen first with water and then to soak it in the deep dye. We cannot plunge into fire to become part of it unless all the dross in us is consumed. If belief in the power of fire to cleanse gold of alloy is of no avail unless gold is put into

fire, our belief in any dogma cannot purify our soul; we shall have to plunge ourself into a burning fire. Baptism by fire or baptism by colour, call it what you will, it is only a metaphorical expression to indicate the process of the cleansing of mind from all dross, and saturating its every nook and corner, its every cavity and recess, with the colour of the Lord.

Idolatry and worship of stone images are things of the past, although other things have taken their place in the Church in the West. But we are slaves to something still worse. We worship those vile and low motives and other similar passions. We have made our low desires as our God. Our carnal desires, partial satisfaction of which was necessary to keep soul and body together in order to make further progress which our Creator has meant for us on this plane, has taken better of us. We worship them day and night. Study your inner self, and see if your mind is free from them. If it is, then you have certainly given access to the Spirit of God in you; your heart is now become His very throne, your body is His tabernacle where He alone is the object of your worship; then indeed you love God. Nay! God loves you. Then indeed He is your hand, and He is your feet. Miracles are easy to work at this stage, but they are an indication of the presence of the Lord in you, and not an evidence of your Divinity. You have perfected your course of humanity, and have given birth to Divine mind, you have given manifestation to Divine attributes in the garb of humanity. But you are still man.

“NOTHING IS LIKE A LIKENESS OF HIM”

(The Qur-án). “So transcendent is the Divine Being, and so far above all material conception, that a likeness of Him cannot be imagined even metaphorically; for not only is nothing *like Him*, but, as stated in the Qur-án, *nothing* is like a likeness of Him. Such is the transcendently pure conception of the Divine Being in Islam. He is not only above all material limitations, but even *above the limitation of metaphor*.”

Working miracles makes not one Divine. It needs self-annihilation; therefore kill your ego. Jesus did never bear the cross but for his own self, for his own elevation. Through the gateway of pain and tribulation he pleased his Father and became one of the chosen. He laid before us, no doubt, a wonderful lesson. He showed us the way, that the attainment of Divine Love lay only through bearing our own cross. The sacrifice of our physical being is a difficult thing indeed, but much more difficult is the surrender of our ignoble desires in the service of God; therefore give up yourself, your soul, all your worldly gains, all motives of expediency in the furtherance of your low desires, and you attain that height whence Holy Muhammad proclaimed :—

“Say surely, my prayer and my sacrifice, and my life, and my breath are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds (the Creator of all nations, the Sustainer of all races, and the Cherisher of His creatures). No associate has He, and this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit.”—THE QUR-ÁN, chap. iv. 163-4.

WOMAN UNDER ISLAM

By SHAIKH M. H. KIDWAI

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HAREM, PURDAH, OR SECLUSION.

AS regards social reforms inaugurated by Islam, the misrepresentations deliberately propagated in Europe by biased and bigoted Christian writers are now disappearing as darkness disappears at the rising of the sun. We have shown that polygamy was by no means any special Islamic institution and that the divorce laws of Islam are being imperceptibly adopted by Christian nations themselves. Now we shall take up the question of the "seclusion" of women.

As it is a mistake to consider polygamy to be any special Islamic institution, so it is a mistake to take the custom of the seclusion of women to be an Islamic innovation. The civilized Greeks, and also Romans, kept their womenfolk separate from men. Nobody can deny that Greece was at one time the home of genius and civilization. It was the home of art and philosophy. It produced men like Socrates and Plato, but it treated the woman most brutally. Professor Lecky, in his "History of European Morals, from Augustus to Charlemagne," says that under Grecian law a woman had to live a strictly indoor life, and was not permitted to go out unless under any particular necessity.

Greece did not give any right to woman—not even that of inheritance. No Greek maiden was allowed to marry according to her own choice; she had to submit to the selection made by her father, and any disobedience in the matter gave the father a right even to kill his daughter. The *gynaikonitis* was a favourite institution of the Greeks, and women's quarters in Athens were kept under guard. In Rome also man, as a father or husband, had absolute power over woman, and treated her as a slave. She had her separate quarters. In Asia the most advanced social civilization was that of the Persians. The Persian court then was like the Parisian court of later times. The Persians were, however, extremely strict as regards their women, and kept them under close guard. In China also woman was secluded, so also in Corea. In India there was no regular seclusion, but the rigidity of the caste system rigorously restricted social intercourse even between men and men, much more so between the opposite sexes. It can be safely asserted that historically the free intercourse between man and woman which is perhaps the product of American pushfulness in the twentieth century of the Christian era was never witnessed before, except under very rudimentary conditions of human social life when there was not much to choose between man and his other brother mammals.

