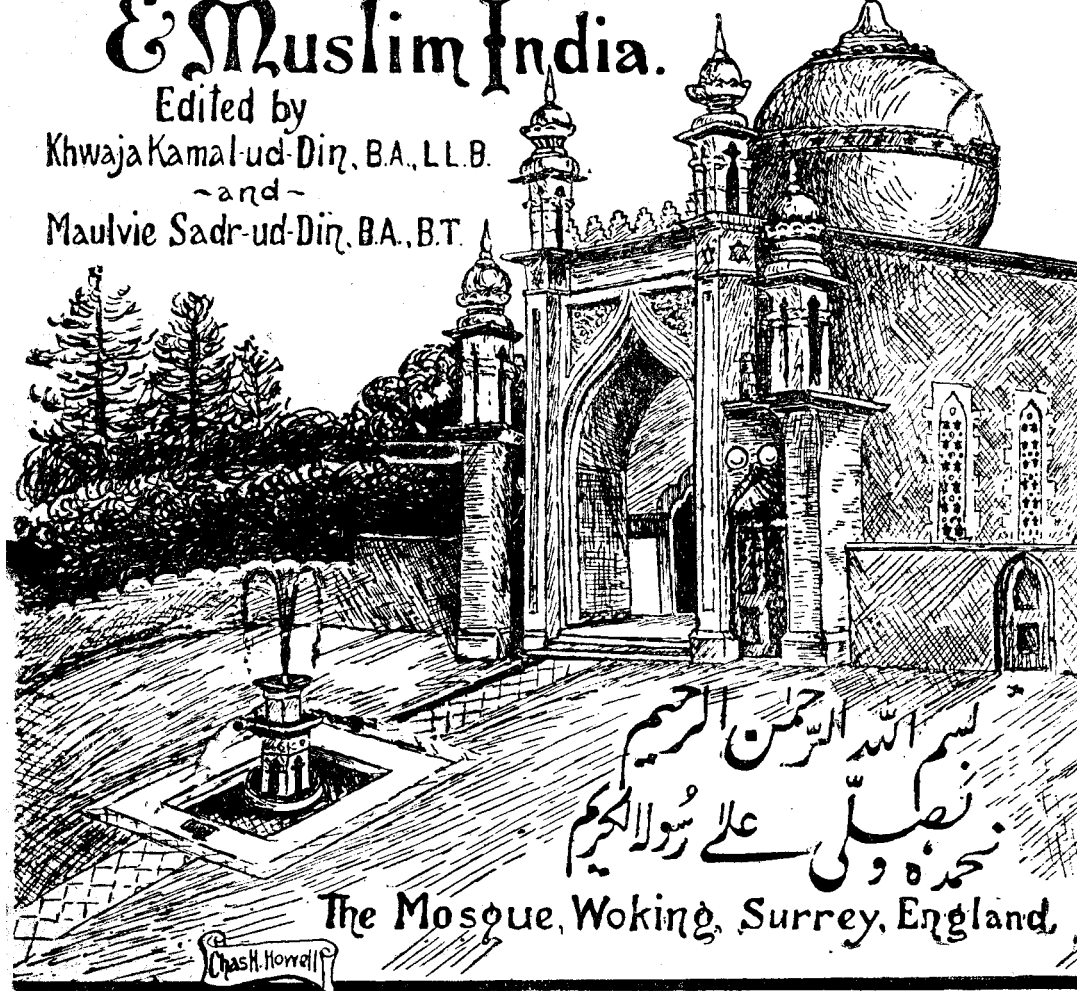


Islamic Review & Muslim India.

Edited by
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-and-
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 مُحَمَّدٌ وَآلِهِ عَلَى رُسُلِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

ISLAMIC REVIEW

AND

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[No. 3

THE HOLY QUR-ÁN

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 Sunday at 3.15 p.m. Muslims and non-Muslims are all welcome.

NOTES

MAULUD-UN-NABI IN LONDON

THE lectures at the London Muslim House and other places in London were delivered on their appointed dates. For want of space we reserve our full report for our next issue.

We gave a brief report of the doings of the Muslim Literary Society when it met on the last occasion, viz. November 29th. Its first meeting in the new session after Christmas came off on 15th January. Mr. A. M. Ahmad, of Oxford, read a paper on the past and present economic conditions in the Muslim world. Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall was in the chair. The richness of the paper in facts about the past of the Muslim industries evidenced the pains Mr. Ahmad must have taken in its preparation. His remarks on the question of interest and usury excited a long and heated discussion, in which Mr. Schleich, Mr. Sheldrake, and Rev. Du Cox chiefly took part. Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din was asked to throw Quranic light on the subject, and we hope to give a brief account of his remarks in our coming number.

ADHESION TO ISLAM.—Two ladies and a gentleman—a university graduate—declared their adhesion to Muslim faith in the month of January.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE 1389TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR HOLY PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY.

As announced by Sheikh M. H. Kidwai, the Hon. Secretary of the Central Islamic Society, in the December number, the Maulúd-un-Nabi was celebrated with great *éclat* on the 29th December. Owing to Christmas, no suitable place could be hired for the function, which should have come off on the 22nd December.

Fortunately a spacious hall was secured in the Princess Hotel, St. James, for the 29th December. The indefatigable Hon. Secretary of this most useful organization had issued invitations to all those interested in the celebration of the day. Right Hon'ble. Syed Ameer Ali, than whom no greater authority on the history of Islam and the Prophet of Islam lives

to-day, kindly consented to deliver the address. The audience, like those of the gathering of the Woking Eid days, represented nearly all ranks, religions, nationalities, and colours. It is a significant sign of the general awakening to Islam of men of intelligence in the West, that although unprepared as yet to testify to the universal greatness of Islam by an avowed belief in its teaching, they do recognize the very large place which its Prophet occupies in the moral and spiritual development of the world. It was an inspiring spectacle to see a follower of Islam from distant Africa sitting side by side with another brother, a native of the soil, listening in reverential awe and loving admiration of the life-work of the simplest yet the noblest of men of all times and all history.

After the recitation of verses from Holy Al-Qur-án by Mr. Saada Bey of Egypt, and a few introductory words from Mirza Hashim Isphahani, the President of the Central Islamic Society, the orator of the day, who was loudly cheered by the audience, rose to speak.

Each and every word of the right hon. gentleman, coming as it did from one who is well known in the world of Islam and European learned circles for his great erudition, was listened to with great attention. Those other than Muslims in the audience felt greatly enlightened by the truly remarkable place Muhammad (peace be upon him!) occupied in the ranks of world-reformers.

After a few remarks from the Chair, who deemed it unnecessary to say anything more on the subject after the audience had listened to the learned address, they were requested to adjourn for refreshments. The address will appear in the April number.

After another most enjoyable two hours, this interesting function came to an end.

ETHICS OF THE QUR-ÁN

CONTROL OF ANGER

"A noble instance of moderation and generosity."—SALE.

ANGER as a passion partakes of the animal nature. It is treated as bestiality by some, and must therefore be suppressed. Various systems of ethics propose measures to kill this passion, which is wrong and unnatural too. It shows want of true insight into human nature. There is no passion in us, tender or stern as its nature may be, which the lower animals do not share with us. No brute is devoid even of what we call love and kindness in man. In fact, no emotion in itself is bestial or human. They are low in their nascent state, but they become high morality when controlled within desired limits. Anger is as good as love in the formation of character and maintenance of social order. Magistracy and war in redress of wrong are necessary institutions, but they are manifestations of anger on proper occasions. Love transcending limits of propriety is infatuation and borders on madness.

In short, all our emotions receive their birth from physical organism. They need refinement. Religion comes to sublimate them into true humanity, which should not be synonymized with tender passions. Humanity takes its genuine shape when every passion is balanced and receives its fair play when proper opportunity arises. Any teaching which crushes these natural emotions, even though it may be associated with some big name, cannot be Divine in its origin. It partakes of human alloy, as it deprecates Divine economy in placing them in our nature. Religion, if from God, must lay down a course before us which when pursued may enable us to control all our passions and sublimate them into morality. We badly need such a course in the case of stern passions. They in unbridled conditions do more harm than the tender ones. An uncontrolled anger is a real danger to society. The Word of God lays down the following in this respect:—

"Those who spend benevolently in ease as well as in straitness, and those who restrain their anger and pardon men; and Allah loves the doers of good" (The Qur-án iii. 133).

The verse speaks of two contrary conditions of mind—anger and benevolence—which in ordinary conditions cannot go together. But the ethics of the Qur-án always appeal to

a contrary tender passion when a stern one is aroused. Good meets evil, to counteract the effect of the latter. "Repel evil by what is best" (xxxiii. 96) is another injunction of the Qur-án. The above quotation appeals to our charitable nature. It makes it meritorious in our eyes to show charity towards those whose conduct has aroused our anger. We can afford to be kind to a cringing mind. He who craves help is sure to get it. But aggression or injurious actions cannot court favour nor invite charity. Besides, in ordinary conditions mind in anger finds no room for kindness and charity. But if we are taught not only to restrain our anger and pardon those who have given rise to it through their inordinacy, but also to exercise benevolence towards them when anger is at its climax, we cultivate a psychology which one day will make a slave of that formidable passion, anger, which makes a brute of man. This teaching of the Qur-án has on many occasions inspired the noblest thought of toleration and charitableness. Hassan's¹ servant, having on one occasion thrown a boiling-hot dish on his master, obtained his liberty along with monetary help by reciting this verse. Thinking that he would be punished for his fault, he repeated the words: "Those who restrain their anger." Hassan said he was not angry. "And pardon men" (the next portion of the verse), added the servant. Hassan said, "I pardon you." "And Allah loves the doers of good" (the rest of the verse), concluded the offending servant. "I give you liberty and four hundred pieces of silver," was the response. "A noble instance of moderation and generosity" is Sale's comment upon this incident.

Forgiveness should not be confused with non-resistance to evil, as we find in the Church theology in the West. They are two different things and have got different occasions for their exercise. Forgiveness can only come from those who can retaliate injury. It finds no opportunity for its exhibition when a stronger hand buffets you right and left. An offender, if not reduced to the mercy of the wronged, needs no mercy being shown to him. The spirit of forgiveness must be cultivated to soften anger, but the latter passion remains dormant when oppression comes from a stronger quarter. In such case injury does not call forth a reprisal that forgiveness may have its chance, but sighs and cries, a helpless and at the same time

¹ Grandson of the Holy Prophet.

harmless manifestation of anger. Wrong, when coming from the weak or one depending on us, exasperates us, and our anger finds form in retribution. In both cases anger plays a part. In the former it is the aggressor who is stronger than the oppressed and is in fury, and in the latter the injured, but stronger than the wrongdoer, is a victim to the said passion. The Sermon on the Mount deals with the one and the above quotation from the Qur-án applies to the other. The sermon preaches submission to evil, which by exciting mercy will control anger, while the Qur-án enjoins forgiveness of evil upon one who can show his anger otherwise, which when attended with benevolence will make an angel of the brute.

MUHAMMAD ALI.

