

Islamic Review

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XI.] JAMADI-UTH-THANI, 1341 A.H. [No.

Subscription, 10s. FEBRUARY 1923. Single Copies

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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

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PUBLISHED AT
THE MOSQUE, WOKING, ENGLAND

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

طور نمونہ

سریاری منظور فائش

THE

ISLAMIC REVIEW

VOL. XI. JAMADI-UTH-THANI, 1341 A.H. No. 2.
FEBRUARY 1923.

NOTES

Islam Again a Victim of Libellous Attacks.

Recrimination and accusing others for our faults is an average human weakness. But the evil finds its best illustration in European diplomacy and Press jingoism. Islam has suffered more from the hands of the political propagandists than from Christian missionaries in the matter of misrepresentation. It is not surprising to find the following in the columns of the *Sunday Times*, when the demands of the Turks, legitimate as they are, proved to be unpalatable to European diplomacy, which failed in its last effort to banish the Muslims from Europe :—

For Mohammedanism is a conqueror's religion enjoining conversion by the sword and relegating men of other faiths to a position of static inferiority. The subjection of the infidel is not so much a political principle as an article of faith, sanctioned by divine decree and observed with a tenacity that has made it a habit or instinct of nature. There never has been, nor can there ever be, under a Mussulman Government any real equality between Christians and Mohammedans. There has never, therefore, been, nor can there ever be, a national Mussulman Government that impartially rules over and protects all its subjects of whatever creed alike.

A wanton libel! We find not a semblance of it in the teachings and practice of Islam. We wish Mr. Sydney Brooks, the writer of these lines, had substantiated this false statement by referring to some teaching in the Qur-án. We assure him that he would have found just contrary to

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what he has pictured of Islam. His remarks not only show the venom of his heart, but at the same time show how ignorant he is of the real state of things. These paragraph writers do not serve the cause of the nation as they think they do. The British Empire stands in dire need of harmony and good feeling between England and Islam. They may agitate their readers in this country, but that is the least thing in requisition. Sobriety of judgment and cool-mindedness is the need of the day, while circulation of such calumnies and slander against Islam causes more irritation to and estrangement of the Muslim mind. These writers should care more for the interests of the Empire than for the whim of the ignorant masses. Such writings are an offence, and they are taken to be so by Muslims of the Empire, who reply in quite different terms. The resolutions of the last Khilafat Conference is a typical instance of it :—

INDIAN MOSLEMS AND TURKS.

GAYA, *January 1st*. The Caliphate Conference, at its concluding session, decided, in the event of war breaking out again with Turkey, to launch immediately a civil disobedience campaign, including the spreading of propaganda in the police force and the Army, the prevention of recruitment, refusal to subscribe to war loans, picketing foreign cloth and liquor shops, and the prevention of the export of food grains. The Conference resolved to recruit a legion for service under the Angora Government.—*Reuter (The Times, January 3rd)*.

The Need of the Time.

But the need of the day cannot be met in this way. These writers do not represent the whole Western world, which has become disillusioned to some extent. It needs spread of Muslim literature combating all such calumnies to which Islam has been subjected by political propaganda. The West is awakening to the fact that whatever they have learnt of Islam was only a misstatement of facts. We invite the attention of the Muslims to the terrible need of the day. Some standard work on various aspects of Islam should see the light of day. Islam has suffered from its foes and friends equally. If the former spared no effort to disgrace it, the latter neglected to do anything by way of redemption.

“They have neither Assimilated nor been Assimilated by Them.”

So a writer in the *Sunday Times*, December 31st, says of the Turks. We admit that the Western ways of assimilation are not only strange to him, but a matter of abomina-

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tion to a Muslim. A civilized method of assimilation is in these days going on in America, of which we read the following in the *Daily Telegraph*, December 2nd :—

This advertisement appears to-day in New York under the headline "Shame of America" in great black lettering, followed by a query which will give satisfaction to Turkey: "Do you know that the United States is the only land on earth where human beings are burned at the stake?" In the four years 1918-21, says the announcement, twenty-eight people were publicly burned by American mobs, and also from 1889 to 1922 3,436 people were lynched. The crimes alleged include murder 1,288, and cases of rape 571. Miscellaneous crimes alleged were not turning out of the road for a white boy in a motor-car; being the relative of a person who was lynched; insulting a white man; talking back to a white man.