In England itself, but a generation back, woman lived a far more exclusive life, and to a certain extent more secluded life, than what she lives to-day. Any respectable maiden could not think of going out without a proper chaperon. It was not considered right for a woman to travel on the top of an omnibus. Our present-day low-necked blouses and frocks and flimsy, transparent dresses would have outraged the modesty of every decent woman then, as they do now of all Asiatics. The tango dance would have been considered an outrage on decency, the all-in-a-minute marriage a horror. The social restrictions in Europe worked like the caste system of India and were a very great restraint upon the freedom of woman in particular. If philosophically studied, the question of the seclusion of woman would give credit rather than discredit to the sense of honour and chivalry of those people who introduced it. It was decidedly an *improvement* on the animal life. The idea that it reflects any disrespect upon women is quite devoid of truth. On the other hand, perhaps it does convey a slight hint to men that each and every one of them is not fit to have free intercourse with a sex which is sacred. When women go out in veils they do see men, but men are not allowed to see them. This in itself means that woman can be trusted more than man.

The custom of *Purdah* (veil) or *Harem* seems to have come into existence in all countries, whether Asiatic or European, when man developed a greater sense of honour, a great regard for home life, a great respect for woman's chastity and purity, and great sentiments of chivalry. There is no doubt that in their barbarous life men and women lived as other animals live to-day. But with the progress of civilization man began to realize that woman was a more sacred being than himself—that in her lap lay the destiny of generations to come, and that there should be a division of work between man and woman, the former taking the rougher work to himself and leaving any gentler to the fair sex. It is quite natural for everybody to guard a thing which is considered very valuable. The best jewels are kept in strongest safes under lock and key.

The contributor of the article on Harem in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* says:—

“The seclusion of woman in the household is fundamental to the Oriental conception of the sex relation, and its origin must, therefore, be sought for earlier than the precept of Islam as set forth by the Qur-án, *which merely regulates a practically universal Eastern custom.*” (Italics are ours.)

The contributor of the above passage would have been more correct if he had not confined the custom or the conception of seclusion of women to the East alone. Seclusion of women was a universal custom at one time, and the conception that because woman is sacred therefore she must be guarded was also universal, particularly at the dawn of the chivalric sentiment in man. It was an age of insecurity. It was an age of might—of brutal power. It was usual for the strong to take possession of the hearth and home of the weak. Woman's

charms often brought about disaster not to individuals only but to whole clans, tribes, and even nations. The charms of Sita of India, the charms of Cleopatra of Egypt, had had tremendous influence on the history of India and of Rome respectively, and this when nations had advanced from the age of their infancy. Before clans coalesced into nations and before international relations came into existence the charms of women were very often the cause of trouble. Men fought with one another for women as animals fight for females. To escape from that, to secure more thoroughly the nobility of birth, to provide a protection for woman, who has always been a weaker sex, and with a view to show her due regard and respect, veil or *purdah* or *harem* or seclusion came into existence.

Because Europe had always had a more materialistic trend of thought, so much so that it never brought forth any religion and still bows to an Eastern prophet—a “black man” in its own phraseology—Jesus Christ, whom it has completely misunderstood, although it has raised him to the pinnacle of Godhead, so in Europe the sense of chivalry did not develop to such an extent as to make the particular regard for the purity of woman to become a ruling sentiment. In Asia, on the contrary, the more civilization progressed the more the idea of the sanctity of the woman developed. If one man were even to look towards the wife, daughter, or sister of another man with any lust or disrespect, it would be taken as the grossest insult. When social etiquette became still more refined and man’s sensitiveness as regards woman increased, it was considered unmannerly for the womenfolk to mix with strangers. The next step to that was to leave no occasion for any man to show disrespect to any woman. Seclusion was the result of that stage. Perhaps the strictest seclusion of woman came into existence in India. Hindus, who did not seclude their women before, became themselves very strict in the matter when their country was conquered by foreigners. Muslims, who in their own countries allowed women to go about veiled, stopped even that privilege in India, and women of all respectable Muslims and Hindus alike adopted a life of complete seclusion. That this was because of an enhanced notion of honour and chivalry becomes evident from the very fact that the more respectable a family was the more secluded the women of that family were. Seclusion thus became a sign of respect and nobility. No woman but a very common woman could be seen in the streets.

There was a time when no English lady could get into an Indian zenana, because the fact of her going about in the street was to an Indian proof positive in itself that either her sense of honour was not fully developed in her or that she was not the right sort of person. Christian missionary women, by their misguided zeal for conversions, which very often resulted in elopement, proved a nuisance. Asiatics have by nature more delicate and refined sentiments. Their culture and civilization are also older than that of Europe. When they adopted the custom of the seclusion of woman, it was not

because they had no confidence in woman or meant to show her disrespect. On the contrary, it was because they had developed an exaggerated sense of family honour and of chivalry for woman. They took upon themselves all the burden of supporting and protecting their women. Even to-day it is man in the East who sweats for woman. To keep her in comfort, in luxury, to keep her away from labour and distress, he himself works, and very often works very hard indeed to make two ends meet. He is more solicitous for the comfort of his women than Europeans for theirs.