HISTORIC ISLAM

"MODERNISM in Islam," and "Historic Islam," are meaningless phrases to a Muslim mind. He finds no need or room for modernism in his theology. Islam is not individualism, that a new aspect or new reading of the life of its hero or heroes may bring change in its tenets and doctrines. It is free from dogmatism. Rituals play very defined parts in it and have never been treated as its tenets. Islam consists of some beliefs and principles of life, which are so lucidly explained in the most unequivocal terms in the Qur-án that they leave no room for two commentaries to its readers. Again, we have the advantage of the life of the Prophet, which clearly mirrors the teachings of the Qur-án—no better translation of that portion of the Book which deals with beliefs, ethics, sociology—in one word, code of life—than the sayings and actions of the Prophet himself. "The short, but most beautiful statement of that intelligent lady Ayesha (the wife of the Prophet), than whom none was more familiar with the recipient of the Quranic revelation, remains unsurpassed in depicting the character of the Holy Prophet; when asked about it, she replied, "*Huwa Khulqohul Qur-án*," i.e. "His character is the Qur-án." The remark is as true to-day as it was in the time of the Prophet. All those wonderful pictures of moral sublimity drawn in the Holy Qur-án became mirrored in his character. Fortunately for the coming generation of Islam, that portion of the life of the Prophet has been accepted by friends and foes as genuine as

the Qur-án itself. These two most authentic records have closed the door against heresies in Islam.

Besides, Islam does not stand in need of modernism. Had it been revolving on certain beliefs concerning the life-events of its founder or those of any of the heroes mentioned in the Qur-án, every new investigation in history would have moulded it into new form. Religion in the West has, however, been based from time immemorial on a different ground, which has from time to time given occasion to remoulding. It has all through been individualism. Jesus was brought into Europe to fill the old wine into new bottles. He took the place of Apollo, Jupiter, and Woden. Belief in his divinity and atonement was only a re-echo of ancient beliefs. The whole theology based upon such beliefs depends for its integrity solely upon reading certain events of the life of Jesus in the light of the Church. Give these events a new meaning and the whole theology crumbles into pieces, and Christian faith needs modernization. Try to read events recorded in the New Testament as not conclusive in proving the death of Jesus on the cross, but proving his survival after the event, and the theory of atonement falls to the ground. Take the narratives of his miracles as allegories and give to some of his utterances metaphorical meaning common to an Oriental mind possessed by Jesus, and belief in his divinity needs revision. If these are essentials of Christianity, every generation of culture and thought, if cared to remain attached to the old religion for reasons ultra-religious, shall have to trim its sail according to the currency of the wind. Had Islam been based even on a semblance of individualism it must have shared the same fate. Even miracles play very little part in the formation of Muslim belief. They have been used as signs to prove Divine messengership of their workers. They in themselves are no article of faith in Islam. We read of many miracles in the life of the Holy Prophet, we believe in their truth, but Muhammad, who has rightly been called "Modern Prophet" by Carlyle, never resorted to miracles in proving the truth of his teaching. He always appealed to reason, human observations, and nature all around. Miracles were performed to strengthen the belief already secured on rational bases. Similarly we find mention of various events in the accounts of the Prophet in the Qur-án. Some of them are of miraculous nature. They received dif-

ferent interpretation at the hands of different commentators, sometimes belonging to the same school of thought. They led to healthy controversies, as difference in opinion in matters like that has been allowed by the founder of the religion himself, who declared it as blessings of God. As, for instance, Qur-án clearly denies the death of Jesus on the cross. Whether he came down from the cross alive and died a natural death on some part of the earth or he was translated to heaven and another person was crucified in his place—a theory which came to Islam with Nestorians, who in large numbers accepted the faith in the ninth and tenth century A.C.—are matters more of academical nature than of faith. The holders of diverse opinions are all the same Muslims, and to call them as belonging to two sects is a misnomer. Islam requires a Muslim to believe in the Divine messengership of Jesus and to accept his teachings from God and to act upon them if found in their original purity, treating them as his own religion. His death or birth hardly affects his faith. Christology plays no part in Islam.

Freedom of opinion and personal judgment has always been encouraged in Islam. Difference of opinion was declared as Divine blessing by the Prophet. Muslim has never given even a slight countenance to an institution like that of Papacy. Priest-craft is unknown to him. Belief in an intermediary sounds to him as an insult to his sense of self-confidence. He accepts his articles of faith directly from the Qur-án and the words of the Prophet. He moulds his daily life on the tenets laid down in the Book and explicitly translated in the actions of its recipient, and this all has so clearly been laid down before him in black and white in a most unambiguous language that it leaves him no room to accept other than the universally received meaning in the whole Muslim world. This finishes his religion. His sense of looking to the Qur-án as the sole and final source of his religion is so strong—and this under the teaching of his own Prophet—that he would not accept anything contrary to the Qur-án, no matter if it was reported as the word of the Prophet. He would treat such reports as *Hadees Waze*, i.e. fabrication on the Prophet. This explains that marvellous unity of faith which rules the whole Muslim world in its four corners under different divisions of opinion and diverse schools of thought—a natural outcome of that freedom

of judgment in matters religious as well as mundane which a Muslim claims as his birthright. It gave impetus to healthy controversies and produced religious literature in volumes. Difference of opinion never invited persecution, as it never affected essentials of religion, which for their lucidity remained always above these intellectual treats. The great influx of converts from Judaism and Christianity to Islam enriched Muslim literature with all such traditions then in vogue in the said two religions which were not contrary to the tenets of Islam. They were accepted by some and rejected by others, and gave rise to diversity of opinion, which was encouraged as it did not affect the faith. This healthy course went on on every Muslim contact with new forms of thought and opinion. The same is the present Muslim attitude towards modern sciences. To call it a tendency to modernism is only to betray ignorance of Islam. Islam has never been a parasite. It has always stood on its legs. We never subordinate our religious view to any new philosophy, and the words of the Qur-án have never been distorted to suit any current theory. We accept useful and reject deleterious, but the Qur-án stands the sole judge in the matter of discrimination. Whatever has once been imported has got no binding obligation on us, as it has always been treated beyond the pale of the essentials of Islam. It can be rejected if found untrue or irrational. The Teacher of Islam left it complete. Whatever came afterwards was an intellectual growth. It may be retained or discarded without affecting the pristine beauty of the faith, as it was never treated as its essential. It was more or less a mental treat. So has been the course in the whole history of Islam. It gave rise to difference of opinion, which was never persecuted, but encouraged. It excited hot controversies and produced debatable polemics, but it was not sectarianism in any sense of the word, as the holders of diverse opinion never differed from each other on cardinal principles of Islam.

But to a mind nurtured in the Church theology in the West the above-mentioned differences supply reasons for subsections of the faith, as he finds the same thing in his own theology. What he fails to remember is the basic principles on which Islam diverges from Christianity and other such religions. The latter is Individualism and the former Principleism (if I may

be allowed to coin such a word). The one takes its inspiration and mould from a book and a person whose record is genuine, and the other is not so. The one receives its principles and tenets in clear-cut and defined form and complete in all its requirements from its founder, while the other needs superstructure and build and revision from the coming hands. Similarly, a student of the Church history cannot fail to observe thorough amalgamation of the current politics with religion. What to millions appears as a crucial difference between one sect and another sect of Christianity was only a political exigency a few centuries before. The history of Islam saw also some differences on political grounds, and as everything in Islam is religious and nothing secular, these differences may be characterized as religious in their nature, but they cannot be taken as creating sects in Islam in the current significance of the word in Western theology. For instance, Shias in Persia and Sunnees in other Muslim countries. The main difference between the two deals with the question of successorship to the Prophet. On his death a Caliph was to be elected to further the cause of Islam. Some favoured election of Abu Baker, but the others thought Ali the only rightful heir to the Prophet. The former are called Sunnees and the latter Shias. Neither Abu Baker nor Ali added to or subtracted anything from the Qur-án and the teachings of the Prophet, and had they done so they would have been discarded then and there. Go to Persia and Syria, and you will find Shias and Sunnees believe in one and the same faith. These two big divisions of thought gave rise to many other subsections of opinion.

A very cursory study of Islam will make the matter clear, but unfortunately the West has created a class of propagandist who think themselves amply paid in misrepresenting Islam. Any effort on our part to disabuse Western minds of the grossly wrong views as to Islam germinated by these politico-religious missionaries excites a counter-move. They are in the habit of hurling down on our head the same charge which was the ignominious blemish on their escutcheon. Middle-age Christianity did not believe in the soul of woman, but the blame afterwards came to our door. People in the West are disgusted with the multi-ramification of Christianity and are attracted by the unity of Islam. To counteract it these so-called missionaries must again bear the wrong tale.

Islam has now got a fair chance to present its real beauties to cultured minds, who are sure to be captivated. People have begun to think for themselves, and when these calumniators are put to task by honest seekers after truth, our representation of Islam is branded as Modernism. Could they honestly cite one single instance where the writers in these pages have ever tried to present anything of Islam which is not borne out by the words of the Qur-án and the sayings of the Prophet? We deny any sectarianism in Islam. We admit that a healthy Muslim mind, not bridled by papal or priestcraft yoke, so alien to human nature, has always encouraged and respected difference of opinion. Thinking is a Divine gift, and to think is to differ. We do differ with each other, but what constitutes Islam has never given rise to two thoughts. Truth is one-sided, and so is Islam. Can our detractors contradict this statement? Our pages will welcome such an attempt on their part.

THE PRIESTCRAFT

SURVEYING the religions of the world of the past three thousand years, there is ever present in all religions (except Islam) and at all times the sinister figure of the priest. Ordained by the gods or by God, and given special powers, regarded as part of the very Deity itself, holding the mass of the common people in meek submission and ever on the side of reaction and intolerance, truly the priest may be said to be one of the world's greatest evils. I will cite as an example the growth of priesthood in Judaism and Christianity. Early Israel had little need of priests, and it was only when the multitudinous laws of the Pentateuch were promulgated that the need of a priest was felt. However, during the Exodus a small number of persons were required under the headship of Aaron, whose duties were the supervision of the Ark of the Covenant. These being of the tribe of Levi, there thus grew up a tradition investing members of that tribe with the sole right of being eligible for the priesthood. When, in after-years, the Jews were settled in Palestine, synagogues were built in most of the towns and villages, and there was given into the hands of one tribe a power, safeguarded from all limitations, which has continued unto this day. It is a pity that so few people understand or care to investigate the Jewish

religion. Not only does this ignorance lead to much anti-Semitism, but I doubt if one can fully appreciate the life and teachings of the prophet Jesus without a complete knowledge of the circumstances under which he laboured. Jesus was against the priesthood. If he had not been, he would never have been crucified. "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no way enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." During the centuries separating Moses from Jesus a huge bulk of writings had come into existence, all treating of the numberless laws and regulations contained in the first five books of the Old Testament. Each new exigency required new explanations, and each new explanation gave to the tribe of Levi more power over the people. Even at the present day it is not allowed to hold a service of religion unless there are ten males present, of whom one must be a Levite. The Romans so respected their power that they left the government of the country in the hands of the priestly tribe. Jesus was not a Levite. His mother was, but marriage with a non-Levite by a woman destroys her "caste." Now I think the reader can understand the anger of the priests when Jesus, an ordinary Jew, not only preached religion, but exposed their trickery, exploitation, and evil power. Thus Jesus was crucified, but his followers under Paul in Gentile countries, hopelessly misunderstanding the teachings of their master, soon allowed another priesthood to spring up, which soon became as powerful and as evil as that of the Jews. Instead of a priestly tribe, here we have, similar to the Lamas of Tibet, the doctrine of Apostolic Succession. The Holy Spirit descends in the greatest degree to the elected Pope and in lesser degrees to bishops, deans, and clergy. After ordination the priest has the Spirit of God in him. What he says is the voice of God, and thus grew up the teaching: "The priest can do no wrong." As Jesus is the Chief Intercessor between God and man, so the priest is the intercessor between the people and Jesus and the saints. Man cannot approach God. He cannot even confess his sins to Him. He must confess to a priest, who, having the Spirit of God, has the power to assure one that he is forgiven. This is the true doctrine of the ordained clergy. Another bad side of most Christian priesthood is the prohibition of marriage (never, however, the prohibition of wine). To say the least, to forbid a large body

