

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

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Friday Prayer and Sermon.—At the London Muslim Prayer House
—111, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, London—every Friday
at 1 p.m.

Service, Sermon and Lectures every Sunday at the Mosque, Woking,
at 3.15 p.m.

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NOTES

Mr. Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall.

Mr. Muhammad Pickthall, whose name is not unfamiliar to our readers, was born in 1875; educated at Harrow; and, at the impressionable age when most young men are contemplating a University career, was already in Palestine, laying, as it were, the foundation of that intimate understanding of the Near East and its conditions—religious, political, social and economic—which has made him, perhaps, the foremost English authority on the subject.

As a novelist he sprang to fame with the publication, in 1903, of *Said the Fisherman*, a Syrian romance which stamped its author as a literary individuality and a seeing observer. Other works from his pen include *Enid* (1904), *Brendle* (1905), *The House of Islam* (1906), *The Myopes* (1907), *Children of the Nile* (1908), *The Valley of the Kings* (1909), *Pot au Feu* (1911), *Larkmeadow* (1912), *The House of War* (1913), *With the Turk in Wartime* (1914), *Tales from Five Chimneys* (1915), *Veiled Women* (1916), *Knights of Araby* (1917), *Oriental Encounters* (1918), *Sir Limpidus* (1919), and *The Early Hours* (1921). He has been a frequent contributor to, among other journals, the *Athenæum*, the *Saturday Review*, the *New Age* and the *Near East*, and is, at present, editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*.

Mr. Pickthall declared his faith in Islam in 1918, and has since taken a prominent part in Muslim activity in this country. During the period between the departure for India (owing to urgent reasons of health) of the Khwajâ Kamal-ud-Din in the early spring of 1919, and the arrival of the Khwaja's assistant in the autumn of that year, Mr. Pickthall conducted the Friday Prayers and delivered the sermons at the London Muslim Prayer House; led

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the Eid Prayer and delivered the Sermon, and during the month of Ramadan in 1919 conducted the *traveeh* prayers at the London Prayer House, while throughout the whole period he was largely responsible for the editing of the *Review*. It is noteworthy that on his conversion to Islam, Mr. Pickthall, in the spirit of a true Muslim, refrained scrupulously from any thought of influencing his wife, and the fact that Mrs. Pickthall has now of her own free volition embraced the faith is but one of many indications of the modern trend of intelligent religious thought.

Another Breakwater.

That the Foreign Christian Mission, especially in Asia and Muslim countries, has been an utmost failure is an established fact. The only consolation which the Ministers of the Church had, lay in imparting lessons from the Bible, which formed part of the education given in various schools and colleges started by the Christian Missionaries in the East. Prayers in the name of Jesus were repeated every day in these institutions; but those whose mind receives religious mould under their belief in One God could not any longer stoop to such polytheistic practices. A very strong opposition, we hear, is coming from the students of the various Missionary Colleges in India against the continuation of the "Bible Period" in their curriculum, nor would they consent to take part in any prayer in which Jesus was mentioned.

A Fallen Idol.

So is Europe and her civilization to-day. "People go after the ways of their rulers," is an Arabic proverb which truly indexes the mind of the subject race. European domination naturally claimed subject race imitation of her ways and manners. The Oriental mind became dazzled for some time, and

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began to idolize Europe. But the cat did not take long to come out of the bag; the war broke out with all its horrors, and the world was given an occasion to make her own estimation of the European capability of devastating humanity. It will not avail to trumpet out European civilization through journalism. Broken pledges cannot receive amendment by bragging of a superiority proved to be hollow. In this connection we insert elsewhere an interesting article under the heading of "European Civilization and Islam," which comes from the able pen of an esteemed brother in faith in these Isles.

Sunday Lectures.

The following lectures will be delivered during the month of February at the London Muslim Prayer House, 111, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, W. 8, at 5.30 p.m. :—

- February 5.—"Soul in Woman, and Islam," by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.
,, 12.—"Islam and Socialism," by Khwaja Nazir Ahmad.
,, 19.—"A Fallen Idol," by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall.
,, 26.—"Three Stages of Human Mind," by Muhammad Yakub Khan.

Starving Thousands !

We give below the copy of a letter from the Rt. Hon. Syed Ameer Ali, P.C., C.I.E., to Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din :

Will you allow me to call your attention to the terrible distress and suffering prevailing among the Moslem refugees congregated in Constantinople and its neighbourhood, who now number between 70,000 and 100,000 souls. Thousands are dying from starvation and cold in the bitter winter of Turkey, and the mortality, especially among children, is appalling, owing to the inability of mothers to give their babies sufficient sustenance. Similar distress is prevailing among the Moslem peasantry of Western Anatolia in the Provinces of Broussa and Smyrna. The British Red Crescent Society has given all its available funds for the relief of these stricken people.

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The Committee would be very grateful if you can give us any help to relieve the sufferings of these poor people and save them from dying; and we trust you will appeal on our behalf to the affluent people in India and Java among whom, we know, you have a great deal of influence.

The letter speaks for itself. Immediate relief is the crying need. It is the bounden duty of each and every member of the Universal Muslim Brotherhood, man or woman, rich or poor, to come forward with his or her mite to succour the thousands of starving souls. Feeding the poor is, according to the Holy Qur-án, of the very essence of true religion: "Have you seen the one who *believes religion*? It is the one that treats the orphan with harshness, and *does not urge others to feed the poor*" (cvii. 1-3).

Thus under the Qur-ánic teachings, lip-profession of religion is worthless trash, if it fails to create in man a humanitarian sense of fellow-feeling, so much so that he should not only feed the poor himself but also exert the utmost of his influence, urging others to do the same. We cannot over-emphasize the critical gravity of the situation, calling for *prompt and generous response*. Rise equal to the sublime traditions of Islam. When the Muhajirin (refugees) from Mecca, leaving their wealth and property in the path of Allah, settled at Medina in a state of awful destitution, what was the treatment meted out to them by the Ansar (Helpers)? Each one of the latter, dividing his all, house, wealth, goods and chattels into two equal parts, made over one-half to his fellow refugee, linked to him in the chain of Islamic brotherhood by the Holy Prophet. Will the Muslims of to-day be worthy of such illustrious ancestors?

A Libel on Jesus.

CANON BARNES ON THE OLD TESTAMENT.—With some interest we read the utterances of the Canon of Westminster in the course of his speech given to the Association of University Women Teachers,

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held at the University College. From it we make the following extracts from the *Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 6, 1922.

In this connection it was most important that the true nature and value of the Old Testament should be explained to children. It was Jewish literature, and was valuable for us mainly because it showed how the Jewish prophets were led to the idea of God, which Jesus accepted and emphasized, and because in it vague expectations of a Messiah foreshadowed the advent of Christ. But in the Old Testament were also to be found folk-lore, defective history, half-savage morality, obsolete forms of worship based upon primitive and erroneous ideas of the nature of God, and crude science. The whole, however, was valuable as showing the growth of a pure monotheism among the Jews—a religious phenomenon as remarkable and inexplicable as the great intellectual development of the Golden Age of Greece. It was very difficult to convey truths like this to children, and so it seemed to him better to postpone the Old Testament part of religious teaching to the later stages; otherwise children would learn stories like that with which the Book of Genesis opened, which they would afterwards discover to be untrue.

He had come reluctantly to the conclusion that it was highly dangerous to use for didactic purposes such allegories as the creation of woman, the Daniel stories, and Jonah; it encouraged the prevalent belief that religious people had a low standard of truth.

One cannot fail to see the struggle between faith and rationality in the above remarks; but can the learned and Reverend Doctor condemn the Old Testament and eliminate it from the curriculum of studies without condemning the New Testament as well? If to accept stories like that of Jonah, as a genuine piece of history, betrayed a low standard of truth in the believers of Christianity, what would Dr. Barnes say of him who said:

“An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

“For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”—St. Matthew xii. 39, 40.

If to teach the story of Jonah is dangerous to human intellect while in its infancy and growth,

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it becomes more so, if the purport of the above quotation—and there are many other similar things in the Old Testament—is to be believed by every Christian child as an article of faith. Should we blame Jesus, also, for showing a low standard of truth for his allusion to the story of Jonah? The text and the occasion clearly show that he accepted the story as a truth. Many dignitaries of the Church do not believe in its truth, and if Dr. Barnes shares the same belief, then what would he say of his Master? Is it not a serious libel on him? The above-quoted lines have always been taken by the Biblical commentators as a hint by Jesus of the coming event of the Resurrection. And if the Resurrection is the cornerstone of Christian belief, Jesus had to resort to the “low standard” of truth to establish a greater truth.