As to another instance of the Western method of assimilation we read the following in *India in the Balance*, p. 146 :—

When the Turk governed the Morea, he did not deport or destroy the Greek population, as their statistics and their continuous history prove. After Europe handed over the Morea to the Greeks, in less than one hundred years the Muhammadan population of the Morea, formerly some 300,000, is practically nil. The same result has followed forty-three years of Hellenic liberation in Thessaly. A Muhammadan population of about 100,000 has disappeared.

The last process of European assimilation of the non-Europeans was given a trial in the years 1920 and 1922 under the connivance and indirect help of some of the Allies, and we read the following of Greek atrocities in Turkey :—

Although a year has not yet passed since the occupation of Eastern Thrace, and although the poor Muslims in that district—being surrounded on all sides—are deprived of a safe place to take refuge in, the number of Muslims who have emigrated under conditions of sorrow and agony amount to more than 43,000.

Islam forbids interference with the religion and comfort of the subject races, and the very fact that the Balkan States do exist to-day, and that Turkey has been the home of people of other religions, proves that the rights of the non-Muslims have always been sacred. A propagandist may say whatever he likes, but he cannot disprove these facts.

Belief in Reincarnation

is on the increase; but the anomaly of the Christian mind in some cases transcends average human appreciation. With

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all their belief in the Gospel of Jesus they can still manage to believe in the theory of the reincarnation of the soul. Jesus did not believe in the theory. His belief, on the other hand, was contrary to it. But perhaps the habit of slavishly subscribing to the Church dogmas has left no room for individual judgment. One cannot be a Christian and a reincarnist at the same time; but in Christendom perhaps everything is possible.

Jesus the Wisest of His Time.

So we believe him to be, we who accept him as a Prophet and a messenger from God. He could not, we say, be otherwise, being chosen of God for the performance of a Divine Mission. But those who believe in his divinity have in these latter days become wiser and are disposed to think otherwise. They incline to the belief that their God, when He came on earth for man's salvation, proved Himself, after all, just the averagely imperfect man; of high moral calibre, it is true, of lofty ideals, but a dreamer, a dreamer for his own age and not for all time—let alone eternity—and of course hopelessly unpractical. Of such is the learned Bishop of Durham, Dr. Henson.

His lordship is of opinion that if Jesus had lived in the present century he would have been wiser. Yet, on consideration, it would seem that this lack of wisdom has been evinced not by Jesus, but by those who accredit him with what he never claimed, and of these Dr. Henson is one. Jesus declared to his disciples that he was a man like themselves. All his miraculous achievements were—given certain conditions—equally possible for them. He came with a revelation suited to the time and place of his mission, which, as he says, was to the Jews alone. His Sermon on the Mount, in all its ethical sublimity, was intended for the proud and stiff-necked Jew who stretched the letter of the law to its breaking-point in order to evade the spirit. The Jewish law of divorce gave ample latitude for changing wives and getting young women “into trouble”—as it is euphemistically termed nowadays. The Master whose mission it was to reform his tribe, could not give a higher or holier ordinance than that contained in the words: “What, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.”

This was the wisest interpretation of the Judaic law of divorce, keeping in view the conditions obtaining two thousand years ago in Judæa. Any un wisdom attaching thereto lies at the door of those who sought in these words of Jesus

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a universal application. He claimed no such universality for himself, inasmuch as he did not profess to give the whole truth : " I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now." The law he gave could not therefore be taken as a perfect law ; for, the promulgation of the perfect law was reserved for the promised messenger who was to come. Leaving aside the question of who was the comforter, Jesus himself admits the deficiency in his teachings. Moreover, when the very authenticity of the record of his life and sayings cannot be trusted, what right has the Bishop of Durham to question the wisdom of Jesus ?

The Law of Divorce in Islam.

Islam on the other hand, claims to give us laws from God, and consequently with universal application. Western legislation day by day is drawing nearer to the Islamic law, where incompatibility of temperament even, can constitute a valid cause for divorce. The world is rich in paradox, and the law of divorce in Christendom and Islam is a case in point. In spite of the differences set up by the law of divorce in the West, all the scandals to which the parties become exposed in an average divorce case, the courts here are all teeming with such cases, while, in the world of Islam, in spite of all the latitude and all the facilities which the Muslim code affords, divorce is a rare thing.

" Christian Love " !

Once a Churchman, always a Churchman.

In urging upon the American people to help in the economic reconstruction of Europe, Bishop Blake, episcopal supervisor of the Mediterranean area, conjures up the bogey of a " Moslem drive " into Europe. He says :

Turkey was defeated and broken—the world thought—but she is about to re-enter Europe completely restored, stronger and more powerfully entrenched than she has been for a century.