We must admit that the zealous regard and solicitude of Asiatics in general and Muslims in particular for women resulted in something like the regard for the institutions, customs, and laws of non-Muslims under Muslim rulers. Persuaded by their religion to treat their non-Muslim subjects well and to grant them full liberty of conscience, as well as of acting according to their own customs and institutions, Muslim conquerors granted Christians of Europe their own courts and laws, but in the end this generous concession proved an unmixed curse to the sovereign rights of the Muslim States, and took the shape of capitulations or extra-territorial rights which only now have been got rid of. In the same way it was the over-zealousness of Muslim men to pay due respect to woman and to show her greatest chivalry and honour as a far more sacred and valuable being than man himself which ended in the *Harem* or *Purdah* life. Just as the concession of extra-territorial rights proved a curse to the Muslim States owing to the greed, tyranny, arrogance, and love of exploitation of European Powers, so seclusion and veil proved a curse in the hands of autocrat and rich libertines. Islam never sanctioned slavery for woman or man; it never sanctioned bondage. Islam brought the whole humanity on the platform of liberty, equality, and fraternity. The chains which fettered slaves were cut off. The bondage in which women were held from the very dawn of human history was removed. The distinction of class and of sex was done away with as far as human rights were concerned. Islam cannot be held responsible if certain monarchs and rulers who professed to belong to that faith misused the injunctions of Islam to satisfy their own passions or whims. The harem life or the zenana life of Pashas or Nawabs is no criterion to judge the life of woman as sanctioned by Islam. Women in the early days of Islam, even during the time of the noble successors of Muhammad, expounded Muslim law and jurisprudence, nursed men on the battlefields, even led armies against opponents. It was perhaps the influence of Persian civilization which developed into later-day harems or zenanas of Turkey or India. But even they were less corrupt and depraved, as far as woman's part was concerned, than many a European court.

The truth is that it is very difficult for a European to understand fully the social life of the Easterns.

The family life in the East is different from that in the West—the man's part as well as the woman's part. Men have

comparatively huge establishments and so have women. Even a middle-class Eastern woman would have several women servants in the house. She would have her maid or maids, and she would have a dressmaker, as Indian ladies' dresses are made in their own homes. She would have somebody—a sort of chamber-maid—who would have the charge of all her things and keep the keys of stores, dress-cases, valuables, etc. She would also have at least one such maid who would be the means of communication with the male portion of the household and carry orders for things to be brought. If the family had children, then there would be a lady teacher. Every individual daughter would generally have her own maid. Even the nurses of the old members of the family became members of the house and formed part of it. Thus the female section of the house has a very large establishment. All that makes up a Harem or Zenana. Europeans fail to understand this, and consider that the ladies in the East are in prison, though the fact is that Eastern women live more like queens than prisoners. In Europe even the crowned queens do not live in such comfort and happiness as do ordinary ladies in the East. Eastern ladies live a very jolly and happy life, and sometimes even a gay life. They have their own guests and friends; they have their own festive occasions; they have their own amusements. Little girls have spent thousands of pounds in the supposed "marriage" of their dolls. Eastern houses have gardens and flowerbeds reserved for their ladies. The daughters of the family do a good deal of the work of the household. They are taught needlework, dressmaking, cooking, housekeeping, etc. The elders do the supervising. The system being mostly of joint family, even those ladies who have not been blessed with a child of their own do not live a lonely life, because most often they have children with them or other relations.

So the life of an Eastern woman is far from dull. It can in no sense be called depraved.

John Davenport says :—

"So far from the harem being a prison to the woman, it is a place of liberty, where the husband himself is treated as an interloper. The moment his foot passes the threshold, everything reminds him that he is no longer lord and master; children, servants, and slaves look alone to the principal lady; in short, she is paramount: when she is in good humour, everything goes on well, and when in bad, nothing goes right."

Niebuhr, the celebrated traveller, declares: Europeans are mistaken in thinking that the state of marriage is so different amongst the Muhammadans from what it is in Christian nations. I could not discern any such difference in Arabia. The women of that country seem to be as free and happy as those of Europe can possibly be.

Mirza Abu Talib Khan of Persia, after paying great attention to the domestic habits of the English people, came to the conclusion that Muslim women have more power and liberty, and are invested with greater privileges, than Europeans are.