The present psychology of the Church only betrays the struggle between reason and dogma. Their learning and culture revolts at the dogmatized faith to which they are so tenaciously attached. Hence, all these hopeless efforts of modernization. Their utterances, garbled with ecclesiastical coverings, cannot help them any longer. They have only to bring their utterance under a logical analysis, and the whole faith which they try hopelessly to save will fall to the ground. For instance, if Dr. Barnes has already discovered, as his above-quoted words show, that “stories like that with which the Book of Genesis opened were untrue,” what about his faith in the inheritance of sin and vicarious atonement of Jesus? If the incidents in the Garden of Eden, and the story of the Fall of Adam, were mere fables and myths with no truth in them, then the whole superstructure of the Church on which Christian faith was laid down by St. Paul, and the generations of theologians after him would crumble into pieces. It is the fall of Adam which, according to the Church belief, brings the whole human race

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under eternal perdition. The situation needed a saviour, and the son of Mary was crucified to create reconciliation between God and the human race. This sums up the whole story of Christian faith, which takes the fall of Adam as its pivot. If the story of the Genesis is a false account, then would Dr. Barnes care to revise his list of beliefs? He, as a cultured man, must have known that the story of the fall of Adam was not known to the early Jewish Rabbis. It was an accretion and a very subsequent addition to suit the Pauline theory of reconciliation between God and man. Anyhow, Dr. Barnes accounts the legend of Adam and Eve to be untrue. If children should not read such books, will he ask the educational authorities to condemn as well most of the Epistles of Paul?

The terms like old Adam and new Adam, old dispensation and new dispensation, old and new covenants will become meaningless absurdities the moment we declare the story of Adam and Eve to be untrue.

NAZIR.

WORSHIP IN A MUSLIM MOSQUE

(A Lecture by MAULVI MUHAMMAD YAKUB KHAN at the Forest Hill and District Literary Society.)

A WORD is necessary, at the very outset, as to the true conception of the term worship in Islam. The word smacks of an implicit significance, which it inherits from early pagan forms of worship, where the idea was to appease an angry deity, that worship is something of the nature of a tax or duty which man owes to God. Islam, however, takes just the reverse view of worship which may rather be termed as Prayer. Worship aims, according to the Islamic conception, not at the propitiation of a wrathful Deity, but at the elevation of man himself. Divine glorification is calculated to bring about human edification. God is self-sufficient. Should the whole

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universe glorify Him, it will not add a jot to His perfect self any more than it will detract a tittle from His sublimity, should not a single man sing hymns of His praises. Prayer thus is nothing of the kind of an exaction on the part of the Almighty from His poor creature, man; on the other hand, it is meant for the latter's own good. "Prayer," says the Holy Prophet, "is the 'mi'raj' of a believer." "Mi'raj" is an Arabic word, meaning ascension to a higher plane. Hence a staircase which leads one up to a higher floor is also called a "mi'raj." Islamic prayer is thus a means of uplifting man from a low plane of life high up to the moral and spiritual realms, and of making him ultimately one with his Creator.

Muslim prayer is not limited to the four walls of a mosque. Anywhere on the earth's surface a Muslim can say his prayers, provided it is not dirty. When on a journey the Holy Prophet would sometimes say his prayers on the back of his horse or dromedary. Neither is prayer restricted by time limitations. A Muslim can say his prayer at any hour of the day or night he chooses. Five times a day, however, it is compulsory to say it. Islamic prayer is thus above the restrictions of both space and time.

A Muslim is not summoned to his prayer with the ringing of a bell or the blowing of a pipe. Every detail of Islamic prayer, like its very name, is pregnant with a deep significance. It is a human throat that gives out a loud cry, with the enthusiasm of a living conviction, what is called the call to prayer. This is how it runs:—"Allah is great. Allah is great. Allah is great. Allah is great. I bear witness there is none worthy of worship besides Allah. I bear witness there is none worthy of worship besides Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah. Come to prayer.

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Come to prayer. Come to felicity. Come to felicity. Allah is great. Allah is great. There is none worthy of worship besides Allah." The words, "Prayer is better than sleep" (twice) are added in the case of morning prayer. Five times a day the cry rings out in all directions, a sort of reminder inviting man's attention to the eternal truth that there is a Power, a Being, the great Unseen, to Whom he must humble himself in prayer.

As soon as the cry falls into his ears, a true Muslim is expected to give up his work, whatever it may be, and mind the call towards God, the source of all real happiness. Islam has blended the temporal and the spiritual in a most beautiful way. The old conception when the two were regarded as two watertight compartments of the same mind, quite incompatible with each other, has been replaced in Islam by the conception that the two are supplementary to and interdependent upon each other. The one cannot prosper without the other. Work-a-day life is necessary for the growth and development of the spiritual capacities of man, as already illustrated, while, on the other hand, constant return in the midst of busy life to a calm contemplation of higher truths, tends to give a fresh tone to man's spiritual fibres, enabling him to bring a still nobler outlook to bear on his various pursuits in life.

In order to betake himself in prayer to the presence of God, a Muslim must make his ablutions. A sound mind, they say, dwells in a sound body. It is perhaps no less true that a pure heart dwells in a pure body. Cleanliness, they say, is next to godliness.

Then he stands with his face towards the Ka'ba, which does not, by any means, imply that he worships the house or localizes God. The Holy Qur-án contradicts the view with the words, "To whichever side you turn your face, there indeed God is." As a matter of fact the Muslims look

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upon it as the first house on earth erected for the worship of God. Muir, too, admits the remote antiquity of the house.

The house thus stands as an ostensible monument to the worship of one God. It was rebuilt by Abraham with his son Ismail. To this day, tradition has preserved the association of Abraham with the place. A certain place there still exists, known as the *Maqam-i-Ibrahim* or Abraham's standing-place. It was here that Abraham prayed to Allah to raise a Prophet from among the descendants of Ismail, which found fulfilment in the person of the Holy Prophet. Besides, it is intended to serve as a common centre, emblematic of the universal brotherhood of man, for which Islam stands.

The Ka'ba has thus a threefold significance for a Muslim. It stands as the most ancient monument of the worship of God, as the scene of Abraham's self-sacrifice in the path of Allah, and as a symbol for the unity of mankind under the universal Providence of Allah. Thus it is that it has been chosen as the common centre for Muslims all the world over. No form of prayer is addressed to the house, as often supposed. It is not vested with any Divine powers. As a building, it is just what any other is—a combination of ordinary bricks and clay. Its sanctity lies in the sanctity of its associations.

THE PRAYER AND ITS PHILOSOPHY.

Let us now turn to the prayer proper, which runs thus :

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful ; Master of the day of requital. Thee do we serve, and Thee do we beseech for help. Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours, not of those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor of those who go astray.

The most beautiful prayer ever conceived of ! It is as philosophical as sweet. It is composed of

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three distinct ideas, without which no prayer worth the name is possible. The first puts the votary into the frame of mind indispensable for a genuine prayer. Obviously, a prayer must be the spontaneous outpouring of the heart. One may undergo a deal of trouble in repeating certain words, yet he may be far from a prayerful state of mind. It is of the very essence of true prayer that the deep inner sentiments of the heart must involuntarily gush out, in the presence of God. No amount of mechanical ceremonies by themselves constitute prayer. Prayer is essentially an affair of the heart, and unless the heart goes out towards God, one may be doing anything but praying. The first portion of Muslim prayer is therefore calculated to put man into the mood of mind suitable for prayer. A little insight into the working of man's heart reveals the fact that all the influences capable of commanding man's love and devotion ultimately resolve themselves into two main heads—beauty and utility. The beautiful and the useful in nature have an irresistible attraction for us. We are drawn towards them, in spite of ourselves. We cannot help it. Islamic prayer has drawn upon these forces in the fullest measure. In order to bring man closer to his Creator, it depicts Him both as lovely and as benefactor, beyond all measure.

The prayer opens with the words, "All praise to Allah." He is possessed of all conceivable good attributes, free from every form of flaws and frailties. Whatever of beauty and loveliness is met with in the nature round about us, is but a faint shadow of that Perfect Beauty. What a charming conception! Who would not bow down to such a God? The effect of human beauty, infinitesimal as it is as compared to Divine beauty, works on the heart of man, with the spell of magic. Divine beauty must be bewitching beyond all conception. It makes the lover dumb, deaf and blind to the

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external stimuli, vainly playing upon his or her sense-organs. Transported beyond the world of sense-experience, the worshipper grows oblivious to his mundane environments, and enjoys sweet communion with that Perfect Loveliness. There, in realms celestial, he or she breathes in the atmosphere of bliss, saturated with Divine presence, enjoying sweet heavenly music. There he is above the worries and cares of this earthly life. Pain and pleasure, as conceived of in the terms of sense-experience, can no longer affect him. The Holy Prophet, when in moods of sorrow or depression, would begin praying to Allah, which is the balm, the panacea for all sorts of sores and ailments. It is said of Ali, one of the most devoted companions of the Holy Prophet, that in a certain battle he was shot with an arrow in the leg. His friends wanted to pull it out, but the pain was too much for him. Thereupon he asked his fellows to wait; for he would, as an antidote against the pain, stand in prayer, and when he should reach the posture of prostration, the arrow might be drawn out. Accordingly, it was pulled out at that stage of the prayer, without his feeling the intensity of the pain. This illustrates what that sweet sensation is which a true Muslim prayer enables one to experience.