The greatest fear America should have of the social chaos that is bound to come unless it helps Europe out, is a great Moslem drive. It is not a visionary fear. It is not a preposterous prophecy. It is a very tangible possibility.

" With the Continent disrupted, with Russia behind the Crescent, we are in danger of seeing the Turks once again outside Vienna, and this time marching into it. Turkey's inherent power is indestructible. It is the whole Moslem world. Only a united Continent can be sure of holding it in check if it once breaks its bounds."

Why could not the clergyman base his plea on an appeal to some higher chord in human nature ? We wonder. Where

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lay the wisdom in raking up the Crusader's spirit? Surely there is already more than enough of human blood on the hands of the Church and it is time it should have set them to better ends. The world is sore and bleeding, and would have no more of it. Peace—let that be the word.

Why, we may ask, grudge bare existence to the Turk? Why this hue and cry, if he should return to his home and hearth, of which you did and would rob him? Does "Christian love" mean love *for* the Christian? It is surprising how those wearing the robes of the Church of Christ should give the lie direct to the teachings of Christ. The Bishop of Durham says that Jesus would have been wiser if he had lived to-day. One thing, at least, he must have done, we are sure—he must have found better shepherds for his fold.

Lord Headley's New Book.

We note with pleasure that Lord Headley's new book, *The Three Great Prophets of the World—Moses, Jesus and Muhammad*, has been placed in the hands of the printers and will shortly see the light of day. We are sure the able work will mean a valuable addition to Islamic literature, and will go a long way to educate public mind in these isles as to the true position and mission of Islam. We must express, in this connection, our indebtedness to Dr. Muhammad Ghaus, of Taping (F.M.S.), whose generous donation has enabled us to proceed with the publication of this work. Dissemination of sound literature is the most effective method of furthering the cause of Islam in the West, and Dr. Ghaus has done the right thing at the right moment. Should his example inspire others to come forward to our help to bring out the needful, much can be achieved in a comparatively short time.

A Sad Loss.

It is with sorrow that we record the death of Mr. Sidney Muggeridge, of Bromley, Kent, a member, and for long the honorary treasurer, of the Anglo-Ottoman Society, London. A sincere friend of India, Turkey and the East, his loss will be keenly felt not only by his relations and English friends, but alike by a large circle of Easterns.

Friday Prayer and Sermon.—At the London Muslim Prayer House
—111, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, London—every Friday,
at 1 p.m. **Sunday Lectures** at 5 p.m.
Service, Sermon and Lectures every Sunday at the Mosque, Woking,
at 3.15 p.m.

LORD HEADLEY ON ISLAM IN THE WEST

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[With kind permission of the Rt. Hon. Lord Headley we take the following from His Lordship's recent work *The Three Great Prophets of the World*, which, we understand, has been placed in the hands of the printers.]

It does not astonish me at all to hear so many questions asked every day concerning Islam. On every side earnest enquirers come to me or write with most pertinent enquiries, and it is wonderful how many there are in this country who are really and truly Muslims without knowing it themselves. This is the time when a simple and pure faith is wanted, and I feel that it needs but a little more publicity to bring into the fold tens of thousands of Britishers who have privately discarded the narrow bigotry of the creeds they have been brought up in.

Only ten years ago, the founder of the Muslim Mission, Woking, came to this land and commenced his activities by starting the *Islamic Review*. He could hardly imagine the fruitful harvest that his labours, indefatigable and persevering as they were, would bring so soon. For years no one took any notice of him, but his voice, feeble but sweet, began to grow strong, and to-day his words command an appreciative audience in many quarters. The force of his pen, which he wields with facility and rapidity, is felt by his readers. I wish he could devote more of his time to the production of some standard works on different aspects of Islam, as it is satisfactory to know that much good work has been done by him, and other workers of the Muslim Mission at Woking, to correct the misleading representations which were spread about concerning the Faith. The spade work is nearly finished and the era of advancement approaches. The Western world needs a more extensive spread of Muslim literature, especi-

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ally when people on all sides are making such pressing enquiries about Islam.

Many of these, while thoroughly in accord with Islamic teaching, cannot face the comments of their friends and relations. Only a few years ago, I myself was not quite free from vindictive remarks—I had “deserted the religion of my fathers.” “I was apostate.” “I could not be saved,” etc. So I pointed out that I could hardly have deserted a faith which had never meant anything to me, but which I openly professed in order to obey my parents and please them.