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* contains the following: "The depravity of the system and the vapid idleness of harem life are much exaggerated by observers whose sympathies are wholly against the system. In point of fact much depends upon the individual. In many households there exists a very high degree of mutual consideration, and the standard of conduct is by no means degraded. . . . Their seclusion has very considerable compensations, and legally they stand on a far better basis in relation to their husbands than do the women of monogamous Christian countries. From the moment when a woman, free or slave, enters into any kind of wifely relations with man, she has a legally enforceable right against him both for her own and for her children's maintenance; she has absolute control over her personal property, whether in money, slaves, or goods; and if divorce is easier in Islam than in Christendom, still the marriage settlement must be of such amount as will provide suitable maintenance in that event."

Not long ago Miss Grace Ellison wrote as follows, after her personal experience of Turkish harem life:—

"In Roget's 'Thesaurus' 'harem' stands as a synonym of a house of ill-fame. When I came back from Turkey and announced the fact that I had been staying in a harem, I fear, now that I know what a harem is supposed to mean, that some people must have had a very curious idea of my morality. A short while ago, when I spoke on 'Harem Life,' the room was full of men, and not one woman had dared to come to hear what I might have to say.

"For the sake of those who do not know, it will be necessary to again explain that the word 'harem' comes from the Arabic *maharam*, and means private or forbidden. It is simply the term used to describe those rooms in a Turkish house exclusively reserved for the use of women. It does not mean a collection of wives, as so many people suppose. No man may cross the threshold of the harem unless he be a blood-relation of the lady of the house, and in many cases even cousins are excluded. As a matter of fact, it has exactly the same meaning as the Indian word 'zenana,' which stands for all that is most proper. There is just as much sense in saying that a Turkish man travels with his harem as in saying that an Englishman travels with his boudoir.

"The only reason I can find that in any way justifies the popular idea of the impropriety of harem life is the fallacy that a Turk must necessarily have more than one wife. Yet how unjust is this supposition. The days of polygamy are past in Turkey, as almost everywhere in the East. When the great Prophet of Islam limited the number of wives to four, he was legislating for a people amongst whom the practice of polygamy had been brought to its most awful aspects. The reforms instituted by him marked a very great improvement in the position of women. Also polygamy was an economic necessity among communities in which war was increasing the disproportion between the sexes. Muhammad, with his numerous wives, underwent self-sacrifice of no light character. I know, amongst

my Turkish friends, men equally meritorious, although it would be difficult to find a European who would deliberately sacrifice his own comfort and feelings to provide for a homeless woman, as a Turk will do. Therefore, how unjust it is that the followers of so great a reformer as Muhammad, co-citizen of ours in this great Empire, should be judged solely by the circumstance that the law permits them to have more than one wife.

"The great Prophet of Islam tried unceasingly to enforce 'respect for women.' His own daughter, 'The Lady of Paradise,' was an example of all that is pure and true and lovely in her sex. Speaking from personal experience, I found that Turkish men generally try to follow Muhammad's teachings with reference to women, and keep them protected even from the indiscreet glances of the opposite sex. All the restrictions of their private life are intended to keep them from the ugly side of the world, and to preserve in them all that is divine in womanhood. In Turkey the woman who, from one day to another, without a profession, without influence, without money, and without relations, has to turn round and do the best for herself does not exist; there is always some one to provide for her."

The word "harem" or "hareem" in itself conveys the idea of sanctity. There is nothing in it to give the idea of prison. The word stands for sacredness. In Persia and India the wife is called *ahle-khana* (the mistress or lady of the house). She is in no sense a slave. Very often she rules over the men, particularly so if she is the mother of the eldest male of the family. Very often the man brings to her directly all that he earns, and it is she to whom he has to go for any money he requires for his personal use. He is accountable to her, not she to him. Although it is he who labours, the household belongs to her.

Von Hammer has very correctly said: "Harem is a sanctuary: it is prohibited to strangers, not because women are considered unworthy of confidence, but on account of the sacredness with which custom and manners invest them. The degree of reverence which is accorded to women throughout higher Asia or Europe (among Muslim communities) is a matter capable of the clearest demonstration."

As we have said before, in India the seclusion of woman was the strictest—more strict than in any purely Muslim country. It was the result of the then prevailing social customs which are gradually being modified according to the needs of the time and circumstances. The writer of these pages has thoroughly studied the social problems of the West, and has visited all the important centres of Western thought, culture, and civilization, yet if it were a question of choosing the Muslim social system—even that which is more strictly regulated—or European, he would without a moment's hesitation reject the European as it prevails to-day in the West.

These simple people of the West who are talking of the emancipation of women of the East should first look

to the beam in their own eyes—they should clear first the streets of their towns from those human pests who endanger the life of nations and who degrade the noble woman to the deepest depths. They should free their civilization from the three great curses—wine, women of ill-fame, and gambling—which accompany it wherever it goes. It is European civilization which has filled the streets of even certain Muslim towns with ill-reputed women.