Then follows the Divine bounties we have been enjoying, before as well as after birth. Allah is the *rab* of all the worlds. Now this word *rab* means the Creator, the Sustainer and the Evolver. Out of nothingness, when man is yet part and parcel of the lifeless nature, for that is the stage from which all life springs, His Providence brings together various scattered particles in the form of food, which in turn is transformed through innumerable complex processes of the digestive system into human blood and finally into human seed. Then follows man's conception by his mother, during which period Allah's Providence takes good care to furnish him

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with the nutrition necessary for the growth of a body of flesh and bones. Thus originates man from mother earth, by the mere Providence of Allah. Man owes his very existence to Him. How he goes on growing and developing, physically, intellectually, morally and above all spiritually, passing through various stages of evolution, is a matter of no small indebtedness to the same *rab*; for He it is Who sustains as well as evolves us all the time.

Then He is *Rahman*, an attribute indicative of the kindness shown to man, without having been merited by him, by virtue of any deeds on his part. The sun, the moon, the earth, the air, water, etc., in short the whole universe, but for which man's existence could not have been possible for a single minute, has already been created for his sake. Such unmerited grace is the outcome of Allah's attribute known as *Rahmaniyyat*.

In spite of all this, however, life would have been a very dull sort of a job if everything one desired could be had for nothing, i.e. for no effort on man's part. Allah therefore ordained a set chain of cause and effect with a view to giving an impetus to our latent faculties to work themselves out. Without such occasions for coming into play, the manifold capacities embedded in the nature of man would have got stunted and atrophied. The apple-seedling contains within itself the roots, the trunk, the branches and leaves of the plant, and ultimately lovely sweet apples, but all these potentialities cannot become actualities unless the requisite occasions such as sowing, watering, manuring, weeding and so forth are there to bring them into play. Thus the Divine attribute, known as *Rahmaniyyat*, has so arranged that man's efforts may invariably result in corresponding consequences. But for this there would have been no progress whatsoever. Thus the God of Islam, called Allah, is not only the possessor of all the good and the beautiful attributes, but

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at the same time His attributes are a source of infinite benefit to us. He is not only beautiful, but at the same time useful.

Beauty and utility, thus combined together in the God of Islam, their power becomes irresistible. Both being blended in the highest conceivable degree in Allah, a Muslim is drawn towards Him with the strength of an immense magnet, and is so absorbed in Him that he becomes dumb and deaf to all that is unworthy of the pure company of Allah.

With such a conception of Allah in his mind, his own being dwindles into nothingness. He falls down prostrate before Him, all instinctively, by way of a token of utter humility. This is the stage when he becomes insensitive to the physical world around him. He loses himself, a microscopic drop, into Allah, the vast ocean from which he had sprung. Thus merged into Him, he becomes part and parcel of the Universal Providence. This is real at-onement with God, which a Muslim has the occasion to attain to, each time in his daily five prayers. This is what the Holy Prophet's saying, that *prayer is the "mi'raj" of man*, signifies.

But this frame of mind is further enhanced by bringing to man a sense of his utter insignificance and utter dependence upon God. Thus the next portion is : "To Thee alone do we humble ourselves, and Thee alone we ask for assistance." The sublimity of God inspires him with the sense of his own humility. Thus he feels all the more drawn towards that Source of Power and Goodness, and the sense of his dependence makes his prayer all the more spontaneous which he then addresses to God.

"Guide us," he exclaims, "O Lord, unto the right path." This is the next part of the prayer, prayer in the sense of asking. Now, mark the dignity of the prayer as well as its wisdom ! It is worthy both of the votary and the worshipped. He does not ask for "bread," for even Jesus is reported to have

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said, "Man does not live by bread alone." Nor does he ask for this or that particular object of desire; for every consequence has been bound up, according to the teachings of Islam, with an appropriate set of causes, which must be brought about to attain it. There is no such thing, in Islam, as the lamp of Aladdin, just a rubbing of which might build you a palace in no time. If, for instance, one should go on praying for a crop of wheat without having ploughed the soil, watered it and sown the proper seed therein, he would be asking for a will-o'-the-wisp. Among other good points, Islam is essentially a rationalistic religion, a religion in just accordance with the laws of nature; for both religion and nature spring from the same source, Allah. There could be no inconsistency between the two aspects in which a single being, Allah, has manifested Himself. To disregard the chain of causation, fixed and immutable, as set at work by God, cannot be the teaching of the same God Who has created the universe. The right sort of prayer is, therefore, the one that does not ignore the established system of the universe as chained down by Allah. A Muslim is therefore taught to pray not for a particular object but for the various ways and means necessary for the achievement of the same.

Thus his heart is filled with the conviction that what he is asking for is not only intrinsically good, but also quite in accord with the demands of his reason. Yet still further momentum is added to all these psychological influences brought to bear upon him. The next part, "The path of those on whom Thou hast showered Thy blessings, not of those on whom Thy wrath came down or who went astray," gives him further impetus to prayer. The idea that those before him who followed the right path were actually blessed by God, and those who ignored it invoked His wrath, fills him with all the more devotion in prayer.

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Thus Islamic prayer makes the best use of all the possible incentives to true prayer. It presents to man a God All-Might, All-Beauty and All-Goodness. It brings home to him his sense of utter dependence upon Him. The prayer it teaches him to address to God is worth asking for. Those who got the right path were blessed, those who rejected it incurred His wrath. Can there be another chord in the heart of man, which is not struck by some part or other of the Muslim prayer? It is, therefore, the best conceivable form of prayer and truly characterized by the Holy Prophet as the "mi'raj" of man.

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SPIRITUALISM.

A THING mostly needed in the West. A practical demonstration of life after death in the spiritism-aspect of the movement. Religion, without faith in the life beyond the grave, becomes an institution inefficacious to enforce its demands. Belief in the accountability of man's every action in some future is the only check against evil tendencies. Many of our sins remain undetected in this life. Many a miscreant may avoid detection and consequently public censure. Disbelief in the coming Unavoidable Accountability, therefore, would leave depravity unbridled. Hence, belief in the post-grave life is the essential of religion.

Materialism could not be favourable to such belief, though it is reality with us. Life and death, or death and life is, to me, a common phenomenon. I am quite positive about it. Have I not visited people in the hell? I have tasted also blessings of heaven. Such experiences are within acquisition of human race, but patience, abstemiousness and an exclusive pursuit of the life of a Sufi, with love and devotion, bring man to that life. There is an

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awakening to it in the West, as well, but as the race is only emerging from dry materialism, and is to some extent given up to luxury and pleasure, our austerities will not suit them.

SPIRITISM IN THE WEST—A DIVINE ECONOMY.

To the Occidental with his usual want of imagination, and his reluctance to go beyond the surface, Spiritism-observations was the only remedy to cure scepticism in things of the world hereafter. No wonder if spirit visitation came as divine economy to bring home here the lacking belief. Anyhow, belief in the hereafter is on its way to restoration here; no matter if some are duped, or deluded, or victimized to cheat or swindle. Most of the order are good and honest people, striving after the truth and working for what may be called the real salt of life. I admire their ways and really enjoy their conversation. There is a tinge of that strength of belief in their talk, without which walks in the avenue of Spirituality is an impossibility. Dear old H.L. ! One has simply to look at his unassuming honest face when he relates his, what he calls, abnormal experiences. His eyes become watery, in the heat of the moment. A halo of child-simplicity and innocence plays on his face, his lips open and begin to quiver when he becomes heated in narrating his spiritual incidents. Good God ! Who could belie his honest face ? No ! He is always genuine. You differ from his conclusions, but he gives you the true case.

APPEARANCE OF THE DEPARTED SOUL.

No wonder to me if one receives visits from the denizens of the other world. Death after all is a passage from here to hereafter. Who can deny the continuity of consciousness ? If a child shows traits of his parents' consciousness, and sometimes inherits most of it, has not consciousness travelled.