What we want now is a living religion to comfort the souls of those who *might* slide from Christianity into idolatry or atheism. Followers of Islam do not attempt to force their opinions on others, and anything like compulsion is entirely forbidden by the Qur-án. The absolute fairness of Islam is what has struck most of the people to whom I have explained various points. It cannot be right to be without any religion—though what are called religious people are often so disagreeable and uncharitable—but do let us choose that faith *which is least hampered by improbabilities or absurdities*.

I feel sure that if the people of England fully grasped what Islam really is, common sense, and the natural desire we all have to use our reasoning faculties as well as our emotions, would do much to remove the misunderstandings which exist. It is, I think, much to the discredit of certain persons that they have wilfully spread abroad incorrect accounts of Muhammad’s work and teaching, and have generally misrepresented Islam to Western nations. To show that Islam stands on a firm foundation and is a religion appealing strongly to the intellect as well as to the natural sentiments engrafted in human nature, should now be our closest duty.

There are many customs in the East which are different from our own and which have wrongly been

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taken as part of religion, whereas they are not so. The Spirit of Islam is exactly the same to-day as it was thirteen hundred years ago; the charity and love inculcated differs not from those sweet attributes as applied by the Holy Prophet when he freely forgave all his deadly enemies.

POLYGAMY.

There is one matter which I should touch on, as it has been so often pushed to the front and used as a sort of bugbear to frighten women. I refer to polygamy. Very few Muslims have more than one wife, and no one in this country need be in the least alarmed lest the introduction of Islam as a recognized religion should alter the laws of a Western nation.

Polygamy, practised in the East from the earliest times, is pointed out by over-zealous but unscrupulous traducers as a "Muhammadan institution." As we know, and as the Christian missionaries also know, it is nothing of the kind.

Polygamy existed in the House of Jacob and was practised unscrupulously. Jesus belonged to the same tribe. His own family was not free from it. He neither abolished it nor made any reform in the institution. It continued in Christendom for more than fourteen centuries. The civil law based on the institution of Justinian came to abolish it recently.

Muhammad broke up the idols and effected innumerable improvements in the midst of heathenish surroundings in a country sunk in all the darkness of pagan idolatry. Amongst his good works, he placed restrictions on the existing polygamy. He limited the number of wives a man might have, and subjected the practice to such strict conditions as to make it impracticable in the average case. By regulating the marriage customs which then existed in the whole world, the Prophet paved the way to higher ideals respecting morality,

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Polygamy is not a substantial law in Islam. It is only an adjective or a remedial law, which comes into operation when some evil is to be remedied in the absence of which such practice in Islam does not fall far short of sin.

CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

It is possible that some of my readers will ridicule my suggestion that Islam is a better religion than the curious medley of antiquated improbabilities which stand for Modern Christianity. They will point to the great charitable institutions, hospitals, schools and homes for suffering humanity run on Christian lines. But one fails to see why these charitable institutions should be ascribed to a religion which could not give birth to them for more than 1,700 years. They are the growth of modern culture and owe their origin to quite different external causes, the greatest among them being Islam in Spain. Islam highly speaks of these charities in its teaching and brought them into existence in all Muslim countries within two centuries after its birth. Islam can claim superiority to modern culture in one respect—Muslim Universities opened their doors in Baghdad in the days of Nizam-ul-Mulk and in Granada in the days of Abdul Rahman to students without distinction of caste, colour or creed, where they were looked after, boarded and lodged at the public expense.

Besides hospitals, libraries and other institutions, there were public baths in every town in Moorish Spain, which were demolished in the time of Ferdinand, because cleanliness was strange to Christian piety in those days. Besides, it is no proof that these institutions could not be run every bit as well—perhaps better—under the ægis of some other simpler and less contentious religion. Such a religion is Islam, which is, in very truth, Christianity shorn of the man-made dogmas. In Islam there is complete

KARMA : A CRITICISM

freedom of the soul. There are no priests, or saints or virgins to invoke. No tolls to pay on the road to Heaven. No need of candles or masses. Each human being has an equal right to the Keys of Heaven, which can be used by any man, woman or child without external aid of any kind from prophet, priest or king.

The strongest and most convincing argument we can bring forward to support our claims and win Western sympathy is that *no idea of atheism or idolatry can possibly exist in the mind of the true believer* ; and this fact should go far to mark Islam as the great Religion or Faith of the future. We cannot fail to observe in Christianity a lack of cohesion and uniformity, but in Islam we find all that should satisfy the created in the desire to be at one with and to return to, the Creator, the Ever-Present and Omnipotent Protector of all creatures.