When the conscience of Europe awakens to that degradation of woman which the want of any religious stricture has brought about, or when the ravages of disease and decline of birth-rate open the materialistic eyes of Europe to its social condition of life, it will, *volens volens*, have to look towards Islamic principles—towards the laws laid down, under God's own inspiration, by the greatest benefactor of humanity—Muhammad (may victory in all respects come to him and his followers).

As to Muhammad's social laws, Bosworth Smith, a great student of his life and work, says :—

"By his severe laws at first, and by the strong moral sentiment aroused by these laws afterwards, he has succeeded, down to this very day, and to a greater extent than has ever been the case elsewhere, in freeing all Muslim countries from those professional outcasts who live by their own misery, and by their existence as a recognized class are a standing reproach to every member of the society of which they form a part."

It is a happy sign of the times that the conscience of the legislators in England seems to have awakened to the immoralities prevailing in the large towns, and particularly in London. Letters have appeared in the papers showing the terrible condition of certain streets. Prosecutions have also been taken recourse to, and a Bill is before the Legislature to amend the Criminal Law of the country in a way so as to prevent immorality and disease.

The cause of the immoralities and diseases is the intercourse of the two sexes, and it is now under consideration to make the law as regards solicitation more strict and to increase the penalties for keeping a disorderly house. Indecent advertisements are also being stopped, and any communication knowingly of venereal disease is going to be made penal.

But the question is whether it is possible to make people moral by legislation. Dr. Helen Wilson says: "If every known prostitute could be interned to-day, there are vicious men always manufacturing new ones. While the masculine demand persists, it is folly to think that the supply can be cut off." She further says: "Radical dealing requires something more than repression and punishment, for these alone can never be effective." And she admits: "Adults who intend to come together for vicious purposes cannot be prevented by any measure short of absolute separation of the two sexes. All that the law can do in regard to such men and women is to insist that they must respect public decency, and further, that in their

attempts to find each other they must not be allowed to annoy and insult respectable people. This should apply equally to men and women."

A way to keep people moral—a moral code from God Himself—is required. Man-made laws do not carry sufficient weight with human conscience. It might be possible to stop "public indecency" by parliamentary legislation; but will that be sufficient? Will it stop disease? Will it make people really and truly moral? No. To make people really moral and to prevent sexual disease, it is necessary to bring such an agency into work as will check the most private indecency; also, which will set up a detective on every person, not from Scotland Yard but from the police court of one's own soul. Unless human conscience itself is made sensitive, immorality can never be really removed.

Even as to those means which human nature demands to be employed to keep it straight, secular laws cannot go far enough. It is quite true, "Adults who intend to come together for vicious purposes cannot be prevented by any measure short of absolute separation of the two sexes." But can any legislator in Europe undertake to enact a law securing "absolute separation of the two sexes"? It cannot be denied that that would be the only sure preventive of immorality. But that is impracticable to-day, simply because Christianity left the improving of morals to "Cæsar" instead of taking it up itself as a religious duty.

More than thirteen centuries ago, however, one Divine Book—the Qur-án—took upon itself the legislation to prevent immorality and disease, and because it was a Divine law it succeeded in its object. Up to this day the morals of Muslim nations are not in the hands of the lay legislators. The Divine Book guides in every path. Al-Qur-án is full of moral and social laws, and those laws are sure preventives of immoralities, because they have been laid with due regard to human nature.

It was Muhammad's privilege as a man to act as a moral teacher for the whole of humanity and for all ages. It was his privilege as a prophet to secure the obedience to his laws of one-third of the population of this globe.

To-day, Muslim nations are as free from the curse of alcoholism as Muslim countries are free from the pest of indecent women, from immoralities and sexual diseases.

Every Muslim feels that not he alone but the whole of humanity is indebted even to-day for those laws which Muhammad (may all the peace and blessing and triumph be with him and for him and his people) left behind permanently and unalterably, whose beneficence is recognized more day by day as the world progresses.

The Qur-án says in the chapter entitled "Al-nur," the Light, verses 30 and 31:—

Qul lil mominína yaghuddú min absárihim wa yahfazú furújahum Zálíka azkálahum innallaha khabírun bima yasnaún.

"Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks

and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; surely Allah is aware of what they do."

Wa qul lilmomináti yaghdúdna min absárihinna wa yahfazna furújahunna wa la yubdína zínatahunna illa ma zaharaminha wal yadribna bikhumurihinna alá juyúbihinna wa la yubdína zínatahunna illa libaulatihinna au abáihinna au abái buulatihinna au abnai baulatihinna au ikhwánihinna au bani ikhwánihinna au bani ikhwátihinna au nisáihinna au ma malakat aimánuhunna awittabiína ghairi oolilirbati minarrijali awittifillazi na lam yazharu ala aurátinnisái wa la yadribna biarjiluhinna liyulama ma yukhsína min, zinatihinna wa túbú ilallahi jamian ayyuhalmominúna laallakum tuffihún.