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from one worldly body of the parent to the other worldly body of the son? A clear proof as to the continuity of consciousness; death cannot kill it. A caterpillar has become a butterfly; but could butterfly come back to the caterpillar-world? Some caterpillars "assert that they have seen" butterflies. How can I deny it, when I have seen the people of the world behind the screen? I have talked to them. I have discussed with them questions of importance. They have enlightened me on the difficult problems of Theology. They came to my guidance when I groped in the darkness, and discretion and reason was trembling in some critical moments of my life. Often and often I have been a victim to incurable maladies when the medical verdict or treatment did not inspire hope; but the inhabitants of the Garden of God came to my help. They prescribed me drugs not on the official list of pharmacopœia, and with wonderful results—this all from the other world. How can I refuse to lend a favourable ear to a spiritualist friend if he comes to me with a story of ghosts? I know overzeal in the cause unconsciously takes better of his judgment, and his narratives unintentionally become coloured. He forgets to note many a circumstantial fact which is more responsible for visualization than anything from beyond the grave. Imagination is a creative agency of unimaginable potency. Have I not myself perceived my own thoughts materialized in my "twenty's"? I always mistook them for realities. I remember those days. A well-meaning sceptic in my friendship always came to explain them on philosophic bases, to my great hatred. I loathed his very face; but I am quite positive now that he was not wrong after all and I was in the error. I may say so now in my grey hairs, when the experiences and observations of twenty years more have made me saner in my deductions. No one, therefore, should deprecate these fantastical experiences which

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are dawning on the Western horizon. We should make allowances for a beginner. Discouragement and strictures will curb the truth which has just been emerging from materialistic clouds. I must hail the silvery line.

But the question of questions is, whether the apparitions we see in our dreams and visions are from the world of departed souls? Do the denizens of the post-grave regions really pay visits to us? They may bear the same form and may be clothed in the same figure and features which they had when on the earth. They might give us sometimes knowledge of things which could only belong to them. This may stand as a sound argument to substantiate visits of the translated souls—a logical data, no doubt, to prop what can be said in favour of spiritism; but it cannot be conclusive. It has its explanations; besides, how to account for such visions in which we see persons still in this earthly plane? I have seen them. They enlightened me on things decidedly beyond their knowledge. Have I not met them the following morning after the night when I saw them in vision? I inquired of them of the very subject they were talking to me in my dreams. Not only were they quite ignorant of the visionary occurrence, but the very subject as talked about in dream was strange to them; and I may say much beyond their reach of knowledge. This shows that the theory of “sending thought” is not a satisfactory explanation. I think I would do better if I give here some of the incidents.

(To be continued.)

HOLY ANECDOTES

THOSE THAT COME TO DESTROY BECOME THE BUILDERS
OF THE HOUSE.

“WHAT, O Umar, are you after?” enquires Na'im, with his breath bated and his accent anxious, seeing

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Umar dashing along in hot haste, his sword hanging by his side.

Umar's eyebrows are close-knitted, his forehead swollen and his eyes bloodshot. Bloody determination is writ large on his face. Na'im is apprehensive of the worst. The look in his kinsman's eye unmistakably shows that he is bound on a deadly mission. His enmity to Islam, Na'im fears, has got the better of him.

Yes, Umar is no doubt bound on a bloody resolve. Ever since he has heard of the new faith, he has been filled with rage. It is extremely painful to his sense of Quraishite honour and dignity to see his ancestral form of worship denounced. He has left no stone unturned to vindicate the honour of the idols, held in deep reverence by his forefathers. But the contagion has spread even to within the four walls of his family circle. A number from among his own kith and kin have also turned heretics, including Na'im and Labina, a handmaid in his household. He has turned against all such apostates from their hereditary religion. But poor Labina, she has been a helpless victim to his wrath ever since. He would pitilessly belabour her, and only cease when exhausted, in order, as he would excuse himself, to take breath, to renew the castigation with fresh energy. But the truth of Islam has entranced, so to say, each one of the converts. Cruel as these tortures are, they are proof against them. Not a single one of the lost sheep could thus be brought back to the fold. Umar has grown sick of it. He can no longer stand the shame, the degradation and the blasphemies to his ancient idols. In the full bloom of youth, having just stepped into the twenty-seventh year of his age, with a domineering temperament, inherited from his aristocratic Quraishite forefathers, and skilled in the use of arms, he has, at last, resolved upon striking at the very root of Islam. Girding his sword round his

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neck, he shoots forth to Muhammad's abode, when, on the way, he is met by Na'im, who, in a state of alarm, puts him the above question: "What, O Umar, are you after?"

"To put an end to Muhammad," replies the youth.

"You would better set your own house in order, before taking such a step; your own sister and brother-in-law have accepted Islam," rejoins Na'im.

The news is a veritable bolt from the blue to him. The conversion of those so near and dear to him, which was kept secret from him so far, has touched him to the quick. Retracing his steps, he darts, in a fit of rage, towards his sister Fatima's house. Reaching there, he overhears Fatima reciting a passage from the Qur-án. Alarmed at the sound of his footsteps, she hurriedly conceals the scroll from which she has been reciting. But, sure enough, he has with his own ears overheard her. He is not going to be so easily put off.

"What were you just reciting?" he demands of his sister in a harsh tone.

"O, nothing, Umar," replies Fatima.

"I have heard you have both turned apostates," rejoins Umar, forthwith falling upon his brother-in-law, Sa'id, grappling him fast, and does not spare even his sister, when she tries to intervene. She too receives wounds, her body getting drenched in blood. But the charm of Islam has worked too deep into her heart. "Umar," she exclaims in a defiant tone, "Do what you will. It is now impossible to eradicate Islam out of our hearts."

The electrifying words work like a talisman on him. He is shaken to the innermost depth of his heart. He is already half vanquished. Turning affectionately to her, he sees her bleeding and is moved all the more. The reaction comes. "Let me also hear," he remorsefully asks, "what you have been reciting."

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"Here you are," says Fatima, placing the scroll before him, and lo, on picking it up, he finds the chapter beginning with the words, "Whatever is in the heavens, or in the earth, glorifies Allah, who is All-Mighty and All-wise."

Impressed with the sublimity and majesty of the words, he goes through it, word by word, till he reaches the spot, "Have faith in Allah and in His Apostle." No sooner does he read these words than he spontaneously proclaims, "I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship besides Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is His Prophet."

Forthwith he leaves his sister, hurrying towards Arqam's house, where the Holy Prophet, to avoid molestation, is taking shelter along with the brotherhood which is, as yet, as small as young. Umar knocks at the door. Having a sword about him, the Muslims fear he is not there on a peaceful mission. He is, however, given admittance.

"What brings thee here, Umar?" asks the Holy Prophet, stepping forward to him, as soon as he enters. The voice of truth sends a thrill all through him. In all humility he makes declaration of faith, to the great joy of the brotherhood, who burst out in spontaneous shouts of "Allah is great!" till the surrounding hills resound to the glory of Allah. Thus is vanquished one that comes to crush Islam at the point of the sword—Umar the Great, the second Caliph, the builder of the mighty Empire of Islam. He that comes to destroy, becomes the builder of the house.

Centuries roll by, and the history of Islam presents one other such marvellous scene. About a period when the flame of the Muslim Caliphate has dwindled into just a pale dying flicker, the notorious world-conqueror, Changez (Jengez) Khan, the heathen Mongol chieftain, carries sword and fire into the very heart of the tottering Muslim Empire, killing, burning and destroying for a whole week. Sixteen

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hundred thousand persons are massacred within the walls. His grandson, Hulaku Khan, true to the traditions of his bloody grandfather, deals a final death-blow to the Muslim Caliphate at Bagdad, in 1277 A.D. But here again we find Islamic history repeat itself. The Tartars, whose sword crushed the Muslim Caliphate, fell in turn, a prey to the spiritual sword of Islam.

The descendants of the self-same Chingiz and Hulaku, submitting to the spiritual sovereignty of Islam, become the inheritors of the Caliphate which they come to destroy. Who is the present Turk, but a scion of the same proud race of the Tartars?

Truth! How invincible is thy might! Suppressed, thou still reboundest and with added momentum. Eternal, imperishable and everlasting, thou defiest extinction!

Verily, those that come to destroy, become the builders of the house. BABAR.

TABLE TALK

An Apology for some Traits of British Character.

I will not call the people in these islands "self-motived." They may be self-centred people. Perhaps climatic conditions led them to pass over the desired limits of self-seeking somewhat. Self-seeking tendencies are life tendencies. If Ego lies in consciousness of one's existence and of its needful, it must generate self-seeking impulses. And they cannot be deprecated. They are responsible for all our activities. Without Ego, life would not be worth living—a cessation of all energies; all civilization would come to nothing. We have been equipped with various thirsts and hungers like other animals besides ourselves. Our activities are only our efforts to satisfy them. How, therefore, can we afford to minimize the importance of self-seeking instinct? Of course, there are limits and boundaries. It is sin to exceed them.