KARMA : A CRITICISM

By HERBERT BLOODWORTH

(Continued from page 14)

Is it to be wondered at that parents imbued with *fiendish* and abominable teaching should cast away their helpless offspring to die by the wayside, as actually is the case in many instances. The maternal instinct, perhaps the strongest in nature, is utterly disregarded as a result of this superstitious belief. Especially is this the case among the Chinese, both in the Straits Settlements and in their own country. In these places it is nothing uncommon for the corpses of infants to be cast away, instead of being buried. The charitable explanation was that this was done to save burial expenses. The true reason, however, is the deep-rooted superstitious belief among the people that *the death of a baby arises out of punish-*

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ment to its soul for sins committed in a previous state of existence; hence its Karma in this. It is an accursed creature (poor child!) whose coffin no one will follow. Hence it is a common sight in China to see dying babies laid down by the roadside to breathe their last. The parents will not allow them to die in the house, the belief being that infants at their death become wicked spirits. To allow them to die under the parents' roof will bring but evil upon the family.

A foreigner in China, if he be of an observant disposition, will soon be struck with one strange fact. He sees an abundance of children playing about the streets, of all ages and sizes. He can readily see, from the manner of life of the people and the entire absence of trained physicians, that the death-rate among the young must be at least as great as in any Western city, yet he never sees a child's funeral. He will puzzle over the problem for a time, perhaps ask an explanation from a native friend, and receive no satisfactory answer, since it is both impolite and unlucky in Chinese ideas to discuss such a topic. Then, if he happens to be upon the street very early some morning, he will find the hideous explanation of his puzzle. He will meet, as I have many a time, the dead-cart, a huge covered vehicle drawn by two oxen, having a sign across the front stating its horrible office, and piled to the brim with the bodies of children. I have seen at least a hundred in the cart at once, thrown in as garbage, nearly all of them naked. These carts go about the streets each night, pick up their pitiable remains, some of them mutilated by dogs; they are thrown in like so much wood, and taken to a pit outside the city walls, into which they are dumped and covered with quicklime. They are the victims of one of the most cruel and revolting superstitions that ever found lodgment in a human brain.¹

It is necessary to state these facts in order to show what a terrible grip this fearful superstition has upon the Chinese mind.

In countries of the West infant mortality to a very great extent is preventable, did but public opinion interest itself at all about the matter. In poverty-stricken localities and in prosperous districts the proportion of infant mortality is as two to one,

¹ *The Real Chinaman*, pp. 168-170—a book by Chester Holcombe, who for many years was Interpreter, Secretary of Legation, and Acting Minister of the United States at Peking.

KARMA : A CRITICISM

while in some places there is a proportion of four to one. There is no mystery about the causes : they are simply malnutrition and neglect due to poverty and ignorance. Only by the removal of poverty will be avoided the attendant results. Not to attempt to remove it, or to teach the doctrine of Karma, which affirms poverty to be necessary in the out-working of the acts of previous lives on earth, and, therefore, ordained by "God," as Westerns say, or "Lords of Karma," *is to be a party to the crime.*

Karma having done so much for the children of the race, it is not surprising that it is claimed that "the general recognition of the law of Karma will restore the relation of the sexes to the pure and holy condition from which it has been degraded"! Has the wide acceptance of Karma in the East brought about this result? Let the condition of women to-day, and in long past, in the East, give the pretentious claim *the lie*. The general acceptance of the doctrine of Karma in the East has degraded women the world over, and repressed her from the cradle to the grave—and after. The female counterparts of the gods of the East, especially in India, take a very secondary part indeed. And so it is all the way down to the despised Sudra and his still more despised wife. In that great epic poem, called "The Mahabharata," Krishna is made to rank women as of "low and unpretending birth." And this in the very birth-place of the doctrine of Karma. A woman's religion in India is said to "consist in obedience, first to her father, and then to her husband, with attention to her domestic duties." There are many, too, in this country who would, if they could, limit woman's whole activities to this low level.

And what has been the influence and effect upon man? Has it brought about the brotherhood of humanity? Let India, the very home of the idea of Karma, which for at least one hundred generations has held dominance over the hearts and minds of

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the people, answer. We find in that answer caste separated from caste, and subdivided caste from subdivided caste, to an extent difficult for Westerns to understand. Islam has, undoubtedly, done very much towards the abolition of this upas-tree of caste by her liberal and enlightened religion. It is this leaven which is, at long last, beginning to leaven the whole of India. Even so, it is only within the last fifty years or so that any real intercommunion between Indians, as a whole, has become possible of realization. Mr. J. D. Rees, in his book, *The Real India*, makes this significant statement, which is even now to some extent, unfortunately, too true: "No man of any position among his countrymen will submit himself, at any rate in rural districts, to the ordeal of election, on the chance of having to accept as his colleagues persons of low caste and slight consideration."