"And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts, and not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their head-coverings over their bosoms, and not display their ornaments except to their husbands or their fathers, or the father of their husbands or their sons, or the sons of their husbands or their brothers or their brother's son or their sister's son or their women, or those whom their right hands possess or the male servants not having need (of women) or the children who have not attained knowledge of what is hidden of women; and let them not strike their feet so that what they hide of their ornaments may be known, and turn to Allah all of you, O believers! so that you may be successful."

Those persons who have to deal with the European and so-called Christian societies of to-day will see how very wise the legislation of the Holy Qur-án was, and how it shows a masterly knowledge of the weaknesses of human nature. If they were free to accept the Divine legislation they would surely have done so. The Quranic law stops every opportunity of solicitation. It prevents venereal disease by stopping the occasions of adultery and fornication, etc. It separates the two sexes in a very judicious way, and lays down the rules of conduct for both men and women. It must be noted that the total separation of the two sexes has not been aimed at. It is only free and unrestricted intercourse of the two sexes which has been stopped.

Legislators of to-day might succeed in diminishing solicitation in Waterloo Road or Leicester Square, but what of those solicitations which go on every evening in luxurious drawing-rooms and ball-rooms, possibly not in blunt and unartistic words of mouth, but by half-nude dresses, passion-exciting dances, inebriated eyes, etc.?

The utmost that lay legislators can aim at is to diminish public indecency among poor people. It is beyond their power to stop totally public indecency. Private indecency is altogether beyond their reach, and we have no doubt that their legislation to stop the communication of venereal disease will utterly fail. Perhaps it will give rise to greater mischief in other respects.

To lay down sound maxims of life is not enough. The

ways and means of securing a healthy and moral life must be shown to guide humanity on the right path. Those means and ways should not be beyond human reach.

For physiological reasons it is necessary to regulate more strictly the social life of man and woman in the East than in the West. In the East maturity of life comes sooner, carnal desires are felt keener, even susceptibility to disease is stronger. Eastern temperaments are easily excitable. The fire of love in an Eastern heart is more intense, the sense of honour is greater, and the feelings of envy also more acute. The Divine law should be such as to keep in mind the East as well as the West. Therefore Islamic social laws have judiciously laid down restrictions upon the intercourse of the two sexes. The object of that was to secure not only purity of body but also of mind. It is in human nature to hanker after human beauty, particularly of the opposite sex. Beauty inspires love and a desire for its possession. If the beauty that has aroused the desire for possession is not obtainable, what amount of heartburning would be caused, particularly in a young, excitable, easily impressionable man of the East. It is possible for men and women of mature judgment and ripe age to gain a mastery over themselves, but to expect that from raw youths whose physical passions and desires have developed much quicker than their judgment will be too much. Moral legislators should always have an eye upon persons of every age. Social legislators should lay down some rules to guide the youthful part of their citizens, whether male or female. Man is after all an animal physically. The animal in him is more prominent in the time of his youth. Intercourse of the sexes at that age cannot be desirable. The sight of "loving couples" in public parks at the time of dusk, mixed bathings in tight semi-dresses in the open sea, the flirtations with one young man to-day and with another to-morrow cannot have very wholesome effect upon young minds and characters. The moral condition of Europe to-day clearly proves it. What Islam means to develop is a sense of modesty in women. They should cast down their eyes when they are walking in streets, as should men. They are further asked not to display their ornaments except what cannot be conveniently concealed, and to wear their head-coverings over their bosoms.

In chap. xxxiii. v. 59 the Qur-án says: "O Prophet! say to your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they let down upon them their over-garment; this will be more proper, that they may be known, and thus they will not be given trouble; and Allah is forgiving, merciful."

In chap. xxiv. vv. 27, 28: "O you who believe! do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked permission and saluted their inmates; this is better for you, that you may be mindful.

"But if you do not find any one therein, then do not enter them until permission is given to you; and if it is said to you, Go back, then go back; this is purer for you; and Allah is cognizant of what you do."

It will be seen by these quotations how arduous was the task of Muhammad when he undertook to elevate the moral and social condition of humanity. In Arabia men used to get into the houses of others without permission; they used to assault respectable women in the streets, and so forth. Muhammad undertook to change all that. He undertook to protect woman.

In chap. xxiv. vv. 23, 24 the Qur-án had to lay down: "Surely those who accuse chaste believing women, unaware (of the evil), are cursed in this world and the hereafter, and they shall have a grievous chastisement:

"On the day when their tongue and their hands and their feet shall bear witness against them as to what they did."

The last verse warns people of not entertaining even evil thoughts in secret, as they cannot conceal anything from the All-knowing God.