of men to marry, and then to grant them such a power over the people of both sexes, is highly dangerous ; especially so when the priest is regarded as possessed of the Spirit of God, and is therefore above criticism, whatever his actions. It is the observation of these evils still carried on in the name of holy religion, still defended by so-called sacred books, that make men so prejudiced against the very word "religion" that they even deny God Himself. Is it not, then, refreshing to turn to Islam, a Faith of works, of approachment to God through self, and not through any intermediary ? No monasticism, no apostolic succession, no body of men whose very livelihood depends upon the ignorance of the masses. True, mosques require attendants, and some men love to devote their lives to religion ; but the doctrine of priesthood itself is not, and never has been, found in the religion of Islam. Because, after all, what is a priest ? Only a man. You may take me and perform a certain ceremony in which I am the central figure, but after the ceremony is any logically minded person going to believe that I am possessed of the Spirit of God, not because I have lived a life of religion, piety, and good works, but merely because I have been ordained a priest ? However, evil will not last for ever. Starting with the Reformation, the power of priesthood in some parts of Christianity is steadily waning. Man is steadily moving towards that religion in which all mankind stand in equality before God, where "he who is best among you is he who does most good works." In such a religion the priest is not needed.

The simple worship of the one Great God Who rules over all, Who is understood by the most cultured and the most ignorant, only requires a right heart which is totally oblivious to priestly chants, music, and incense. This religion is Islam, and the absence of the priest in the religion of the Qur-án is one of the reasons why Muslims are nearer to their religion than any other people, and by not having a class interested in making Islam inseparable from priesthood not only are Muslims free from ritualism, but their religion has remained, and will remain, exactly the same pure faith that came from the lips of the Prophet Muhammad.

SALMAN.

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

THE universe is a vast ocean, the molecules of which are in rapid vibration. The waves set up by the molecular movement travel hither and thither. They are of a myriad different lengths, and travel with a myriad different velocities. Those waves, impinging on the various nerve centres of living organisms, reveal to them the external form and complicated structure of their surroundings, telling them everything they know, or can know, concerning the composition and movements of the universe.

Movements on the earth set up vibrations in the air, and the waves entering the human ear and impinging on the epithelial cells forming the auditorium of that organ are carried to the brain, and give the sensation of sound. By those waves of sound we hear, but only if the waves are of certain lengths and travelling with a certain speed. Sound waves travel with a velocity of about 1,140 feet per second. On the musical scale the waves entering the ear every second vary from about 16 to 40,000—the lowest note about 16 waves per second, the highest note about 40,000 per second. They are all travelling with the same speed ; the number entering the ear per second depends, therefore, on the length of the waves. Waves longer and shorter than the above are inaudible to us : our ears are not adapted for their reception. Marvellous are those waves travelling through the air, yet they pale and wither in glory before the waves speeding through the ether of space and setting it in rapid vibration.

Waves travelling at a velocity of 186,000 miles per second, and with lengths varying from 33,400 to 64,500 per inch, impinging on the retina of the eye, give what is known as the sensation of light. Wonderful thing, before which all other wonders sink into comparative obscurity like the companion of Rigel in the blaze of the great star's glory !

These light waves are set up by the movement of the various particles of matter composing the material universe. The surrounding ether is set in rapid vibration, and the vibrations radiate in all directions ; entering the pupil of the eye, they convey to the optic nerve, and it transmits to the brain, and the person receives the impression that a body so coloured, so shaped, and so moving exists towards the points from which

the light waves seem to come. "Speaking light," Sir John Herschell calls it :—

"The superior, in point of rank and conception, to all other products or results in the physical world. It is light which alone can give—and does give us—the assurance of a uniform and all-pervading energy. A mechanism almost beyond conception—complex, minute, and powerful, by which movement is propagated, and which is co-extensive with the universe itself."

Light appears simple, very simple, merely a white glow or radiance issuing or being reflected from bodies. It is to Newton we owe the discovery that it is very complex. He admitted a beam of sunlight through a small round hole into a darkened room, placing a white screen at a short distance from the hole for the light to fall on. Now the light passing through the hole and falling on the screen would, under ordinary circumstances, form a white spot, the diameter of which would depend on the size of the hole and the distance of the screen. But Newton placed between the hole and the screen, for the ray of light to pass through, a small glass prism ; that is, a piece of glass shaped like a wedge. The ray falling on the prism was changed in direction, and a rainbow-tinted band appeared on the screen.

Newton had by means of the prism broken the ray of light up into its component parts, and demonstrated beyond a doubt that the ray of sunlight admitted was composed of parts of different refrangibility. This rainbow-tinted band was called by him the solar spectrum, and the colours were classed and named as those in the rainbow—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

Dr. Wollaston noticed that the colours were not of uniform length, and therefore conjectured that a number of images overlapped, so he substituted a slit in place of the round hole, and found that by this method the spectrum was crossed by seven dark bands, but thinking they were natural boundaries of the different colours, he inquired no further. So he missed finding out the nature of the

DARK LINES IN SUNLIGHT.

A few years later, during that period of intense struggle in Europe, when Napoleon was in the ascendancy, when, as at

present, all the nations were at war, when crowns were lost and won and nations changed hands, Fraunhofer, an able German optician, unmoved by it all, was in his laboratory busily engaged investigating the nature of those dark lines in sunlight.

Going into the matter with the patience characteristic of the genius for scientific discovery, and using a telescope to examine the spectrum, he found it was crossed, not only by the seven bands of Wollaston, but by hundreds of narrow dark lines. In 1814, the year that witnessed the first downfall of the Little Corporal and his banishment to Elba, Fraunhofer had mapped no less than four hundred lines. To distinguish or mark the principal he named them after the letters of the alphabet A, B, C, D, and so on, names they still retain. He tried numerous

EXPERIMENTS TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY.

He examined light from the clouds, from the moon, and from the planets; he tried prisms of different materials; all to no purpose, so far as doing away with the lines was concerned: the lines were still there, because the light from the clouds, from the moon, and from the planets is reflected sunlight. As Agnes Giberne observes:—

“They spoke to him of the sun, but they spoke in a strange language, the key to which he did not know.”

He next tried starlight, when lo! a change came over the scene. The stars are not reflected sunlight: they shine by their own light. The spectra of the stars were crossed by dark lines, but they were not identical with those in the solar, and each star gave a different spectrum, the lines varying both in position and intensity. He also found that dark lines in the yellow portion of the solar spectrum (distinguished by the letter D), occupied the same position as the two bright yellow lines in a candle flame, found afterwards to be due to the burning vapour sodium.

He was near the clue, but just failed to grasp it. However, he had done his share of the work, and it was left to others to continue the investigation and make far-reaching discoveries, issuing in a new era in both astronomical and physical investigation, and extending still further our knowledge of the movements and the constitution of the material universe.

THE FIFTIES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY,

a decade that witnessed the startling of the biological world by the publication of the "Origin of Species" and the discovery of "Natural Selection" by the illustrious epoch-maker, Charles Darwin, witnessed also a new investigator attack the problem of dark lines in sunlight. Kirchhoff of Heidelberg, the possessor of a fine prism, began observations on the, by that period, now famous lines. Without going into details, his investigations may be summarized as follows :—

He allowed a faint ray of sunlight to pass through the prism; the D lines in the yellow were, of course, dark. He then allowed the light of a flame in which the vapour of sodium was burning to pass through the prism along with the sunlight. In an instant the dark lines became bright. We can imagine the scientist labouring under intense excitement as he approached the next stage. He now permitted the full blaze of sunlight to fall on the prism, overpowering the light of the flame, and in an instant the lines were dark again.

THE MYSTERY WAS PRACTICALLY SOLVED.

When the light of the vapour was the stronger the lines were bright, when the sunlight was the stronger the lines were dark, and the dark lines were identical with the two yellow lines of the burning vapour of sodium. The explanation is contained in the following law, given in Roscoe's "Spectrum Analysis."

"Every substance which emits light of certain kinds at a given temperature must possess the power at that same temperature of absorbing the same kinds of light."

The law has been put in a different, and I believe in a clear way, by Miss Clarke in her "History of Astronomy in the Nineteenth Century." She writes :—

"Substances of every kind are opaque to the precise rays which they emit at the same temperature; that is to say, they stop the kinds of light or heat which they are then in a condition to radiate. But it does not follow that *cool* bodies absorb the rays which they would give out if sufficiently heated."

The spectrum of various kinds of bodies may be put as follows briefly: If a *solid* is heated so as to give off light, the

spectrum will be composed of a soft band of colour like the rainbow, called a continuous spectrum. A *liquid* gives the same continuous spectrum. If the light of a *gas* is passed through the prism, the result is different—only bright lines are visible, narrow and well-defined, differing in position or wave-length, according to the nature of the element or elements constituting the gas. If sodium is present, two bright yellow lines will be visible; strontium and potassium will give strong red lines; if iron or nitrogen be present, a vast number of fine bright lines, of various colours, will be seen.

The lines of each element have their own position in the spectrum, no two gases having lines of exactly the same wave-lengths. They can therefore be mapped, their exact wave-lengths taken, and easily identified. The lines of each element run in a series, a harmonical progression, as A, C, D. Crommelin puts it in his little work:—

“Hydrogen shows a beautiful series of lines, the intervals between successive ones being half the preceding interval; thus, if we take a line two inches long and draw perpendiculars to it at 0, 1, $1\frac{1}{2}$, $1\frac{1}{3}$, $1\frac{1}{8}$, etc., inches from one end of it, we shall have a good idea of it”—

namely, of the series of hydrogen lines, so long as the temperature and pressure remain the same. The intensity of the various lines vary according to the temperature and tenuity of the gas. Having reached those points, and being in a position to understand them, we can read the language in which they speak to us of the sun and of the stars, and appreciate the wonders of the instrument known as the spectroscope.

JOHN PARKINSON.

WHAT JESUS SAYS ABOUT HIMSELF

“And when Allah will say: O Jesus, son of Mary! did you say to men, take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah, he will say: ‘Glory be to Thee, it did not befit me that I should say what I had no right to (say); if I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed have known it; Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I do not know what is in Thy mind; surely Thou art the great Knower of unseen things’” (The Qur-án).