Thus is Karma weighed in the balances of experience and utility and found wanting—wanting in all those things which make for the well-being of humanity. It estranges man from man, degrades and debases woman, and endangers the life of the child—especially the weak and the delicate child who, though weak and delicate, is not necessarily inferior to those of more robust constitution.

(To be continued)

PRECIOUS GEMS

THE thing which is lawful, but disliked by God, is divorce.

A woman who asks her husband to be divorced, without cause, the smell of paradise is forbidden to her.

God has not created anything upon the face of the earth which He loves better than emancipation of slaves; nor has He created anything which He dislikes more than divorce.

MUHAMMAD.

CHURCH LAW FOUND WANTING

CHURCH LAW FOUND WANTING

THE discussion going on in the columns of *The Times*, and the letter of Mr. Athelstan Riley in the issue of December 13th¹ on the question of divorce reform, quoted the remark of the Bishop of Durham that "if Christ had lived in the present century, he would have been wiser," and that "if he could have foreseen present circumstances he would have laid down a different law."

If Christ had been divine, in the accepted Christian

¹ SIR,—Mr. Stephen McKenna merits our gratitude for having cleared the ground for argument. Will you allow me to clear it still further by examining two positions, tacitly assumed, but which evidently require consideration?

Let us put the purely religious argument on one side, leaving it to "the Churches," as Mr. McKenna says. The Bishop of Durham thinks if Christ had lived in the present century He would have been wiser, or, alternatively, for I do not wish to misrepresent Dr. Henson, that if He could have foreseen present circumstances He would have laid down a different law. Let us leave the Christian argument at that; it does not seem worth while to pursue it.

But is there no stable marriage law for mankind outside the will of any particular country? Lord Buckmaster (and perhaps, but I am not sure, Mr. McKenna) seems to hold that an Act of Parliament can make a thing moral which before was unmoral, that the House of Commons is a fountain from which all morality flows. This is a tremendous assumption, with far-reaching consequences. Would polygamy, for instance, become a moral practice from the moment an Act received the Royal Assent?

And my second point is this: Mr. McKenna rightly states the question as not one of divorce, but of remarriage, and Lord Buckmaster has enlarged upon the hardships of celibacy. Now there are between one and two million more women in the country than men—women thereby debarred from wedlock. (This, indeed, has prompted some "marriage reformers" to suggest the establishment of polygamy.) Have not these women a claim to be considered before divorced wives? Is it fair that the latter should have a second chance before their sisters have had one? Guilty wives *a fortiori*; and in the case of innocent wives one would think that the "once bit" would be "twice shy." And as to the divorced husbands, the moral considerations advanced by Lord Buckmaster surely require that they should take their second partners exclusively from the women who have never had the chance of uniting their lives with a man.

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belief, he, being so, would have foreseen all circumstances. It savours of irreligion to question the wisdom of the Divine Son. Whence comes the divinity if he could not have foreseen the present circumstances? Jesus of Nazareth was not perfect—no man is. Perfection is relative, just as time and space. That which is relatively most perfect is that which is in the fullest sense possible, all-inclusive and all-comprehensive. Islam, as revealed to Muhammad, is the embodiment of Divine Law for all possible human needs, and considers the needs of man under all possible conditions of occurrence and environment. The creed of Christendom is not Divine, but human. As taught, it does not come from Jesus, but from Paul, whose ideas relative to woman were certainly not of Divine origin.

The law of divorce as existing in Christian countries is a blot on culture and social health. The regulations of marriage and divorce as promulgated in Islam were framed at a time of conflict, when, owing to wars and struggles, the feminine sex were in numerical superiority. The natural condition of things should be that the marital state is every woman's right, but the unequal distribution of the sexes debars many from the privileges of a household and home. The result is obvious unless some expedient is found; there are those who have recourse to living under protection. This condition is not in harmony with a well-ordered society; hence the law was formulated of conditional polygamy, assuring women their privileges and rights in harmony with law and not in irregular unions. By this means scandal and aberrant actions were avoided. Be it understood that Islam is basically a monogamous faith, but for times and needs has a sliding scale to meet eventualities. This shows the wisdom of the law. The same conditions exist to-day in Europe as occurred in Arabia at the time of Muhammad. There are between one and two million more women