TABLE TALK

Muslim Conception of Sin.

What a world of difference and diversity in the conception of sin from various standpoints! Sin was not created by God, though whatever is thought or believed by the Church here and other places, brings the creation of sin to the door of One who is all Good and Love. Everything from Him is for our good. It has its use and occasion, so says the Qur-án ; but man disregards it. He exceeds the limit of its use and becomes oblivious of its occasion, which leads to hardship and trouble, and thus makes it generative of sin. In one word, to sin is to go beyond¹ the limits given for the use and occasion of everything in the universe.

Self-seeking impulses are natural tendencies. They cannot be curtailed. They can be regulated and worked out within proper limits. Delimitation is moderation, sobriety and virtue. Trespass is wrong, evil and sin. If we transcend the given limits of self-seeking, we gradually pass through several stages of evil, up to capital sin. Overpassing proper limits of self-seeking finds us walking under the tempting avenues of self-centredness. It leads to self-motivedness, then come in train, selfishness, egotism, self-aggressiveness, self-predomination and so forth.

British People and Self-Seeking.

The people here have, more or less, exhibited almost all the undesirable sides of self-seeking. But other nationalities who chanced to possess power and predomination have done the same thing. Self-aggressiveness is the curse of power. Religion from God came to regulate natural impulses, and to sublimate them into moralities and spiritualities. A very wide gulf is to be paved from Egotism to Altruism. And it can only be done by going through

¹ All the words used in the Qur-án to synonymize sin literally mean "to go beyond."

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various exercises and pursuing the course laid down in Islam.

British people, I say, have been circumstanced to fall from the proper limits of self-seeking into self-centredness. The very climatic condition around them makes them victims to this unfortunate deviation. It is rigidity of the cold in this high latitude which drives them to home. After doing his daily pursuits to keep up his life, a Britisher hastens to his hearth. Few sunny days in the whole year fall to his lot, when he may leave home for walks and talks with others besides his family folks. No chance to come in contact with others often and often, and thus to know more of, and to be known more by them. No wonder if he is a mystery to others, and others the same to him. There must be always something hidden in the background of his mind, and he will take years to disclose it even to his, what they call, bosom friends. Unlucky fellow! Cold weather has made him cold. Things in the East are different. Everything warm and so the temperament; the whole nature open, and blossoming into constant florid verdure. So must be the human heart in the East, always open, full of warmth, capable of prolific growth, if not suppressed *by some politically self-aggressive neighbour*.¹ The sun in the East is in its full vigour. We cannot be chained to our hearth. In fact we are averse to be imprisoned within our four walls, unless we are wanted. Splendid sunshine and smiling nature all around must allure every person to "outing." The sun in a way is decentralizing factor. All the units centred to home-corners by the inclemency of the weather are brought back to public rendezvous, when the sun comes to enhance beauties of nature.

If true happiness of man consists in appreciating the beauties of human heart and having insight into the inner recesses of human mind, you are com-

¹ Italics are ours.—Ed.

TABLE TALK

pelled to lay open your own hearts to others if brought together so often. Thus climatic conditions in the East and West are chiefly responsible for the two psychologies. If the Oriental mind cannot rightly boast for his open-heartedness, the Occidental should not be blamed for the other phase of the human mind.

Liberality and Close-Fistedness.

The same natural phenomena, I presume, goes a long way to produce liberality and its reverse in us.

Our tendencies to treasure our savings in order to meet our rainy days become intensified by chances affording by nature to help good preserving. In hot countries you cannot preserve your food, especially in the cooked form, beyond certain days. It becomes stale and decomposed, and unfit for dietetic purposes; and if you have cooked more than what you want, the surplus must go to feed those beyond the four walls of your own house or the climate would make it rotten. Thus climatic conditions compel us to be charitable. No one should blame a parsimonious Westerner if the climate in the West is favourable to "storing tendencies." A loaf, when broken, goes to pieces, and begins to be decomposed in the East. It must, anyhow, be finished, but a stale bread is something enjoyable here. Even the very crumbs are not waste; many "pies" come out of them. In some quarters "resurrection pie" may come to utilize the remnant of the whole week into a new dish. Stale things may not be acceptable even in charity in the East, but they are a valuable asset for a housewife to show her culinary skill in a Western kitchen. We don't touch cheese, even a day or two after it is produced. But people here relish gorgonzola when it reaches its crumbling stage and germinates life. Perhaps life to go in to support a life. Anyhow, climatic conditions work to the discount of the British people.

DEMOCRACY IN ISLAM

“No, our stay here is dangerous. The place seems haunted. Every possible shadow brings me a thought of an assassin’s dagger.”

It was in the early days of our Holy Prophet—when the tribes of the Quraish, aided by the tribes in collision with the newly founded religion—when the surrounding district of Mecca was a hive of intrigue, conspiracy and treachery—that we heard these words escape the lips of the leader of a little party of respectable bearing. Their place of occupation bore signs of a traveller on the move.

The next we see the little party under the hospitable roof of the King of Abyssinia whither they had taken shelter. The world had a gloomy aspect for the handful of these few individuals who sacrificed every description of their possession, belongings, property and social ties in the path of God—one and only one God. They had to face innumerable barriers created by the opposite side, and these were raised to such an extent that the peaceful and harmless living became extremely dubious and precarious. The only alternative left to them was in the speedy evacuation of the disturbed area—an alternative at the root of which was evident the dire necessity of separation from the Prophet. The Prophet remained at his post, regardless of the consequences and the threats of death, with Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq, while the rest of the band of the faithful—which did not consist of more than eleven men and four women—took refuge in Abyssinia, where they were veiled from the Quraish’s eyes.

Najjashi extended a very kind hospitality to these refugees. The infidel Quraish became aware of this. They made no scruples to approach the Muslim’s place of safety. Under the cover of a presentation, so in vogue in the days of yore, a deputation of envoys put claim on these, with a pretence that they were absconding criminals and

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that they should be handed over to them for a safe custody.

Najjashi summoned the refugees.

"What crime have you committed?" inquired Najjashi.

"None that we are aware of," came the sharp reply from the leader of the party.

"What is the religion you adhere to and which is in contradiction to Christianity and idolatry?"

Hazrat Jaffer, for he was the leader and spokesman, was again on his feet. In a most rhetorical flow of language he summarized the ignorance of the tribes, the necessity of a teacher who would crush the evil influences which had led the society to the brink of destruction, and that the Teacher had already appeared in the person of Muhammad (may the peace of Allah be upon him). He and his small party had confessed him as their Prophet and a true messenger of God.

"It is this crime of which we are accused," reaffirmed Jaffer. "We are expelled, chastised and driven from our own people for this so-called crime. Does your proverbial generosity and unique sense of justice approve of this! Is not man born to do *what he thinks best*? Should I be idol-worshipper because my grandfather or great-grandfather was one? I look to your Majesty for the right dispensation."

To enhance the awakened sympathy, ripe with the spirit of Muslim love for all Prophets, Jaffer recited Sura Cave in a most melodious voice, which acted like a charm on the soft heart of Najjashi.

He turned to the envoys and in a polite tone expressed his regret to deliver over his guests.

Attended by failure, inflamed by impulsive revenge and a desire to retaliate, Omer A'as—the chief envoy—advanced his most formidable piece to make a decisive move in the accomplishment of the mate. This time with the acquired help of the

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powerful satellites of the court, A'as took a steady aim to hit the bull's-eye.

The refulgent pomp and splendour of an ancient court hardly bears repetition. Amid a clarion call of a trumpeter once again the little party was ushered to Najjashi's presence. All eyes turned on them. Silence reigned supreme. There was a suppressed whisper from ear to ear among the enemy. The prey was within the range of the tiger's spring, and all care was taken to clear the ground of obstacles. With a glowing anger in his eyes and clenched fists, A'as declared in a defiant tone :

“O ! Mighty ruler and the sole judge of good and bad, do you know what these miscreants say of your Lord Jesus ? ”

Jaffer realized that his position was no better than of a man standing on a deck of a burning ship in a stormy sea. Either he should submit to the advancing fumes or satisfy Nemesis by throwing himself and his party in the roaring wrath of the waves. Should he say the truth taught to him by the Prophet that Jesus was not the “Son of God” and face the music of Najjashi's probable aversion, or suppress it to serve the time ? To Jaffer the fear of a kingly power was no excuse to tell the untruth. He, like every sincere and God-fearing Muslim, preferred death rather than bring a slur on the teaching of his Preceptor and Prophet.