THE above quoted verse speaks of what will occur between God and Jesus on the Day of Judgment. Jesus not only dis-

* “From this description of Mary being taken for a God by the Christians, some Christian critics of the Qur-án conclude that the doctrine of the Trinity, according to the Qur-án, consists of three

avows his claim of Divinity, but also denies his preaching so to his disciples when he was with them. Fortunately the narrative of the Nazarene Prophet as reported in the four Gospels, though not genuine in its entirety, still contains sufficient evidence to corroborate the statement of the Qur-án. But before I refer to what Jesus himself says about himself as recorded in the Bible I should like to read to you a verse from the Qur-án which gives us a sublime conception of the Deity. We have to read the words of Jesus in the light of the Quránic verse in order to ascertain whether Jesus ever claimed Divinity. The verse runs thus :—

“Allah is He besides whom there is no god, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting by whom all subsist ; slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep ; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His ; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is before them and

persons—God, Jesus, and Mary. But this is an absolutely unwarranted conclusion. Mary is no doubt spoken of as being taken for an object of worship by the Christians ; but the doctrine of the Trinity is not mentioned here, while the Divinity of Mary is not mentioned where the Trinity is spoken of. Had Mary not been worshipped by the Christians as the ‘Mother of God,’ the conclusion would have been safe that the Qur-án mistook Mary for the third person of the Trinity. But the doctrine and practice of Mariolatry, as it is called by Protestant controversialists, is too well known. In the catechism of the Roman Church the following doctrines are to be found : ‘That she is truly the mother of God, and the second Eve, by whose means we have received blessing and life ; that she is the mother of Pity and very specially our advocate ; that her images are of the utmost utility’ (*Ency. Br.* 11th ed., vol. 17, p. 813). It is also stated that her intercessions are directly appealed to in the Litany. And further, that there were certain women in Thrace, Scythia, and Arabia who were in the habit of worshipping the virgin as a goddess, the offer of a cake being one of the features of their worship. ‘From the time of the Council of Ephesus (held in 431 Christian era),’ says the same writer, ‘to exhibit figures of the virgin and child became the approved expression of orthodoxy. . . . Of the growth of the Marian cultus, alike in the east and in the west, after the decision at Ephesus it would be impossible to trace the history. . . . Justinian in one of his laws bespeaks her advocacy for the Empire, and he inscribes the high altar in the new church of St. Sophia with her name. Narses looks to her directions on the field of battle. The Emperor Heracleus bears her image on his banner. John of Damascus speaks of her as the Sovereign lady to whom the whole creation has been made subject by her son. Peter Damian recognizes her as the most exalted of all creatures and apostrophizes her as deified and endowed with all power in heaven and in earth, yet not forgetful of our race.’ The Christian world had in fact felt ‘the need for a mediator to deal with the very mediator,’ and thus Mary was raised to the throne of Divinity along with Jesus.”

Muhammad Ali's Translation of the Holy Qur-án.

what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend any thing out of His knowledge except what He pleases ; His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not, and He is the Most High, the Great."

Let us now turn to the Bible. We read the following in John :—

"I do nothing of myself" (John viii. 28).

"My Father is greater than I" (John xiv. 28).

"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. The Lord our God is one Lord" (Mark xii. 29).

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only thou shalt serve" (Matt. iv. 10).

"Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, that is God."

"I am not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God."

"I cast out devils by the finger of God" (Luke xi. 20).

"I thank thee, O Father, that Thou hast heard me, and I know that Thou hearest me always ; but because of the people which stand by I said it that they may believe that Thou hast sent me" (John xi. 41, 42).

"The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me" (John v. 36).

"If any one hear my words and believe not, I judge him not ; for I came not to judge the world" (John xii. 47).

"(Jesus then went a little further, fell on his face, and prayed, saying) 'O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me : nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt'" (Matt. xxvi. 38, 39).

"Eli ! Eli ! lama sabachthani—O God, O God, why hast Thou forsaken me." (Matt. xxvii. 46).

"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46).

Are these the expressions of a true servant of God and of His humble creature or of God? Does not Jesus admit his limit of knowledge and power? Does he not look to God even for his daily sustenance? Does he not express his complete

submission to the Divine will? Does he not disavow all goodness for his own self when speaking of God. A messenger no doubt he was of God, and spoke unto the world what he heard from Him. He has been reported to perform certain miracles, but by the help of God. He is said to have raised Lazarus to life, but he has to pray to God, and thanks him on being heard. See what the Qur-án says of God in the verse just quoted :—

“Whatever is in the heaven, and whatever is in the earth is His. . . . He knows what is before them, and what is behind them. . . . His knowledge extends over the heaven and the earth and the preservation of them tires Him not.”

Compare with these words what Jesus says of himself :—

“Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.”

“Of myself I can do nothing ; of that day and that hour knoweth no man . . . neither the son.”

One fails to understand how, in face of these admissions on the part of Jesus, Divinity can be claimed for him. I have read the Bible from time to time, and with all reverence which a Muslim can afford to cherish for Jesus as his Prophet. I have approached his narrative, and I must admit that I fail to appreciate anything in it which may make Jesus a God. I wonder how this simple truth remains unobserved by the ministers of the Church with all their university education. After all Jesus was right when he said, “I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that Thou hast kept these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.”

BASHEER.

PROPHECIES OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

“He will show you things to come” (St. John xvi.)

“HE will show you things to come,” is the sign of a Prophet in the words of Jesus. In fact, the very words Prophet in English and its equivalent “Nabí” in Arabic, literally mean one who is given the knowledge of things to come. An average man would expect from any claimant to prophethood the possession of such supernatural knowledge. Invidious comparison is no doubt odious, but if truths are ascertained through contrast,

Muhammad seems to be the only one amongst the prophets whose foreknowledge of things surpasses all that has been claimed by other prophets. His prophetic words are not indefinite in their character, nor wanting in exactness as those of Jesus, in the description of his second advent, "Ye shall hear of war and rumours of war . . . nations shall rise against nations and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines and pestilence, and earthquakes in different places." Such vague predictions of events so recurrent in the history of the world, hardly go to prove prophetic powers of their speaker. Expressing definitely of a future event and its time if necessary, would only constitute true prophecy. Unfortunately where Jesus has been reported in the Bible to make such an attempt, he has been a hopeless failure. "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." More than fifty generations have passed and the words have remained unfulfilled.

Besides, a prophecy in order to distinguish it from a forecast, should refer to events highly improbable in the face of our surrounding circumstances. To make my object clear, I refer to some concrete example in the life of the Prophet. The struggle that had existed between the Persian and the Roman Empire for a long time became keen in the lifetime of the Prophet. To avenge Maurice, who was murdered by Phocas, Chosroes II of Persia, began a war with Rome in 602 A.C. "His armies plundered Syria and Asia Minor, and in 608 advanced to Chalcedon. In 613 and 614 Damascus and Jerusalem were taken by the General Shahabaraz, and the Holy Cross carried away in triumph. Soon after even Egypt was conquered. The Romans could offer but little resistance, as they were torn by internal dissensions and pressed by Avars and Slavs."¹ When the news of the conquest reached Mecca, the enemies of the Prophet were jubilant, as their sympathies were with the fire-worshipping Persians more than with the Christians who, being the followers of the Scriptures, were classed by them with the Muslims. In this defeat of the Christians, they saw the vanquishment of the Muslims. "The Greeks were so much distressed, that there appeared little likelihood of their being able to retrieve their fortune, and in the following year the Persians proceeded to lay siege to

¹ Encyclopædia Britannica. Art. Chosroes II.

Constantinople itself.”¹ It was at that time that the Holy Prophet Muhammad received the following revelation :—

In the name of Allah, the
Beneficent, the Merciful.

1 I am Allah, the best
Knower.

2 The Romans are van-
quished,

3 In a near land, and they,
after being vanquished, shall
overcome,

4 Within a few years.
Allah's is the command before
and after ; and on that day the
believers shall rejoice,

5 With the help of Allah ;
He helps whom He pleases ;
and He is the Mighty, the
Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْمَ ۞

غَلِبَتِ الرُّومُ ۞

فِي أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ

عَلَيْهِمْ سَيُغْلِبُونَ ۞

فِي بضعِ سنينَ ۚ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ ثَمَلٍ

وَمَنْ بَعْدُ وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْعَلُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۞

يَنْصُرُ اللَّهُ يَنْصُرُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ

الرَّحِيمُ ۞

The Qur-án in these words announced two different prophecies. One about the defeat of the victorious Persians by the Romans, whose power this time was quite shattered, and the other about the vanquishment of the powerful Meccans, by the handful of the persecuted Muslims.

The words in the Arabic text corresponding to their English translation “a few years” are more expressive. It is *bid-an*, which denotes a period from three to nine years. When these verses were revealed, Abu-Baker, the first Caliph after the Prophet, asserted in a public assembly that the Romans would overcome the Persians within three years. Oubayy-bin-Khalf, an unbeliever of the Prophet denied this, and ten camels were betted on the issue. When the Prophet came to know of it, he told Abu-Baker that the time limit of three years was not correct, for “*bid-an*” signified from three to nine years. Abu-Baker went to Oubayy to extend the time to ten years, who

¹ Palmer in his translation of Holy Al-Qur-án.

could only listen to it if the bet was raised to a hundred camels to which Abu-Baker consented. This shows how sure were the companion and the Holy Prophet himself of the fulfilment of the prophecy.

These two prophecies were made in 615, and in 624 Heraculius advanced into Northern Media, where he destroyed the great fire-temple of "Godazk."¹ In the same year a small band of Muslims routed a strong force of about a thousand of the Qureish archers, killing all the leaders and dealing a deathblow to the power of the enemy. These successes continued until the Qureish on one side became utterly crushed, and "the Persian Empire sank into hopeless anarchy."

Here is a prognostication with the true character of Divine prophecy which at once distinguishes it from a political forecast: "When did forecast have the courage to declare that a mighty conqueror that had laid waste another mighty empire, taking province after province during a long course of years, until its soldiers came to the door of the vanquished enemy's capital, would, within a fixed period—a period too short to either bring about *débâcle* in the conquering troops or to allow the vanquished and almost annihilated armies to regain sufficient strength and organization—not only recapture its lost territory, but attack the very heart of the victorious country? Or when was forecast ever able to say that a handful of men whose numbers did not exceed a hundred, and who were so persecuted and oppressed that most of them had to take refuge in another country, would within nine years vanquish a whole nation of warriors?"²

The prophecy of the final triumph of the Holy Prophet and the utter discomfiture and overthrow of the power of his opponent, is of very frequent occurrence in the Holy Al-Qur-án. Among them we read the following: "Or, do they (enemies of the Prophet) say we are a host alight together to help each other? Soon shall the host be routed, and they shall turn their backs. Nay, the hour is their promised time, and the hour shall be most grievous and bitter." Holy Al-Qur-án, chapter 54, vv. 44, 45, 46.

Bukhari makes mention of an incident in connection with this prophecy. On the day of the battle of Badr when 313

¹ Encyclopædia Britannica.