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than men in England to-day. We see, to-day, women living under protection, irregular in the eye of the Church, the law and human judgment. This is against social well-being and the social order, engendering an inordinate state of affairs, scandal and mischief to both parties. One has only to observe certain districts in London or any large city to note the aberration in matters relative to the regulation of the sexes. The result is a slow and gradual recession of the majority of the people from the ideas of moral law for which the unjust and unreasonable law of marriage and divorce is responsible. A woman married to an habitual drunkard, savage and brutal, perhaps a criminal, has no redress nor relief. One may be married to a lunatic, yet he or she cannot be freed or obtain a divorce, according to the teaching of the Church. Assuming there are young children, in the case of the woman, what is she to do for sustenance and livelihood? In many cases the relief is either in protection, irregularity or starvation. Can the Church which formulates such an unjust law claim to have a Divine origin?

Lord Buckmaster (and possibly Mr. McKenna), according to the letter in *The Times*, are regarded as holding the view that an Act of Parliament can make a thing moral that before was unmoral, and that the House of Commons is a fountain whence all morality flows. Mr. Riley asks, Would polygamy become a moral practice because it had received the Royal Assent? This is another instance of man-made laws. This is on a par with the Church doctrine of marriage and divorce. It is a doctrine emanating from the mind of man and not from the design of God; hence its utter imperfection and failure to remove or remedy the evil. The Qur-án formulates ordinances which cover all possible contingencies on this and other questions; hence the perfect regulation of the divorce laws in Islam and the entire absence of any flaw in the family or social order.

R. V. LISSAN.

SIX GREATEST MEN IN HISTORY

By M. YAKUB KHAN

MR. H. G. WELLS, author of the *Outline History of the World*, gives the world, in the *Strand Magazine*, a list of the half-dozen outstanding figures in history—outstanding, we are told, in point of *character* and *influence on mankind*. Among others—kings, conquerors, scientists, artists, thinkers, philosophers—he also summons from their Olympian heights personalities such as Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, Buddha and Confucius, and puts them into the witness-box for cross-examination. And then, down he comes on them with his verdict from his high seat of judgment which he arrogates to himself for reasons best known to himself.

G. Bernard Shaw—that writer of name and fame—rightly calls the question *idiotic*. It is much more, I should think. It is arrogant to the extent of ludicrousness on the part of a historian—at best a chronicler of men and matters—to go out of his way to apply his Lilliputian measuring-tape to such giants of humanity—those that have left an imperishable impress on the sands of Time. It requires a kindred soul—a great soul that has played this game of life himself, a soul that has been through the rough and tumble of life—to be able to obtain a gaze at the face of these men of Himalayan greatness. Greatness alone can duly appraise and appreciate greatness.

Once in the lifetime of Muhammad there arose a dispute between a Jew and a Muslim as to the superiority of Moses or Muhammad—of the one over the other. The Prophet reprimanded the Muslim, saying, “Do not exalt me even over Jonah.” To be sure, it requires a Muhammad to gauge the worth of a Moses. Sir Oliver Lodge, who also contributes to the symposium on the question, hits the nail

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on the head when he observes that he would rather leave the "attempt to estimate the signs of true greatness to those *who are nearer the mountain-top themselves.*"

Nevertheless, it must be confessed, Mr. Wells has been quite tactful at his job. He knows his readers well enough, and so it does not take him long to allot the topmost place. Jesus done with, he comes to scrutinize the rest. Moses he brushes aside light-heartedly. "There is hardly any evidence that . . . Moses . . . ever existed"; as if the Israelite lawgiver were in any way less historical than the one who came to fulfil his law. And Confucius? He fails to come up to the mark, as "his teachings lack the universality of Jesus' teachings and Gautama's"; obviously forgetting, or perhaps conveniently overlooking, that the Master's mission was not more universal. "I am not sent," he said, "but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and even went so far as to say, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs."

Comparisons are always odious, and especially so when instituted between such luminaries of moral and spiritual firmament. Islam enjoins *equal veneration for all these Prophets from the Lord*, be he Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, or Confucius. Says the Qur-án (ii. 136):—

Say: We believe in Allah and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit.

Thus it is not for a Muslim to set about comparing these sons of God as if they were so many horses on a racecourse.