He rose from his seat. In a balanced posture and determination in his tone he began :

“The worthy host has asked me a question—a question which should be replied to as a duty. We are Muslims and plain truth-speaking is our ideal. The firmest pillar of Islam is the submission in the path of Truth, and I shall be untrue to my parents, my Prophet and above all to my Creator Allah—one God—if I desist in what I have to say. The fear of death or torture does not deter me from pronouncing the dictates of my conscience.

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To us who are Muslims, Jesus is a human creation of God. He is nothing more than a Prophet sent to this world in an hour of trouble, to give the message of God. It is not my function to say how far his work and message is misunderstood. It could be evinced in every phase of the existing society."

The brave and outspoken conviction and determination of purpose of the daring chief carried the assembly to its feet. He declared what he thought best, trusting in Divine rescue. In a court, where an inappropriate gait was an offence punishable with immediate expulsion or even death at times, an insult to the established religion was a deadly sacrilege. There was a smile of confident victory on the faces of the Quraish.

The audience saw a sudden flash of light—as if by a theatrical contrivance—on the face of Najjashi. In a state of seeming inspiration Najjashi exclaimed in a firm accent, with a pronounced emphasis in every word he uttered :

"Jesus," he said, "was no more than a single bit of straw to be tossed over again and again at the mercy of the wind."

The words came like a bomb-shell to the ears of the Quraish and weird-looking representatives of the stern priesthood. The bubble of hope burst. The orthodox priests in their flowing robes began to stir life in the ornamented seats they occupied. An insult and a slander to Christianity in a Christian Court, with a crushing conclusion by their own King and head of the realm, was an uncommon spectacle. Najjashi was firm and resolute. His benevolent nature could not tolerate to see that spirit of righteous democracy and universal fraternity so beautifully summed up in a nut-shell, should any way suffer in his own presence. Jaffer justified his title of a pioneer in Islam. His quality of destructibility of the seed, planted a fresh and fruitful tree. The intended blow at the very root and foundation of Islam

flew flat on the ground. The court rose, after a declaration by Najjashi of his refusal to deliver over the little party.

Later Najjashi embraced Islam.

FAIZ MOHD. KHAN.

ISLAM AND EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION

By ABDUL MUNTAQIM

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH.

IN *The Times* of January 7th a leading article entitled "Angora and the Entente" contains the following :—

" . . . The time has come to make peace in the Near East, and to establish through the pacification of Turkey, normal relations with the Mahomedan World. The Allies, as the leading representatives of European civilization, must finally determine their attitude to that congeries of peoples whose moods and conflicting sentiments are dominated by the still obscure impulses of an awakening Islam. Islam that slumbered long is reviving in strange aspirations and antagonisms at the touch of Western civilization, and for the present the spirit of this civilization is being transmitted to the Mahomedan peoples largely through the agency of Great Britain and France. The attitude of these countries, their dissension or their unity, will determine their varied and as yet uncertain reactions of the awakening world of Islam towards Europe. Upon Great Britain and France lies a definite compulsion to hold together, to act together, and to speak together, in order that they may bring the Mahomedan peoples within the scope of European civilization, and may not betray them to alien and perilous influences."

We suppose that the writer's intention in the above sentences, and indeed in the whole article, could be epitomized in six words : Beware of Bolshevism in the East. The East does not beware of it upon its own account. "The obscure impulses of an awakening Islam" is nonsense. Islam is wide awake, and the impulse of its peoples is not at all obscure ; it can be seen by everyone. It is the

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impulse to resist the Wrong, and to assert the Right by every available means. If an alliance with Bolshevism proves the only means available, then Bolshevism will be used, otherwise Bolshevism does not come into the question, which is : How to remove the present horror and distrust of Europe from the minds of Muslims and of all the Eastern peoples ? The horror did not always exist, nor was the distrust so rigid as it is to-day. There was a time when, in the British Empire at any rate, Muslims were contented subjects and entirely trustful. The Entente, of which it should not be forgotten that Czarist Russia was dictator of the Eastern policy, has, by its unjust dealings with the Muslim peoples, in a few years managed to destroy every vestige of their confidence in European promises and sense of justice. If "the spirit of Western civilization has been transmitted to the Muslim peoples largely through the agency of Great Britain and France" of recent years, it is time that Great Britain and France should realize the extreme horror with which Muslims and all Asiatic peoples view that spirit, as revealed in their transaction. It is now too late to think complacently of "bringing Mahomedan peoples within the scope of European civilization" by any action, military or political. There was a time when that seemed possible, but it is impossible to-day. There was a time when Europe had almost seduced the East, a time when Orientals, dazzled by the material progress of the West, sought European education as an end and object in itself, a kind of charm of power to make them supermen ; a time when many Easterns thought with sentimental pity of their own production in the realm of thought and art compared with this new shining mechanism, when they even thought of their religion as behind the times. That madness lasted until Eastern students, educated in Europe, returned with tidings that injustice and abuses were to be found there as elsewhere. The claim then

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was : " We have received the same education as you Europeans, give us the same status." That claim was scornfully repelled, and then, after a period of disappointment and dismay, came introspection and a great discovery. The men who had been dupes of Europe became conscious of the dupery. They said : " We had been following their way obediently, yet they despise us. They did not despise our fathers who pursued a different way. Why ? Because our fathers had strong independent character, because they had a soul which claimed respect. We ? We have nothing but our European education. They have robbed us of our proud inheritance as Asiatics." Then it was seen that Europe's patronizing attitude rests upon the fallacy that Asiatics are inferior. They are not inferior to Europeans ; but they are different—so different that to impose the European mental habit on them is to cramp their faculties. They had become inferior through imitation involving the neglect of their own genius, just as a heaven-born poet would appear inferior if he confined his self-expression to commercial book-keeping ! Asia has led the van of civilization in the past, and in the future she will lead again when she has free expression and development ; but she can never do so as the sedulous ape of Europe ; she must be herself. European education, in the manner we have indicated, has roused all Asia to new consciousness, just as the impact of Asia upon Europe at the time of the Crusades roused Europe to new consciousness. That was no doubt its mission in the Scheme of Things. Europe and Asia are not independent human entities ; they are as body and soul in terms of human progress. A civilization controlled by thought from Europe only is a civilization without a soul, as anyone will agree who troubles to reflect that all the great religions come from Asia. The Europeans cannot say that they have never heard the voice of Asia. It has

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been with them from their childhood in the Scriptures. It was acknowledged by their fathers as a salutary check upon European materialism, of which the tendency, without such restraint, is to become inhuman in its selfishness—a danger to its votaries and a curse to mankind as a whole; and while the Europeans listened to it and to some extent obeyed its teachings, there was no such gulf as now exists between the East and West. But Europe, as a political factor in the world, to-day ignores that voice which warns of a last judgment, and Asia looks with horror at a Godless civilization, of which the rulers recognize no higher law than their own aims. Asia revolts from such a civilization, she asserts her independence of it, and she claims a hearing from its leaders in the name of God. People in England may be heard to wonder how, in India, Hindus and Muslims can agree upon the Turkish Question. How can they disagree when they have seen the solemn words of England lightly broken, when they have seen the European War, and now behold the smug indifference of Europe to that mighty warning of the fate in store for a civilization which is not based upon the fear of God; when they see the leaders of European civilization behave and speak as if the Asiatic peoples had no human rights, while paying hypocritical lip-service to the Prophet of Galilee, who was himself an Asiatic and a preacher of the Higher Law which they transgress so lightly. In the scripture of the Hindus, no less than in that of the Christians and the Jews, is preached the great ideal of theocracy, which is the very bedrock of the thought of Asia; and they ask for justice to be done to Turkey and Islam less for the sake of Asia than for that of Europe, because Europe has been guilty of a great injustice, and those who do injustice are in danger from the law of God.

Theocracy is the idea underlying all religions. But Europe now regards it as a mere ideal, without

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practical significance, being infatuated with materialism which gives quick results.

“Man prays for evil as he prays for good, for man is impatient.”

Man forgets that his brief span of life and effort is trifling as compared with the life of mankind as a whole—less than a second in eternity. Theocracy appears a too remote ideal, which offers no immediate profit to the rulers; its restraints, the law of right and wrong, are very irksome. Asia regards it as a fact from which no human being, be he king or slave, can possibly escape, the only possible sanction for earthly government, the only basis of world-peace and of the progress of mankind *as a whole*. The kingdom of God on earth is not a mere abstraction. The phenomena of day and night, of birth and death, the natural laws which we obey, if we but move a finger, show how real and all-encompassing is Allah's kingdom, how strictly limited the sway of man over the things he calls his own. This idea is at the root of all religions, but nowhere has it been so clearly stated as in El-Islam. Other religions seem to set a limit (!) to God's kingdom, identifying it with their own political community. The Holy Qur-án says :

“And they say none enters paradise except he be a Jew or a Christian. These are their own desires. Say : bring your proof (of that which you assert) if you are truthful.