² Muhammad Ali's Translation of the Qur-án.

raw and inexperienced Muslim youths without any arms had to face about a thousand of the Qureish warriors, the Holy Prophet prayed within his tent, saying: "O Lord, if such is Thy will, Thou mayest not be served after this day." Abu-Bakar took his hand and said: "Allah is sufficient for you, O Apostle of Allah." So he went out, and he recited. *"Soon shall the host be routed, and they shall turn their backs, nay, the hour is their promised time, and the hour shall be most grievous and bitter."*

This shows how the Holy Prophet and his companions understood these prophecies to mean the vanquishment of the Meccans. The battle of Badr was a turning-point in the history of the Prophet. And as it had been spoken of in the old Scriptures, "For thus hath the Lord said unto me: Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail, and the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished," (Isaiah xxi, 16, 17). This was to occur in the forest in Arabia, as Isaiah xxi. 13 shows, and so it took place just a year after the flight of the Prophet from Mecca, which has also been referred to in Isaiah xxi. 14: "They prevented with their bread, him that fled." The battle of Badr brought the mighty men of the children of Kedar in the field. Their names were Abu Jahal, Muttam-bin-Adiyy, Shaiba-bin-Rabiyya, Utba-bin-Rabiyya, Walid-bin-Utba, Ubbayy-bin-Khalf, Nadar-bin-Alhars, Aqba-bin-Abi Muad. They all were slain at Badr, and Abu Lahb, who remained at Mecca, died on hearing the fatal news. The glory of Kedar failed, and the prophecies thus became fulfilled. In order to understand the force of many other prophecies given in the Qur-án, one should imagine the helpless plight under which the Prophet was when these prophecies were made. His announcement of his mission incurred strong opposition and severe persecution. In the face of difficulties and hardships which were sufficient to kill all his future, he made prophecies of his triumph. Every new measure of persecution adopted by his enemies, invites a new prophecy of greater force and splendour. Every ridicule hurled on his followers brings forth a fresh promise of success. His enemies are contriving to expel him, and he gives them the news that he would ultimately come back as a conqueror and be made the ruler in the land after their power was crushed.

When the chief men of Mecca conspired against his life, people came to inform him, and inquired about his fate. In answer to them, the chapter with the title "Joseph," found its revelation. The seventh verse of which says: "Certainly in Joseph and his brothers there are signs for the inquirers." The inquirers are told that their treatment of him (the Prophet) would be similar to that which Joseph experienced at the hands of his brothers, and that which they met with from him, viz. that he shall be expelled from his home, as Joseph was expelled, but that his countrymen shall ultimately come to him in submission, asking pardon for their faults, as Joseph's brothers had done, and so it took place eight years after the flight. Mecca was conquered, and the Qureish came to him asking pardon for their crimes, which they received from the generous Prophet. The following incident shows that the Holy Prophet regarded the story of Joseph as a prophetic description of the events that were to befall him. On the day of the conquest the Holy Prophet stood at the gate of the Kaaba and said to the Qureish: "How do you think I would treat you?" They said: "We hope for good, noble brother, and the son of a noble brother." Then he said? "I say as my brother Joseph said, there shall be no reproof against you this day." These words the Qur-án puts into the mouth of Joseph when his brethren came for pardon to him. In connection with these predictions of the return of the Prophet to Mecca, we read the following, which was revealed to him on his way to Medina: "Most surely he who has made the Qur-án binding on you will bring you back to the destination."

(To be continued.)

HOW "GODS" DIE AND ARE REBORN

A WORSHIPPING animal as man is, he cannot live without an object of adoration. From "fetishism to man-worship," his hankering after the Adored one has seen gods in different forms and colours. Even an atheistic mind must have something to idolize, may it be his hobby or fad. Whenever and wherever

true theology is wanting, man's own desires¹ become his deities. His needs clothe these divinities in variegated robes, while his ideals come forward to give mould to divine attributes. Thus a god is born and finds his own author his worshipper. He is an index of received opinion on the morals and ethics of the time and focus of current ideas about what is noble and good. The deity for the time seems to be eternal and unchangeable, like all our ideas at a time, but in reality he is subject to a continuous though imperceptible change. Change of circumstances and environment creates change in our needs and desire; it affects our ideas, and our ideals and goals receive quite a new shape. What the other day seemed to be beautiful and good looks to-day hideous and horrid. Our imagination undergoes a revolution, and ideas which had been summed up by the name of "god" do not appeal to us any longer. New ideas take their place. Then the older god dies and the new god receives his birth, resplendent in graceful covering of new attributes as the Buddhist poet puts it in the following beautiful words: "The flowers of the garland he wore are withered; his robes of majesty have waxed old and faded; he falls from his high state and is reborn into a new life. Under a new name man's own creature—a focus of new ideas—reigns his heart in the garb of a new divinity."

This explains the heterogeneity of the conception of the deity in the realm of mythology. But the world has never been without its mythology. Theology when benighted believes in opportunism, and has to trim its soul at every gush of wind. Human ideas which receive new mould under various vicissitudes of time do not fail to give it a fresh shape. The last two millenniums in Christendom, like all other ancient religions, have seen many a death and birth of the Adored one. The divinity of Jesus has been given from time to time different conceptions and diverse interpretations, always focusing in them the popular ideas of the day. A gradual though imperceptible change in the Church theology has always been

¹ The Qur-ân refers to this tendency in man in the following words: "Have you seen him who takes his low desires for his god?" (chap. xxv. 43). This shows how broad is the idea of polytheism in Islam. It condemns not only worship of idols, it equally condemns blindly following of one's desires. Many men who believe in worshipping one god do bow before the greatest of their idols: their desire. In no other religion has the monotheistic doctrine been brought to such perfection.

at work. But our days are days of wonders and marvels. A work of a century is accomplished in a decade of years, and our days stand for years in the development of human thought. Could it fail to influence theology? No! We are again hearing death agonies and birth throes together. The God who spoke from the Mount is again at Calvary, the olive-branch is withering, his robes as the Prince of Peace are fading, and he is in the tomb, but the resurrection is not far off; the stone has been removed, and Jesus in khaki has been seen in the trenches.

DEANE.

INFLUENCE OF THE SOUL ON THE BODY

Wise men of all ages have justly said that mankind are more curious in inquiring after matters new than common and excellent: such excellent objects have been closely associated with the human life and hence become common; the very fact of nearness has made them despised and unknown. With an idle fancy we turn over one page after another of this great book of nature, without perusing even ordinary characters—characters which stand out in bold relief before our mind's eye to express supreme power of the Creator and so many excellencies of His creation.

World presents us with vivid pictures and fictitious novelties, and these, on account of their rareness, seem stranger and they engross us, yet in their nature are of no real value. Every shooting star strikes more wonder in people's minds, but not those glorious lamps of heaven with a constant motion and order which have even impressed the heathens, inasmuch as that they regarded them their divinities. If a child is born with some abnormality—by a freak of nature, let us say—it will be talked about all over, and myriads of scientific explanations will be brought out, but things of every day are never accounted for. We rather wonder at one solitary exception, than all normal.

None looks up in amazing appreciation to the magnificent stretch of the blue canopy with twinkling stars, nor any eye gazes on the moon in the glory of her fourteenth night: all is taken as a matter of fact. And it has become a second nature, by habit, that we are more apt to take notice of things new than common. But things, be they ever so humble and common, are worthy of our thought in regard to their perfection and usefulness. How often do we not pass by objects and pay no heed to them because they are so familiar to our eyes. Nearness and familiarity are, therefore, their only faults—faults which in no way are inherently their own.

This observation manifests to us a great object-lesson, and a little thought on the problem will bring us nearer to the reality and truth of life. Things familiar and common are left unnoticed, is an explanation of many of the vices and

drawbacks of human existence, as it brings out the initial difference between right and wrong and proves conclusively that man is forgetful of his own being, and, by reason of his own nearness to himself, is usually of himself most unknown and neglected. In man God has stamped a noble character, and has moulded him amongst all His works one of the most perfect models of His created wonders, and we cannot but acknowledge him to be the fittest chapter to study in this great book of nature.

To take a view of the inside, and being desirous to look to a more sublime phase of this book, let us spend no more time in gazing upon its cover alone—to insist on the material or sensitive condition of human nature—but endeavour to understand the cipher of its mysterious pages.

The actions of human soul are principally two—of Reason and of Action; the first originates from the understanding, the second from the will. Both have in the sound condition of life a direct dependence on the organs and bodily faculties, which in one case precede and in the other follow. To the one, they are as carriers, to admit and convey; to the other, as actors, to perform and execute.

Concerning the power, therefore, of the body over the soul, we may resolve that the thinking part of man, in the regular order, depends in all its ordinary and natural operations upon the happy or disordered state of those components of which the body is a whole. These agencies have but little overruling influence, yet they have a power to impair or retard the working of the soul. We know of instances where some sudden disease of the body had weakened, or even entirely extirpated, the profoundest impressions and most firm habits of the mind. As an example we may take the locomotor function: the individual desires to move, yet if the subordinate instruments, the limbs, are diseased or otherwise indisposed for the execution of that power, there will not be any actual motion. The soul and the body to a certain degree go hand in hand, and the soul, being a dependent worker, must of necessity have their co-operation. The soul of man has not directly from itself those weaknesses and infirmities of which so many of us are victims; they are exotic, and it is only disabled by earthly alloy—the defective organs, which, being out of order, encumber themselves upon the activities of the soul and thus almost underweigh it.

Two principal defects are discernible in human soul in reference to each other—an imperfection and an inequality of operation. As to the imperfection, the cause of it cannot wholly be imputed to that bodily weakness from which the soul may at any time be oppressed.

But with the inequalities and differences in individual understandings in their various actions the case is not the same as in the instance of imperfection. It may be that the souls have originally in their nature degrees of perfection and weakness; yet it is also true that this difference proceeds from

the variety of temperaments and dispositions in the instrumental faculties of the body. It is, therefore, this effect that causes the working of the soul. If this be not the only influence, one cannot conceive of another, for it is otherwise inexplicable that there should be such remarkable variations in individual apprehensions as we see that there are: there ought to have been a similitude of human actions, and all ought to have had every facility to perceive the mysteries of existence and to acquire knowledge, which we so often find in a large measure granted to some and to others quite denied.

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CHRISTIAN BELIEF IN A PROCESS OF CRYSTALLIZATION

CURRENT events, especially in regard to Church affairs here, are showing remarkable signs of the effort that is now being made to overhaul once more the tenets of Christian belief. Not one dogma or two, but the whole of the religion, is again in the melting-pot for being moulded and reshaped into something more in fitness and harmony with the developed and matured reasoning of the times. Like its counterpart, the first great effort to shape Christianity on more intelligible lines, the present struggle comes from within—from the Church itself. It is superior to any other effort through the last nineteen centuries of Christian belief in being under the control of more trained intellect than that which forged the Athanasian Creed and the findings of the Synod of Nicea.

There are no more illusions as to the authenticity of the Bible. The burning question of the day, like the deliberations of the earlier centuries, is not to decide between the SYNOPTICAL RECORDS and Apocryphal writings, but between the records being infallible as a word of God or a human composition. The searching inquiry, which characterizes every intellectual movement of the age, has discovered certain passages in the "Book of God" which are not only revolting to a peaceful mind, but are in no case elevating to their readers spiritually. One of such passages is Psalm lviii. The decision of the Church on this discovery is interesting in many ways. It has decided upon its removal from the Prayer Book, without reflecting for a moment the scepticism such an action would give rise to, not only about that particular part, but of the whole which contains it. The almost inevitable logical sequence of this mode of reasoning would be the destruction of the whole Bible and eventually the extinction of all traces of Christian belief.