The more any one studied the life of Muhammad and his work—social, moral, political, and religious—the more would he feel proud of him and would be compelled to admit that he was no doubt the greatest benefactor of humanity. He changed the very nature of his contemporaries and laid down such laws for human purification and elevation that even to-day they are the best means of combating human weaknesses if properly understood and worked upon. Those legislators who have been trying to free England from the poison of alcohol, or those who have been trying to get rid of disease from the people in the twentieth century of the Christian era, with literate people to deal with, should better appreciate the work done by Muhammad more than thirteen hundred years ago among a people who were on the lowest rung of the ladder—almost on equal footing with animals. It was really a miracle what Muhammad did, and did it in such a way as to leave a permanent and undying impression upon the minds of men of different countries and races.

Of course every race and country has its own social characteristics. All the social conditions are the result of the needs and necessities of the people suited to the climate and circumstances of the country and to the thoughts of the past generations of the people. Islam has reached to almost all parts of the world. It has undoubtedly played the most important and effective part in harmonizing even uncongenial characteristics of different races and people. Islam has revolutionized the greater part of the world. It has equalized the position of the largest number of people. It has inspired all the Muslims with brotherly affection towards one another and has taught them to adopt, as far as possible, similar customs and etiquette, etc. Muslims have carried their own institutions all over the world. Yet they have not altogether escaped from being influenced by the customs and manners of the indigenous people of those countries to which they went from their home—Arabia. In China, Muslims have adopted many Chinese customs; in India, Indian; and so on. Anybody who wants to find out the real and original Islamic ways and manners should read the Holy Qur-án

or the life of the Prophet, but in reading the latter he should never forget the time when Muhammad lived and his surroundings. Islam should not be held responsible for the social customs of Muslims of different countries without a thorough examination of the history of those customs.

As regards seclusion, or *Harem* or *Purdah*, what is Islamic is the principle of putting a restraint upon free or animal-like intercourse of the sexes with a view to purify the social conditions and to elevate society. Islam is undoubtedly against creating a rivalry between the sexes. It allots to woman a higher and nobler sphere of work. With these Islamic principles in view, every nation can adopt such customs and manners as would suit best its new circumstances and country. Circumstances always change; principle never changes.

When India was unsettled, most strict *purdah* and seclusion were necessary. It is due to their social purity that Indians have withstood the ravages of very unpleasant times. While men degenerated, women still remained noble, with the result that it has not taken long to elevate again the population. Now that strict *purdah* of old is not wanted; but as long as there is an alien race in India which is arrogant enough to consider itself superior to Indians and to insult and even ill-treat the people of the country, the disappearance of *purdah* will be a cause of greater trouble than of good. In England there is no need of such restrictions as prevail in India. They would rather upset the society. They might even bring about starvation for women. Circumstances in England are different from those of India. Social Customs are the child of circumstances. In England the original rules laid down for the purification and elevation of society by Islam would do.

It might be said that but for the European system of the female life it would have been impossible to save England from sad catastrophe during this war. If the woman had not taken up man's work in the munition factories or in the civil life, thousands of men who have now gone to war would have been held back, much to the satisfaction of the enemy and loss of Great Britain. This is, no doubt, one view of the matter. But the other view is that if all over Europe the Islamic system of woman's life had prevailed much valuable human blood would have been saved, as each belligerent would have had to use less men to kill one another.

After this devastating war it will be more necessary for women to devote themselves to home life—to their children, to the coming generation. It will be more their duty to save the nation from ruining itself by internal commotions, by class wars, by sex rivalries.

Even before the war the struggle for existence was very keen—almost unbearable by human beings. Little boys—and worst of all, little girls—had to be taken away from schools and sent to work to sweat in order to keep themselves in the world. After marriage woman was allowed to a certain extent to devote herself to her home. If this struggle becomes keener and keener every day, as is the tendency now, then a married

woman will have to work for her living and to neglect her home, her children, and the new generation upon which the prosperity of every individual nation, as well as of the world as a whole, depends. Before this war this new element in the disruption of society—the rivalry between man and woman—had already come into existence. After the war circumstances will favour more such rivalry, which might lead to an unending war between the sexes. Steps must be kept in view to stop the rivalry, and the most effective step is the adoption of the Islamic system. Woman's position must be really raised. She should be considered as superior to man. It should be impressed upon her that when she expresses her ambition to equal man she lowers herself from the ideal which should be before her. All the coarser work should be reserved for man, and man alone, as man reserves that for those amongst himself who occupy a lower position on the social ladder. Woman is a gentler being. Her feminine qualifications, virtues, and charms must be kept intact. Paradise should continue to remain under her feet. Her motherhood must remain sublime.