“Nay, but whosoever turns his face towards God, while doing good (to men), verily his reward is in his Lord ; and there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they suffer grief.”

Islam is often misrepresented as a religion of the sword, a religion narrowly contentious like the others. In the darkest hour of Muslim history, when Hallaku had conquered Baghdad, the following question was put before the Muslim jurists, who well knew that on their answer would depend the fate of their Khalifa : “Which is better in Islamic Law : the believing ruler who does wrong, or the unbelieving

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ruler who does right ? ” The answer was : “ The unbelieving ruler who does right. ” In the Kingdom of God proclaimed in the Holy Qur-án there are no favourites ; the Muslims have no privileged position, save as they earn it by their zeal and their integrity as witnesses ; they have to face the judgment like the rest of men ; their creed and observances do not prefer them ; because the test is one for everybody, irrespective of race or creed or class or colour, and the test is conduct in the light of opportunities.

“ And each one has a place towards which he turns his face in prayer, so vie with one another in good works. Wheresoever you may be, Allah will bring you all together, for Allah has absolute power over all things. ”

“ It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and West ; but righteous is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and Angels and the Scriptures and the Prophets, and gives his wealth for love of Him to kindred and to orphans and poor people and to the wayfarer and those who ask and to set slaves free ; and is constant and sincere in prayer and gives the poor his due, and those who keep a promise when they make one, and the persevering in misfortune and adversity. These are they who are sincere. These are the God-fearing. ”

A European would be wrong in thinking that Muslims champion Turkey at the present day in the same spirit and for the same reason that a multitude of Europeans champion Greece, i.e. because that country happens to profess the same religion as themselves. The Muslims champion Turkey and the Arab nations in their claims to political independence because the claims are just ; and they are opposed to England because she has broken every promise that she made to Muslim peoples in order to obtain their help during the War. In the light of all these broken promises, they see now that the War was waged against the thing they love and value most on earth—the power of Islam, the living witness to that great ideal of theocracy which has not yet given its whole message to mankind.

In *The Times* article there is talk about protecting

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Christian minorities remaining under Muslim rule. The Muslims have protected the said minorities and carefully preserved their lives and liberties throughout the centuries when Christian Europe would have simply butchered them or forced them to accept another form of Christianity. Where is the vast Muslim population of Spain ? Where are the 350,000 Muslims of the Morea ? Where are the Muslim populations of Hungary, Serbia, Sicily ? Ruthlessly exterminated, with many other Muslim communities, by the champions of an incomplete ideal of theocracy, which to non-Christians must appear Satanic and condemned of Christ himself. We Muslims do not wish to rake up the old cruel past, we only ask that Europe shall remember her shortcomings of the past in order to deal justly in the present. The Christian sects in Muslim lands denied salvation to the Muslims and thought it no crime to kill and rob them when they had the power. The Muslims did not deny salvation to the Christian sects nor deem it meritorious to kill or forcibly convert them. And the Christians for long centuries repaid that tolerance with a loyalty from which it took a century of European propaganda to seduce them. We ask the European statesmen : Who was it stirred up disaffection in the Christian sects against the Turks, training them carefully and patiently, as hounds are trained, to slaughter and despoil their Muslim neighbours ? It was a member of the Entente, the founder of its Eastern policy—Czarist Russia. We ask them to remember that every rising of the Christian “ minorities ” has been signalized by an attempt to exterminate the Muslim populations. They know that it is so. To pretend not to know, to judge on the assumption that the Christians are entirely innocent, is hypocritical and bound to lead to fresh injustice. We ask them to obey the law of Allah’s Kingdom upon earth, and judge men by their works and not the creed they happen to profess.

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“ Say : O people of the Scripture ! Come to an equitable proposition between us and you : that we shall not serve any but Allah nor associate anything with Him, and that we shall not take others for lords besides Allah ; but if they turn back, then say : Bear witness that we are Muslims ” (i.e. His faithful subjects).

That is the call of the Holy Qur-án. “ You believe in the One God, so come into the One Theocracy.” But the Jews and Christians of the Prophet’s day, rabbi-ridden, priest-ridden, would not hear it, and turned their back upon the way of peace and human progress. The Prophet did not ask them to accept the rules and the observances of his community, he only asked them to lay stress in their belief upon the one essential of religion, and discard intolerance, well knowing that whoever turns his face to God while doing good, whatever he may choose to call himself, must be a faithful servant of Allah, and so in fact a Muslim ; well knowing that the common effort in the one direction would of itself cause unessentials, over which men quarrel, to be thrown away, and human brotherhood to take the place of senseless strife. This is the way of human progress, and there is no other way, says the voice of Islam. But a gentleman in *The Times* is now suggesting that it is time that the rulers of Great Britain and France took measures to bring the Muslim peoples within the scope of European civilization ! There is a spectral shape called Bolshevism in the background. France and England must do something to placate the Muslim world, to prevent it being drawn into the Bolshevistic sphere of influence. Well, the test is conduct. England and France have only to do right, obedient to the Law of God, and Muslim peoples will feel drawn to them. If they continue in their present lawless way the Muslim peoples and all Asia will remain estranged from them. Europe has civilization and Asia has civilization ; both are from Allah. They should complete and supplement each other under Allah’s

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Law. At present Europe goes against that Law, destroying the world's harmony. She has her choice. Asia is willing to co-operate with her in the Kingdom of God, but not otherwise. If she persists in her transgressions of the Higher Law, then indeed the people who are opposed to her present system and behaviour, the people who desire the welfare of mankind as a whole, the people in her midst whom she calls Bolshevist, who seek the Kingdom of God although they do not know it, will have the suffrage of the East so long as they do right. There is only one test : Conduct. Let England and France make good at last the pledges they have made to Muslim peoples and have broken, and they will have done more for world-peace than can be achieved by any Conference held upon the supposition that there is no Law of Right and Wrong.

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Aesop's Fables (in Arabic).—The Fables need no introduction. They have won the admiration of the world's moralists. One may wonder why the book did not claim the attention of the bygone Arab scholars who enriched their literature by giving Arabic garb to every work of some worth, which came from the ancient world. The reason is obvious. Most part of Aesop's Fables can easily be traced to Sanskrit origin, which the Arabs rendered into the well-known book—*Kulala-damnah*. The gap, however, has been filled by the learned efforts of Effendi Deya, who clothes the book in the purest Arabic language. With all his scholarly attainments the Author uses a very simple language, which we are sure will be of great help to those who wish to study or learn the Arabic Language. Though a translation, yet it reads like an original work. We congratulate the Author for this happy production. It can be had from the Author, Kafr Islam Street, Tanta (Egypt). Price P.T. 8, or 8d.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي

Islam and Socialism

LECTURE DELIVERED BY
KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD AT THE MOSQUE, WOKING,
ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 1ST.

I MUST tender an apology at the very outset. The subject is very vast in itself, and it is impossible for me to do justice to it in such a short time as is at my disposal. I hope to be excused if I have to jump from one conclusion to another, and that you will follow the chain of my reasoning very carefully. The complexity of the subject demands this courtesy. I propose first of all to deal with Socialism as known to the West, and shall try to point out its disadvantages. I will then go back to the early days of Islam, and shall venture to show the superiority of the Socialism as brought about by Muhammad, of blessed memory, to the other which is the invention of various Western thinkers.

All down the centuries poverty, like a tragic spectre, has haunted humanity. In ancient days

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poets sang of a Golden Age when peace and plenty reigned. The Golden Age soon gave way to a time of storm and stress, when society became divided into the Haves and Have-nots, as an outcome of class conflict. Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle set themselves to solve the problem by framing political institutions. Theories, however, proved impotent against the innate selfishness of man. Greece under Democracy, as under Monarchism and Aristocracy, failed to secure social peace on the lines of equal distribution of wealth. Under Roman rule, the same problem presented itself. Thus we find the struggle between the Haves and Have-nots, forming one of the most sordid chapters in the history of human race. As time wore on, the gulf between the rich and poor became wider and wider. We, however, find some consolation in the words of Isaiah, the Prophet. Then came Jesus. His teachings to a certain extent came with a message of hope for the poor ; but with the degeneracy of the Church, the gulf still yawned. For centuries the Church persuaded the working classes that it was the ordination of God, that they should remain in the station in which it had pleased Him to place them. The clergy denied all knowledge to the poor ; and when little fires kindled in the corners of a dark world, spread and blazed out, armies were raised to extinguish them with torrents of blood ; and such saints as Dominic, with crucifix in one hand and sword in the other, instigated the troops to the utmost barbarity. Until the Reformation the Church of Rome was maintained merely by force. Thus fear of mind withered the Christian religion, and it became a profession or trade, and the adulteration of the creed followed as a matter of course. As a direct result of the partial attitude of the clergy social discontent became prevalent, but still it could not find any organized outlook. Not till the eighteenth century did popular

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discontent, aggravated as it was by poverty and destitution, caused by the misgovernment in France, find any dramatic expression. The hour had come, and the man, who was no other than Rousseau, came forward as the leader of a new crusade—a crusade, the watchword of which was the *Rights of Man*. Poverty and destitution he declared to be no part of nature. They were, he said, the products of man's selfishness and injustice. He was against the system of private property, and advocated the subjugation of the individual will to the general will of the community. Rousseau would have won the day but for the foreign interference which resulted in the despotism of Napoleon. State Socialism having thus failed, a struggle for Industrial Socialism became evident. Men like Saint Simon in France and Robert Owen in this country began to work. As an employer Owen was exemplary, and had his example been followed, the question of capital and labour would have disappeared in the latter pages of history.