The difficulty of the moment which pervades the ranks, not of the laity but of influential and conscientious Church dignitaries, resolves itself into one or two very vital questions. In the first place, a very deep-rooted doubt exists in the minds of some of these Churchmen that the fabric of belief which they know

as Church-Christianity was at all the teachings of the Master. A careful reader of the four Gospels can easily come to this conclusion. But it has taken them full five centuries—since its establishment—to arrive at this decision. This leads them to another doubt, viz. if Jesus himself is not responsible for the Church which derives its name from him, and did never attempt to give his followers a new religion, then who else with absolutely no claim to Divine inspiration could formulate a Faith for the coming generations?

The generally prevalent belief regarding the teachings of the Christ was that it was considered an ideal, no doubt, to be aimed at in our daily lives, though unfortunately in practice some of the Christendom had always honoured the teaching of that ideal in its breach. In theory it has yet remained an ideal of religion, always respected and loved by its followers; but the situation to-day is, that a large section of ecclesiastical opinion, if not prepared to condemn it as unfit for affording a practicable guidance, has studiously acted in opposition to it. Many attempts have been made by some one holding high Church office to give a different construction to the pacifism of Christianity, but they seem all to have been failures. If this repudiation of the pacifism of Christianity had been confined to laity, it would not have been of great consequence, having regard to the absolutely subjective rôle this section plays in Christian communal organization. But what is striking is this, that the very representatives of the Church of Christ have through their utterances on the subject so minimized the importance of the "Sermon on the Mount" as to render by far the very best feature of the "Religion of Peace" an enigma in the public eye, no amount of sophisticated coverings of ecclesiastical reasoning notwithstanding. So radical has been the change in this direction, that even those material elements of a Christian's belief, viz. miracles of Jesus, have now come to be regarded as mere allegories and metaphors.

There are four leading problems agitating the Church circles to-day: Is it from Jesus Christ himself, directly from whom it derives its name, that Christianity can claim its origin? Is the Book, taken up till now as the Word of God, fit to command allegiance as such? Are the teachings of Christ, so much made of for the spirit of charity and meekness in them, worthy of admiration as practical ideals? And last, but not the least of these: Are the miracles of Jesus Christ an actuality or only metaphorical expressions embodying an impression of the uncommon and superhuman powers possessed by him?

These are to-day the four main points on which the Church unrest and the unwillingness to accept the teachings of Christianity on their face value, by some of those who are the only acknowledged repositories of religious learning and champions of Church beliefs, hinges itself. However veiled the language of such expressions, and however guarded their tone to avoid any panic creeping into the ranks of the less informed, the leading facts of the case assert themselves with merciless

simplicity. The result, the inevitable result, of these self-questionings is already faintly visible on the horizon; the thinking, the leading, and the guiding mind of the Church as well as that of its flock is already on the eve of the realization of the foregone conclusion, that Jesus Christ the man cannot be the God, and that his crucifixion can no more be taken as a Divine scheme for human salvation. It is beginning to dawn, on the other hand, as it rationally ought to, that it was one of the accidents common to the fate of martyrs to truth—in every respect an enviable and worthy lot. His teachings do no more receive such unquestioned recognition and homage as they used to. To a great many, Buddhism contains equally elevating ideals and noble inspirations.

So that after another few centuries of its reshaping the Christianity of to-day is again in the melting-pot. The result of this last process, due as it is to a very highly matured and inquisitive intellect of the day, seems to foreshadow something very drastic for it. The mind of to-day is in search of something that should have less of unpractical idealism and more of reason in it.

This indicates a very serious desire on the part not only of those who are supposed to have control of the conscience of the laity but of the people themselves, to successfully and manfully face the need of a teacher who should demonstrate in his own life the greatness of a religion in the light of its practical utility to the world. Any study, however deep it may be, of the life of Jesus, as much of it as is at our disposal, would reveal the simple fact that he was the bearer of a certain code of human guidance, essentially limited in the scope of its applicability to the times in which the teacher himself lived. His own words and deeds partake of this unedifying character of his message. The Bible, with all its most wonderful idealism, is destitute of those practical rules calculated to afford the best guidance in every phase and avenue of human conduct. A Book of God should not merely content itself with prescribing a rôle of absolute humility and meekness, it should besides lead its followers to higher planes of action and energy in all that is legitimate and worthy for the genius and power of man to undertake. The guide himself should lead the way in illustrating by actual example through all the possible rôles of human life, from the exalted rank of kingship to the humble station of an ordinary man, the truth of its precepts. Jesus and his gospel lack these essential credentials.

It is a universally admitted fact that the human mind, once released from its old grooves of blind faith, does not rest until its object, the motive of its inquiry, is achieved. We are living in an age in which this phenomenon will be observed in all its intensity; and we have no doubt that it would culminate in the attainment of the goal, represented by the realization by it of the best "Rule of Life," viz. El-Islam, which has everything in it for the thinking man, presented to him by the greatest among men—Muhammad.

ABDUL QAYUM MALIK.

MUHAMMAD THE SIGN OF GOD

By SHAIKH M. H. KIDWAI.

Continued from page 88, ISLAMIC REVIEW, Vol. VI.

Number 2 (February).

But on pages 85 and 86 he goes on in rapturous exclamations thus :—

“The school of the twentieth century, flourishing anew on this firm ground, shall have to unfold to the rising youth not only the wonderful truths of the evolution of the cosmos, but also the inexhaustible treasures of beauty lying everywhere hidden therein. Whether we marvel at the majesty of the lofty mountains or the magic world of the sea, whether with the telescope we explore the infinitely great wonders of the starry heaven, or with the microscope the yet more surprising wonders of a life infinitely small, everywhere does Divine Nature open up to us an inexhaustible fountain of æsthetic enjoyment. Blind and insensible have the great majority of mankind hitherto wandered through this glorious wonderland of a world; a sickly and unnatural theology has made it repulsive as a ‘vale of tears.’ But now, at last, it is given to the mightily advancing human mind to have its eyes opened; it is given to it to show that a true knowledge of nature affords full satisfaction and inexhaustible nourishment not only for its searching understanding, but also for its yearning spirit.”

And he ends the confession of his faith with these words, to which every Muslim can say “Amen” :—

“May God, the Spirit of Good, the Beautiful and the True, be with us.”

The fact is that these philosophers and scientists have no right to find out the attributes of God from the working of nature. To them this cosmos is altogether accidental. It had no Designer, no intelligent Architect, no living Fashioner. They take all that exists to be only the creation of blind chance—at least in its beginning. They think that even those laws which they admit govern the whole universe were laid down not deliberately, not intelligently, not with any purpose or object, but just by accident. They themselves, in spite of all their intellect, all their knowledge of the component parts of life, all their knowledge of the organic and inorganic properties,

cannot create a fly, yet they are foolish enough to take unintelligent, lifeless, insignificant atoms to be the creators and fashioners of all that exists and the authors of all those immutable laws which govern every atom. What right have they to say that the struggle in the existence is a proof that God is either not Omnipotent or not Good? They do not know, or care to know, the purpose, the object of the struggle. The mere fact of destruction does *not* show cruelty or callousness—it is no proof of the want of goodness on the part of the destroyer. Surely a surgeon cannot be blamed if he uses his knife to take away deleterious matter from the body. Anybody in his senses can say that it is meant of goodness on the part of the surgeon when he uses his knife.

This subject, i.e. whether the apparent struggle and contention in this world disproves the existence of a good God, has been discussed in greater detail in the ISLAMIC REVIEW of April, 1915, under the heading "The War and God." Suffice it here to say that when the scientists admit that science fails to explain the object, the *raison d'être* of the universe, they have no right to infer from what they see of destruction in it that the Creator was not Good or not Omnipotent. They should take the advice of the greatest poet born on this earth—the immortal Hafiz. He says:—

Hadis as nutribo mai go vo razé dahrkamtarjo

Ki kas nakushoodo nakushayad ba hikmat een moammara.

"Better talk of music and wine and not of unravelling the mysteries of the universe,

Because nobody has nor anybody shall be able to undo the world-mysteries through science or philosophy."

There are powers, not scientific powers, but spiritual powers, in man through which he can conquer death—through which pain becomes pleasure. What right have the scientists to say that death is cruel, when they do not know the other side of death? If they really believe that there is nothing after death, then they have no reason to believe that death is by any means a cruelty. Man by death is relieved of all worries and anxieties and pains—nay, man by his death supplies many little insects and worms with food. Why, then, should death be a proof of the cruelty of God to scientists? Theologians have no fear of death. According to them, this world is meant to be a place

of temporary sojourn ; therefore to them neither pain nor pleasure in this world alarms or attracts. They try to live in a way that all the misery and discomfort which they have to face in this world may be thoroughly compensated in their life to come. They believe that this world is only to sow the seed. Whatever their lot may be in this world, they will do their best to conduct their life in a way to secure for them eternal happiness. They might have to meet severe trials, but they believe that their ability to triumph over these trials has been gifted by the Good and Just and Omnipotent God in proportion to the severity of trials. If they have a will, if they can conduct themselves well, they are sure to triumph. Even in this world they would secure happiness and success, but if they fail in this world, even then they have no reason to be disappointed. Failure in this temporary world might be success in the permanent world to come. The span of life-work for man increases through his religious beliefs. Ideals become higher and nobler. Progress becomes more congenial. Temporary sufferings and cares lose much of their sting. By sympathy for others, sufferings and pains become sources of delight and satisfaction.

Farid-ud-din-Attar, a great Muslim saint, of whom Maulvi Rumi was proud, once exclaimed :—

“I would that the sorrow of all men were laid on my heart, that men might be free from sorrow.”

The following Urdu couplet expresses the same sentiments :—

*Aye Mushir achchha ho ter taira daman hogaya
Khushk auron kai li-ey to bahré 'isyan hogaya.*

Those who have a keener insight into the nature of the universe—those who can go deeper into the why and wherefore of all that exists, those who have studied not only the flesh, the matter, but the spirit, the soul, they have no doubt left, that the Creator is not only omnipotent but also benevolent and good.

To Haeckel man is only a mammal, and he quotes :—

“Imperious Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
O that that earth which kept the world in awe
Should patch a wall to repel the winter's flaw.”

To Muhammad he is the vicegerent of God himself, who can rule over the heaven and earth.

And Hafiz defiantly says :—

*Hergiz na mirad anki dilash zindashud ba ishq
Sabt ast ber jarida-ë 'alam davamé ma.*

“He whose heart has been vivified by love never dies. My eternal existence has been engraved on the annals of the universe.”

However, Muhammad was a practical man. He proved the goodness of God by actual demonstrations. He became the undeniable sign of the goodness of God. He banished evil. He elevated the morals of men. He improved the very nature of human beings. He saved the weak from oppression. He gave rights to women and slaves. He freed millions from the curse of alcoholism, absolutism, bigotry, superstition, and so forth.

He changed the very character of religion. Before him religion was considered to be a sort of philosophy. If there were any rules of life given by religion they were dogmatic. If they elevated human character, it was only a personal or individual matter.

Buddha taught individuals how to get to Nirvana. Christ taught them how to get to the Kingdom of God in heaven. Muhammad, peace be upon him, brought down “the Kingdom of God” on earth. He taught men how to improve, not only themselves, but the whole race, the whole world.