The present-day Muslim woman of India is an ideal woman. Instead of her copying European women, they should rather copy her. *Purdah* has undoubtedly added to the grace and beauty of women of the East. *Purdah* has developed that most valuable virtue *haya*, which has no equivalent in the English language. That nobleness, gentleness of character, that sympathetic and heroic, self-sacrificing and sweet nature which has been developed in Eastern women is, no doubt, the product of their life of seclusion from the materialistic, ambitious, greedy life of man. It is man who has to struggle. It is man who has to plan schemes of robbing and exploiting not only weak or innocent individuals but also less strong and less brutal nations. Because of this materialistic civilization man has developed selfishness. He has even developed a love for destruction of his fellow-beings, and devotes himself to inventing asphyxiating gases and tear-shells. So far the angelic influence of woman has had a restraining effect upon him, but if she herself adopts the same life as man has, there is no doubt that humanity will come down to the life of animals, and because man has more cleverness than animals he will become the most mischievous creature on the face of the earth.

To a man gifted with any foresight the present trend of European life seems to be towards a bottomless abyss. There is no real home-life left in Europe. A man takes more pleasure in attending other persons' houses than his own. He enjoys more a game of bridge at his club than a conversation with his wife and the company of his children by the side of his fire.

The real home-life exists only in the East. Easterns mostly live in houses owned by themselves, even if they be simple thatched huts. They do not care for club life. Their admiration for and attachment to female charms is reserved for their own wife's; the female company they enjoy is that of their own womenfolk. They do not appreciate at all the sentiment which

encourages one's own wife to become an object of adoration or admiration to others. No Eastern woman of any respectability would allow herself to be made an object of any familiar regard to any other but her own people.

Eastern women have developed in them such a noble, sweet, and beautiful character that even those of them who are not gifted with physical charms fascinate and enslave their husbands. They are hospitable, courteous, kind, generous, and affectionate towards strangers and foreigners of their own sex who visit them or become friends with them. Even middle-class women of the East are fit for the highest society of the West. They will never be found wanting in modesty, courtesy, grace, and gentleness. All of them observe those, and even more refined than those, rules of conduct as regards modesty, decorum, delicacy and *belle tournure* which in Europe are observed by women of the highest rank only. An Eastern maiden, even of a low class, would blush at the very word "kiss" instead of allowing herself, like her Western sister, to be kissed and caressed by one suitor after another. Eastern society does not propagate "Social Butterflies." Eastern women bestow their love only to one man—their husband. He is their first and last love.

Lady Dufferin wrote in the *Nineteenth Century* of March 1891 of her long personal experiences of Indian ladies thus :—

"The impressions I carried away from my visits to *zenanas* (ladies' quarters) were invariably pleasant ones; I have nowhere seen women more sympathetic, more full of grace and dignity, more courteous, and more susceptible to the art of giving a really cordial reception to a stranger than those I met behind the *pardah*. In spite of the shortcomings of interpreters and the want of a common language, I never left a *zenana* without being deeply impressed by the gentleness and charm of manner I found there."

She pays a compliment to their intelligence and modesty in these words :—

"I believe that for once a general statement may be made which is universally true, and that is that Indian girls are very quick at learning. Those I have seen certainly appear to read and to write in a shorter time and very much better than English children. . . . The educated Indian ladies I have met retain all the remarkably feminine character of their race; they lose none of the modesty of their demeanour, and I have never seen a sign, nor have I ever heard the faintest whisper, of any levity in their conduct."

Lady Dufferin demolishes the well-known European misconception of the life of the Indian woman in these words :—

"There is in England a conventional idea of the Indian woman which, although practically true in respect to certain phases of her existence, would yet be found faulty in most particulars if examined by persons thoroughly acquainted with the subject. It is one which appears to exclude from consideration all that may be happy in an Indian woman's life, and which regards her only as an ill-used child-wife, an amiable nonentity,

a cruelly treated widow, a neglected invalid, or a prisoner shut up in a zenana, where she never sees the face of any man but her husband. To the unrelieved gloom of the picture I demur. In reality an enormous proportion of the female population—that is to say, all the women of the lower class—go about freely performing their daily avocations and assisting at popular fêtes and religious festivals . . . while, far from being down-trodden and helpless, the Indian woman often rules not only a family but a State, and can from the seclusion of the zenana make her influence very sensibly felt.”

Lady Dufferin goes on even to say :—

“Indeed, I can imagine many a weary and toiling woman, in this our overcrowded and busy world sighing for such a harbour of refuge as the zenana might appear to afford. . . .

“And I certainly am able to have a more kindly sentiment towards the nation as a whole because I have seen happy wives and happy mothers in India, and because I believe in happy Indian homes.”

Of course there are good men and good women, bad men and bad women everywhere in the world. But taken as a whole there is no woman in the world as pure, noble, sweet, modest, kind, full of loving sentiments and affectionate regard, self-sacrificing and heroic, faithful and pious, and gifted with such captivating feminine charms and graces, such polished and refined manners, as the Muslim woman, and there can be no doubt that PURDAH has played a very important part in giving her that character which she possesses.

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