Now we turn another page of history, and come to that great International Materialist, Karl Marx. In his masterpiece the *Capital*, he states his belief in impersonal force. According to him, Industrialism grew out of Feudalism, and tended towards domestic industry. This gave way to the factory system. The worker, now no longer his own master, had to accept the new conditions of dependence or starve. Capital was supreme, and the worker in complete subjugation. Thus Marx evolves the theory of exploitation of labour, believing labour to be the cause of wealth. According to him industrial evolution made rich, richer and poor, poorer. The only solution put forward by him was the nationalization of industry. With him labour and wealth were relative terms. But from an economic point of view, labour is not the chief thing, and the question of supply and demand

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comes into prominence. Marx tries to dodge this question by explaining that no object created by labour has any value unless it is useful, but how a distinction can be made and further the usefulness of an object again involves the question of supply and demand.

Coming to the present time, and keeping the social conditions of Russia in view, the conclusion is forced on us that the fittest survives. The workers, call them soldiers or peasants, if you will, are determined to secure the largest possible share of the national wealth, regardless of the disadvantages to the brain-workers. In due course the latter will disappear to a great extent, if not all together.

Now the question which concerns us most is the attitude of Socialism towards religion. On this point Socialists are not unanimous. Many of them object to ecclesiasticism, others who are opportunists identify it with Christianity. Marx advocates positive abolition of religion. Unfortunately a majority adheres to his views. But I submit that all the Western Socialists, when dealing with this question, had only Christianity in view. Of course, the ideals of Christianity and Socialism are not the same, and men like Blatchford, Bax, Schaffle, Brutton and many others were disgusted with Christianity, and had to declare it to be in essential antagonism to Socialism. That Christianity has proved to be the obstacle in the path of progress is a patent fact of history.

To sum up, Western Socialism demands liberty, equality, fraternity and individualism to merge into State control; every person to have a direct voice in the government of the country, or in other words, abolition of bureaucracy; none to live at the expense of the other; distinction of class, colour or creed to be done away with, and abolition of dukedoms, hereditary kingships, and private property. Islam is in accord with all of these principles excepting

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the last mentioned, i.e. the abolition of private property.

But before dealing with the early days of Islam, I would like to say a few words as to the drawbacks of the Western Socialism. We know Democracy to be sometimes the direct result of Individualism, and Socialism a development of Democracy. But intensified Individualism leads to Egotism. If this is the case in the very beginning, then no society is formed, because Egotism is destructive to society. Unless the mind of the people is trained, Democracy or Socialism is bound to revert at the very time of its perfection to that disruptive basis. Meanness and self-assertion follow, and the result is disorder and anarchy as is at present in Russia. I venture to submit that it is in human nature to worship the Ego, and the only remedy is religion. *Religion and Socialism, to my mind, are inseparable.* Without religious control and guidance of the actions and aspirations of individuals, Socialism will always lead to *class-wars* and end in disaster. Materialism teaches selfishness and Egotism. *To one who has nothing to look to beyond this world, sacrifice conveys no meaning.* Socialism can only be perfect when every individual lives *not* for himself, but for others; and without some great incentive, no human being can practise self-sacrifice.

Another mistake that the modern Socialists commit is that they begin their socializing endeavours from the top and not from the bottom. They leave the individual out of consideration altogether, and go to the reform of the State. But the mere fact of the transfer of land and capital to the State cannot make the administration of the State Socialistic. Is not all the land in India the property of the Government of India? Are not all the telegraphs, telephones, post offices, irrigation canals and most of the railways the property of the State? But neither the State landlordism nor State industrial-

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ism in India has done anything to create a model Socialistic State. For real Socialism what is essentially required is not only the nationalization of the land and capital, but also of the State itself. To apply Socialism at an unripe stage of society is bound to prove ruinous. Instead of making people more free, Socialism proves more burdensome and oppressive to individual ambition, initiative and property. It might even have a deterrent effect on individual skill and genius ; it might lead to the deterioration of the whole race. Under a Socialistic system it would be necessary to see that the whole population is at the highest water-mark in education, morality and intellect. Turning our attention to the abolition of private property, it is quite evident that with it private enterprise will disappear, and consequently it would tell badly on the trade of the country, and the whole machinery of the government would come to a standstill.

Let us now go back thirteen hundred years and find the state of affairs existing when Muhammad flourished. We find him elevating human minds to such a pitch that they were not only able to receive but to live up to Socialistic principles. The beauty of his Socialism was that it did not interfere with private enterprise, nor with individual initiative ; yet it made it almost impossible for an individual to rob another, or to get rich at the expense of his fellow-citizen. Muhammad did not use force in extending Socialism. He waged no *class-war*. His first and foremost care was to elevate the individual character, and thus to purge automatically society of all its vices. The basis of Muslim Socialism was religion. The nationality of Muslims was their religion, which obliterated the man-made boundaries of colour, race or creed. Their object of life and death was one, and they were free from the clutches of Egotism and self-aggression. They were all under the control of One, the Almighty, and acted only as trustees.

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It is nothing short of a miracle that Muham-mad should have succeeded in imbuing every individual with the same lofty notions. He showed, in a practical manner, how extreme Socialism can not only work but work well. He evolved the system of government, and put it into practice. The system, however, reached its fullest development under the master hands of Omar, the Second Caliph, who built a magnificent Socialistic Empire on the foundations laid down by the Holy Prophet. Under their rule all people had equal rights, and each had the responsibility of protecting and helping his weaker and destitute countryman. Free education was introduced. Students in the State colleges were supported. Old people, and those who were otherwise disabled and could not work for a living, were looked after. Children were provided for, and substantial funds were raised for the families and wives of such soldiers as died in wars. A citizen army instead of a mercenary one was introduced, while such citizens as could pay for their expenses, meals and outfit, received no pecuniary assistance even in times of war, and had to support themselves like other citizens. No high salary was offered by the State to anyone, and only a small allowance was granted to the Presidents and those who devoted themselves entirely to the services of the State. All matters of State were decided after a general consultation. The Presidents of the Commonwealth had no power of veto. Bureaucracy was unknown. There were no ministers or portfolios. The legislation was not in the hands of any cabinet or parliament, but came from the Almighty God Himself, who could not but be impartial to all His creatures. The interpretation of the laws was left to the whole community and not to any individuals. Islamic laws could sometimes be better interpreted by an old woman than a mighty Caliph like Omar. Land became the property of

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the State, and Omar introduced into this world the revenue system. By the judicious Laws of Inheritance, Muhammad made the existence of dukedoms or lines of millionaires impossible. Every property of a deceased Muslim was divided up into parts, and so the underpropriatorship of property extended to a greater number generation after generation. No person could devise more than one-third to any one else. But endowments to the State or public charities of the whole property were allowed. The main object in view was, of course, the equal distribution of wealth. Islam made it legally incumbent upon the rich to give over to the national funds or the deserving poor at least two and a half per cent. of their annual income. Thus the poor were made rich at the expense of the rich. The Holy Prophet, when questioned on this subject, said : " Zakat is the institution to enrich poor at the discount of the rich." Socialism in Islam was even carried to this extreme, that if a person left his field fallow for some time, his neighbours acquired the right to cultivate it as a public property.

On the principle that all human beings are brethren and should help one another in need, Islam interdicted usury or interest of any kind. This stimulated the spirit of commerce, industry, labour and thrift, and discouraged hoarding of money in banks, and made the existence of Shylocks impossible. It also served as a set-back to Capitalism, when no private individual even was allowed to lend money and thus become a capitalist. Islam had strictly forbidden its adherents to gamble or indulge in any games of chance. Here again, the underlying idea was to make it impossible for any individual to get rich at the expense of others less fortunate. Monopoly of every kind was condemned. Poverty was made a virtue.

(To be continued.)