The voice of Muhammad, the illiterate, the helpless, the persecuted, was not, for sure, the mere voice of a man. It was a thunder, a lightning from Above—a thunder that roused men from their death-like sleep, a lightning that burnt up their deep-rooted vice and immorality, and, at the same time, revealed a “Kingdom of Heaven” upon earth, inhabited by people of angelic piety, saintly veracity and heroic courage, sublime, serene, self-sacrificing, magnanimous, patriotic, generous, philanthropic, kind and helpful even to the brute creation, loving their neighbours, protecting and sheltering the orphan and the destitute.¹

The contemporary record in history of how Muhammad made a debased people good, is as follows :—

Ja'far al-Tayyar, one of about ninety Muslims forced, in the

¹ The Miracle of Muhammad,

fifth year of the Prophet's proclamation of his mission, to take refuge in Abyssinia, told the Christian King of that country what Muhammad had done in that short time. "Oh King!" said he, "we were an ignorant and misled people, we worshipped images, ate dead bodies, were lewd, ill-treated our neighbours, and the strong despoiled the weak of their property. We had long been in this condition when God sent a Prophet to us from amongst our own people, whose noble birth, truthfulness, honesty and righteousness were well known to us. He called us to God, to worship Him, and Him only, and to leave off adoring the idols and stones before which our fathers and forefathers knelt. He ordered us to obey God alone, and not to make any one His equal. He made it incumbent upon us to offer up prayer, to give alms, to fast when not sick or travelling. He commanded us to speak the truth, to give back safe and whole what is entrusted to us by others, to be affectionate to our relations and kind to our neighbours, to shun wicked acts, licentiousness and bloody quarrels. He told us not to bear false evidence, not to deprive orphans of their property, not to impute bad motives, or be suspicious of women. We have taken his advice and admonitions to heart, have believed in his truthfulness, have followed all the orders which God has made known to us, and have believed in the unity of God. We abstain from what is forbidden and confine ourselves to what is permitted. Our people are infuriated at this change in our belief, thoughts, and actions. They have persecuted us, and done their best to force us back to the idols, images, and wicked acts which we have left. When it became impossible to live among them, and when persecution and torture became unbearable, we left our country, and, believing you to be a tolerant king, have taken refuge in your dominions."

A bigoted writer like William Muir admits: Few and simple were the precepts of Muhammad up to this time. His teaching had wrought a marvellous and a mighty work. Never since the days when primitive Christianity startled the world from its sleep and waged mortal combat with heathenism had men seen the like arousing of spiritual life, the like faith that suffered sacrifices and took joyfully the spoiling of goods for conscience' sake.

From time beyond memory Mecca and the whole Peninsula had been steeped in spiritual torpor. The slight and transient

influences of Judaism, Christianity or philosophical inquiry upon the Arab mind had been but as the ruffling here and there of the surface of a quiet lake ; all remained still and motionless below. The people were sunk in superstition, cruelty, and vice. It was a common practice for the eldest son to take to wife his father's widows, inherited as property with the rest of the estate. Pride and poverty had introduced among them (as they have among the Hindus) the crime of female infanticide. Their religion was a gross idolatry and their faith rather the dark superstitious dread of unseen beings, whose goodwill they sought to propitiate and whose displeasure to avert, than the belief in an over-ruling Providence. The life to come and retribution of good and evil were, as motives of actions, practically unknown.

Thirteen years before the Hijra, Mecca lay lifeless in this debased state. What a change had those thirteen years now produced. A band of several hundred persons had rejected idolatry, adopted the worship of one God, and surrendered themselves implicitly to the guidance of what they believed as revelation from Him, praying to the Almighty with frequency and fervour, looking for pardon to His mercy and striving to follow after good works, almsgiving, chastity and justice. They now lived under a constant sense of the omnipotent power of God and of His providential care over the minutest of their concerns. In all the gifts of nature, in every relation of life, at each turn of their affairs, individual or public, they saw His hand. And above all, the new existence in which they exulted was regarded as the mark of special grace, while the unbelief of their blinded fellow-citizens was the hardening stamp of reprobation. Muhammad was the minister of life to them, the source under God of their new-born hopes, and to him they yielded an implicit submission.

In so short a period Mecca had, from his wonderful movement, been rent into two factions which, unmindful of their old landmarks of tribe and family, had arrayed themselves in deadly opposition one against the other. The Believers bore persecution with a patient and tolerant spirit, and though it was their wisdom so to do, the credit of magnanimous forbearance may be freely accorded. One hundred men and women, rather than abjure their precious faith, had abandoned home and sought refuge, till the storm should be overpast, in Abyssinian

exile, and now again a still larger number, with the Prophet himself, were emigrating from their fondly-loved city with its sacred temple, to them the holiest spot on earth, and fleeing to Medina. There the same marvellous charm had within two or three years been preparing for them a brotherhood ready to defend the Prophet and his followers with their blood. Jewish truth had long sounded in the ears of the men of Medina, but it was not until they heard the spirit-stirring strains of the Arabian prophet that they, too, awoke from their slumber and sprang suddenly into a new and earnest life.

The Qur-án itself is a living testimony of the work of Muhammad. It gives the qualifications of Muhammad's followers :—

“Happy now the believers, who humble themselves in their prayer, and who keep aloof from vain words, and who are lovers of charitable deeds, and who restrain their appetites (save with their wives or those whom their right hands possess): then they shall be free from blame: but they whose desires reach further than this are transgressors: and who tend well their trust and their covenants, and who keep themselves strictly to their prayers; these shall be the heritors, who shall inherit paradise, to abide therein for ever.—Sura xxiii.

“And the servants of God of Mercy are they who walk upon the earth softly; and when the ignorant address them, they reply, ‘Peace!’ They that pass the night in the worship of their Lord prostrate and standing, and that say, ‘O our Lord, turn away from us the torment of Hell, for its torment is endless: it is indeed an ill abode and resting place!’ Those who when they spend are neither lavish nor niggard, but keep the mean: those who call no other gods with God, nor slay whom God hath forbidden to be slain, except for a just cause and who commit no fornication (for he who doth this shall receive punishment.)—Sura xxv.

“Who fulfil their pledge to God, and break not their compact. And who join together what God hath bidden to be joined, and who fear their Lord, and dread an ill reckoning: and who from desire to see the face of their Lord, are constant amid trials, and observe prayer and give alms, in secret and openly, out of what we have bestowed upon them, and turn aside evil by good: for them is the recompense of that abode, gardens of Eden—into which they shall enter together with the just of

their fathers and their wives and their descendants: and the angels shall go in unto them at every portal saying: 'Peace be with you because ye have endured all things!' Charming the recompense of their abode."—Sura xiii.

People have wondered why Muhammad took sword in his hand. They should know because Muhammad was chosen to represent God, to be the sign of God. He was destined to demonstrate that war is not absolute evil, that it should *not* be inferred from the law of destruction in the universe that it cannot result in goodness. If through Muhammad's wars, almost all of which were in the defence of the noble cause and had the idea of the establishment of a model nation, a few hundred people lost their lives, what did it matter when nation after nation, millions after millions of people, generation after generation, were imbued with life-giving and ennobling virtues, and when human nature itself was purified?

Buddha was all for self-annihilation, Christ for self-immolation—to be "eunuchs" in the cause of God, but Muhammad was all for being men—men in the best sense of the word. Buddha absorbed himself in the Great Force, Christ sacrificed himself for Truth, but Muhammad lived for the good of Humanity and for the glory of God—as an undeniable sign of His greatness, His goodness. It is difficult, no doubt, to die for a good cause, but it is still more difficult to live for it.

Muhammad changed religion from a dream to a fact. He demonstrated that God was really good to man, provided he acted rightly. He showed that the promise of goodness to man given by God was not a promise to be only redeemed some time after the present life, but that any individual or any nation who would walk on the right path would secure prosperity and happiness even in this world. Muhammad did not only preach high maxims for life, but he showed the way how to live a useful and noble life. He himself set an example. He produced a nation that set an example. He did not ask people to leave their kingdoms, children, wives, parents, friends, and other fellow-beings to seek the solitude of mountain-tops or lonely caves to secure happiness and bliss, as Buddha and all other teachers except Moses had practised or preached before. On the contrary, he told people to help one another, to respect their parents and to support them when they get old, to comfort their wives and children, to be true to their friends and to be worthy citizens of their country, to help the poor, to keep the law and order, and to work with brotherly harmony for the betterment of the whole of humanity.

(To be continued.)

RELIGION OF ATOMS

IV

REVELATION TO ATOMS

IF to guide discrimination between evil and good, and to help discretion in choice between useful and deleterious is the main object of revelation from God, as I said before, no atom in the universe in any stage of its evolutionary course has been denied it. It has come to it in the form of what some call "constructive ability," which unconsciously works in every form of growth, and knows how to distinguish "between a friend and a foe." This great mass of matter and energy, which envelops the whole universe and provides food for its different components, consists of elements destructive to each other in their nature. Every form and combination of matter finds itself surrounded with things useful as well as deleterious to its build and further growth. It stands as if in the promiscuous company of its allies and enemies. But it possesses an unerring discernment between useful and harmful. It will accept the former, but it rejects the latter. Whether it is accretion in inorganic thing or assimilation in organic structure, that faculty which repels loss and courts gain is always at its work. A crystal will only incorporate elements helpful to its growth, and eschew what is pernicious. The case is, however, different with organism. Things deleterious sometimes find their way into a system, but it excretes them in its process of assimilation. Different secretions from the human body perform the same function. Things unnecessary or injurious must come out. Organism has no room for them. Things good or bad are taken in, but only such eatables and drinks are accepted that are useful and necessary for the maintenance and growth of the human body. The rest treated as unhealthy, and excreted. Nature feels such an abhorrence against what is alien that if it finds itself too weak to spurn them out, its revolt comes in the form of disease. A purgation or a surgical operation comes to help it to get rid of the foreign element.

Again, the same material creates a pig, a chicken, and a man. The pulp of human brain takes the same ingredients for its formation as that of an owl or a monkey. Difference in shape and function arises chiefly from the difference in proportion in

which various elements of brain cells make different congeries in several organism. Same energy and matter prevail everywhere, and are universal supplier of food to every form of growth. Combination in different measures leads to different results. The same creates what is understood as good or bad, useful or deleterious. Nothing is so in itself. Good and bad are relative terms -- a question of proportion and condition. Same thing exhibits contrary aspects in different quantity and under different conditions. In short, it is arrangement of atoms in different measures which creates different results in form and quality. The whole universe thus appears to disclose two unalterable characters. Firstly, every atom in particular measures exhibits a particular property. It possesses a different property when it combines in another measure with other things. Secondly, these prescribed measures and limits are most scrupulously observed by all atoms and their complexes as far as unconscious working of nature goes in the formation of various natural phenomena. The given conditions are never transcended and the prescribed measures remain untrespassed.

Is this apportionment of measures and the observance thereof by matter in its every stage of evolution a property of matter? It exhibits knowledge, foresight, and intelligence, which appear working in matter even before it reaches the stage of consciousness. Is this acceptance of useful and rejection of deleterious by matter, even in its crudest stage of evolution, only a function of some blind power called "unconscious constructive ability" in scientific terminology? If it is, why does it gradually become weakened as consciousness becomes more and more developed? Does not the whole mechanism exhibit some Intelligent Measurement under a Great Designing Hand which gave Revelation to Atoms to work on guided lines and "to discriminate between a friend and a foe"? In building their growth, every collocation of atoms observes prescribed measure; it accepts what is useful and rejects what is deleterious.

MEASURE, THE LAW OF EVOLUTION

The whole universe seems to be a thing measured. Ethereal specks in different proportions exhibit different qualities and capacities. Their subsequent growth and development are only an outcome of further arrangement

and re-arrangement in given scales ; and so the whole course of evolution. They become useful or harmful by difference in proportion. Certain measure means good and the other bad.

The following truths revealed to the Holy Prophet throw lucid light on the subject :—

“Wal qadare khairahi wa sharrehi min allahe Táála. . . . Subbih isma Rabbekallazi Aála, alazi khalaqa fasawwa alazi qaddara fahada. . . . Rubbunallazi aáta kullo shaien khalaqahu summa hada.”

“The measurement of good and the measurement of evil is from Allah the Most High. . . . Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High Who creates them, balances them to completion, and Who makes things according to measure, then guides them (to their goal). . . . Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its measure and shape, then guides it (to its goal).”

The words are neither oracular nor mystic in their expressions, nor the statement has been made in the language of allegory, which needs some elaborate effort of a modernist to force some stretched interpretation on the text in order to conform it to some half-fledged scientific theory. The words quoted above are a plain statement of what has wrongly been claimed to be the acquisition of “modern sciences” only. The last of the above quoted verses—“Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its measure and shape, then guides it to its goal”—in clearest terms discloses all that has been summed up by the scientists in the phrase “unconscious constructive ability.”

I have given here the text in the original, as each word in it is very eloquent. It, in fact, epitomizes in it “scientific truth.” A reference to their root-meaning will not fail to make the matter more clear. *Rabb*, which stands for the word “Lord” in its English translation, signifies “*the fostering of a thing in such a way as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of Completion.*”¹ The word thus indicates that all things in nature are so made as to attain gradually to a state of perfection within their sphere of capacity. It is not only the idea of creation and sustenance which the word in its primary significance conveys, but *also that of regulating and accomplishing Completion*² of the evolutionary course of things, from their crudest condition to that of highest perfection.

¹ Mufridat Raghab Ispahani.

² Tajal Aroos.

Khalaq, ordinarily translated as "to create." The word originally means "measurement,"¹ and then it comes to mean to reduce material into shape, to give form to things. Arabic has, however, got another word to convey the idea of creation, i.e. to make something out of nothing. It is "*fātara*." These two words explain the whole process of creation. The first action is that of *Fātara*—creation out of nothing; and when something was produced then began the action of *Khalaq*, first measurement and then arrangement into different shapes. This arrangement in different measures and scales creates use and injury in things in different relation. The whole process of creation and evolution is the process firstly of measurement and then arrangement in shapes; and this is what the Arabic word *Khalaq* literally means.

"*Sawwa*" is the word which follows *Khalaq*, and means to balance, to equalize. Action of *Khalaq* must be followed by the process of *Sawwa*, i.e. "balancing."

The next verse contains two words, *Qaddara* and *Hadá*. *Qaddara* means to make measurement. The word has often been used in the Qur-án in connection with the words "good" and "bad," and it conveys the idea of goodness or evil as the result of difference in measures of the same thing. *Hadá*, which means to guide a thing to its goal, makes the matter more clear. It is not only the creation of the matter and its apportionment, but everything in its further development to completion needed direction, which has been awarded to it, as the Qur-án says, to complete its course.

The Muslim Scripture in these simple words sums up the whole process of creation in nature. It refers to a certain First Intelligent Cause under the name of *Rabb*—the Creator and the Sustainer, the Regulator and Evolver, as the word literally means—Who arranges matter into different measures after its creation to produce different results; He not only creates things, but evolves them to their perfection; He arranges the course of development for everything and guides it to it. He has placed an inherent capacity in every form of matter to pursue the prescribed course, and tread in "given measure." After atoms received their emanation their further development was their arrangement and rearrangement in different measures, which in given conditions make them useful or deleterious.

¹ See "Lisan-ul-Arab," a standard Arabic lexicon.

They are regularized and balanced in different proportions ; so their whole course of progress. Whether these Arabic words, so pregnant with scientific lore, gradually received these meanings when the Arabs made discoveries in the realm of science on the advent of Islam or the words possess these suggestive meanings from time immemorial, as the pre-Islamic literature shows—which in its turn suggests either existence of a very high state of scientific ken in Arabia in prehistoric days or Arabic being a revealed language, as the writer thinks, and therefore its words reveal hidden qualities and nature of things they designate, and will therefore prove a great help in unravelling mysteries of nature when they receive cultured attention—are things which are beyond the scope of what I am writing upon. But one thing is clear, that the Revelation of the Qur-án gave a strong impetus to scientific learning ; and there is nothing to be wondered at if the book disclosed many unrevealed truths and diverted the activities of its readers to proper directions.

In short, atoms in nature work on guided lines. They possess knowledge of good and bad. They exercise discrimination in selection of matter in their fabric and growth, and never swerve from the prescribed course, i.e. guidance which their nature exhibits to have received. This is what may rightly be named Revelation to Atoms.

OUR LORD IS HE WHO GAVE TO EVERYTHING ITS MEASURE AND SHAPE, THEN GUIDES IT TO ITS GOAL (The Qur-án).

V

MORALITY, PASSIONS MEASURED

“The Beneficent God taught the Qur-án. He created man, taught him the mode of expression. The sun and the moon following a reckoning. And the herbs and the trees do adore Him. And the heaven, He raised it high, and He *made the measures ; that you may not be inordinate in respect of the measures ; and keep up the balance with equity and do not make the measure deficient*” (The Qur-án lv. 1-9).

The above we find in the opening lines of a most beautiful chapter in the Qur-án called “*Ar-Rahman*, the Beneficent.’ These words, pregnant with scientific truth, disclose to us the necessity of Revelation from the Most Unknown. They refer

to the same principle of measures which is working universally in every form of matter in its growth. Every created thing, from those large orbs in the heavens to the smallest herbs that grow on land, follows a law and observes a measure prescribed for its creation and development. Even human language is not free from that law. Intonation of sound in different measures makes articulation. Different letters stand for different measures of sound. These different combinations produce different words. By learning these collocated measures of articulation which receive different meanings in different shapes, we learn languages. The Qur-án draws the attention of its readers to this basic principle of measure which regulates the work of the universe. If the various units of the universe around him, including his language, take shape and evolve an observance of prescribed *measures*, does not man stand in need of knowing some similar measures which will control his natural impulses and sublimate them into ethics, philosophy, and religion? Human organism is, after all, an outcome of some specific combination of atoms, which evolves consciousness and discretion and gives rise to certain passions and emotions. These impulses, when controlled under certain standards, become moralities. They in their turn are balanced into spiritualities. What are those *measures* which, governing these natural passions, convert human consciousness into conscience is our great concern. "He made the measures; that you may not be inordinate in respect of the measures; and keep up the balance with equity, and do not make the measure deficient." We must know those measures to be ordinate in the use of passion. Nothing in itself is good or evil also in the moral world, as I said before when speaking of the physical world. It is not in killing of human passions which makes high morality, but in balancing them to certain measures which creates healthy morals and produces spirituality. All such religions that based their ethics on curtailment of passions have proved a failure. No one could act on Buddhistic principle of life. The teaching of the Sermon on the Mount has always remained an idealism. All kinds of asceticism and monasticism have always done more harm than good. Their working did demand crushing of natural impulses and led to disastrous results. Celibate institutions have nursed incontinent tendencies and produced moral leprosy. It was the revelation of the Qur-án, however, that first

of all revealed this truth to the world. It showed that all natural impulses in man were necessary constituents of the human mind. It was only a question of measure. Human passions were to be regulated and balanced under certain standard measures to evolve true humanity. Mercy misplaced was injustice, and anger in regulated form¹ created discipline necessary for social growth. Magistracy was one of the justified forms of anger, and mercy shown to murderers was cruelty to society. In short, the same principle of measure works in the moral world. Same passion receives.

As same material in different organizations creates different shapes and possesses different qualities, so the same emotions and impulses possessed by us instinctively specialized under different measures produce different morals, good or bad in their effect. Same passion cast in various moulds receives several names. A passion noble in some shape becomes ugly by change of form. What seems to be evil changes into virtue when conditions are altered. Do not pertinacity of character and obstinacy, or, say, constancy and stubbornness, come from the same origin? But their manifestations when at their climax respectively create perfect Adam and archfiend. Submission and slavery, modesty and timidity, toleration and condonation, heroism and bravado, generosity and extravagance, spirit of emulation and jealousy, aspiration and ambition, desire and avarice, etc., are one and the same in their inception—manifestation of same impulses in different garbs. Atoms evolved in animal frame give birth to consciousness, which consists of those impulses and emotions possessed commonly by man and lower animals. All these passions, when used on proper occasions, rise into high morality. Every impulse exhibited under given measure assumes its best desirable form, labelled as virtue; and the said measure, in most cases moderation, is to be fixed by ethics and religion. Trespass of the limit is sin. Evil did not enter into this world as an individualized entity, as crude theology would suggest. Sin was not innate in nature. Abuse of the stuff needed for our physical and moral growth created respectively disease and evil. If moderation is virtue, going beyond its bounds is sin. Happy mean is the rule of life in all planes, as the Qur-ân says. In this connection I am

¹ See page 100.

again tempted to refer to Arabic language for the words it chooses to designate the idea of sin. All the words in their root meaning convey the idea of trespass or transcending certain limits—"zanb," "jurm," "junah," "ism" meaning offence, crime, sin. The root idea in "zanb" is of overgrowth, going beyond a certain limit, as the word as a noun means tail. "jurm" as a verb means to cut—a thing cut and therefore out of place; "junah" to be aside. In short, all the words used in the Qur-án as corresponding to "sin" in their root meaning give an idea of trespass or transgressing, going beyond certain limits. So the words in themselves explain the Quranic conception of evil. One need not go to a theologian to enlighten him on this otherwise most difficult problem in religion; mere reference to some lexicon would solve the difficulty.

The word *tauba*, meaning in Arabic repentance, in its literal sense bears out the same idea. It means returning. If transcending limits is sinning, returning to them is repentance. Middle course in almost all cases is the best course. *Wast*, which in Arabic means middle, also means best or excellent.

Thus, on moral plane as in physical world, nothing in itself is good or bad. Observance of limits is virtue, their disregard evil. Every passion, strong or tender, becomes morality when exercised within limits. Legislation is demarcation, but proper limits can only be assigned by the All-knowing Personality. Actions enjoined upon in the Qur-án as virtues have been named as limits of God—"They who turn to Allah, who serve Him . . . who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, and who keep the limits of Allah, and give good news to the believer" (ix. 112). And these are the limits of Allah, and whoever goes beyond the limits of Allah he indeed does injustice to his own soul.

Allah enjoins you concerning your children—"These are Allah's limits . . . and whosoever goes beyond His limits . . . he shall have an abasing chastisement" (iv. 11-14). "So whoever exceeds the limits after this . . . he shall have a painful chastisement" (ii. 178). "Do not exceed the limits: surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits" (ii. 189). "The dwellers of the desert are very hard in unbelief and hypocrisy, and more disposed not to know the limits of what Allah has revealed to His Apostle" (ix. 97). "These are the limits of Allah, so do not exceed them" (ii. 229).