When, however, Mr. Wells comes to Muhammad, his temper seems to get the better of his sense of proportion. He indulges in reflections at once un-

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merited and uncalled for. It is about these that I want to say a few words. Of the Qur-án he says : " Nor am I one of those who find the Koran wholly inspiring and splendid. I own it in two translations, and I have made diligent effort to like it, but I am unable to lash myself into a glow of admiration."

Neither space nor occasion permits of my giving Mr. Wells, in this article, anything like a full view of the simple charm of Qur-ánic teachings. I would content myself with giving him just a glimpse—say, by way of a sample. Take the very verse already quoted, which enjoins *universal belief* in and *equal respect* for all the world prophets. Could you produce a peer of that in any human or Divine code of life ? And, I say, if a Universal Brotherhood of Man, to a dim sense of whose necessity the world has already awakened, is an ideal grand and noble, could you do without this as the first and foremost corner-stone ? Come again to another :—

Surely those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabeans and the Christians—whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good—they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve (Qur-án, v. 69).

Could you honestly conceive of a greater breadth of vision, a loftier truth ? Does it not strike at the very root of what has been in the main responsible, all through the ages, for the bloodthirsty spite of man against man, viz. the self-illusion of racial or creedal superiority ? Salvation depends not upon what denominational insignia you wear, but upon how you comport yourself in workaday life, in your relation to God and to man—in a word, upon *deeds*, not *creeds*. To say nothing of how far such a view goes to strengthen the sense of personal responsibility in man, thereby uplifting the moral tone of society, its effect in removing racial and religious prejudices is marvellous. Pray, let us have the like of it, if Mr. Wells has come across any in the course of his vast and varied studies.

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This, too, is the exclusive distinction of the Qur-án—yes, the selfsame Qur-án for which he could not “lash himself into a glow of admiration.” Into details, I am afraid, I could not go in the brief space of an article.¹ This single pair of gems should suffice, I believe, for Mr. Wells to see at a glance—he need not go so far as *lashing* himself—that the Qur-án deserved a better word than he has been pleased to give it.

One can understand Mr. Wells’ inability to see the worth of the Qur-án: he is ignorant of its language. He owns it in *translations*, and translations could not impart to him anything of the dignity and majesty of the original. When, however, he comes to Muhammad as a figure in history, his reflections are inexcusable. Here at least one would have expected him—a historian of pretensions—to deviate, just for once, so far as Islam is concerned, into fairness. But his judgment on one whom friend and foe are at one in acclaiming as “the most successful of all the Prophets and religious personalities,”² is unfair in the extreme. This is what he says:—

There is too much of the clay of human weakness mixed with the finer elements in Mohammed’s character. He had too many wives and had too much trouble with them. Allah was too often called upon to intervene with a special revelation designed to extricate the Prophet from domestic difficulties. He was vain, egotistical, and filled with hot desire. I do not place him among the greatest of human figures.

Facts and figures, however, tell a different tale. At every step of his eventful life Muhammad was weighed but never found wanting. Under critical situations such as made even that Great Teacher

¹ An exhaustive treatment of a subject such as this must needs require volumes, considering the vast and varied roll the Prophet of Islam played in shaping the destiny of man. The work—which will be of the nature of a standard work running into several volumes—has, I understand, already been taken in hand by the Imam, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

² *Enc. Brit.*, vol. xi.; Koran.

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of Nazareth cry, "Lord! Lord! why hast Thou forsaken me," Muhammad's equanimity may be judged from his words of consolation, in the face of enemy swords and spears, to his sole companion in the cave: "Grieve ye not! For surely the Lord is with us." Again, mark the human milk of his nature! Where Jesus, when oppressed and persecuted, gave vent to that sublime sentiment, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," Muhammad, under similar ordeal expressed perhaps a sublimer one: "My Lord! *Guide* my people, for they know not what they do." Jesus was no doubt tried, in addition to persecutions, with a strong temptation, which he manfully resisted; but it was, after all, a temptation in a *vision* by the Devil; whereas Muhammad had to face the trial in *fact*, in right earnest. Persecutions having failed to wean him from his mission, his enemies offered him all that coarse ambition can conceivably long for—kingship, riches and the choicest woman; but mark the dignified contempt with which he spurned at all these:—

Should you place the sun in my right and the moon in my left hand, my life mission I will never give up until it has triumphed or I have perished in the attempt.

Now a word as to *influence on mankind*. Here Muhammad stands at unrivalled heights of his own. When once a person came in contact with him, he never forsook him all through his life. Zaid, his freedman, when offered, at his father's wish, the choice to go home or stay on with the Prophet, gave preference to the latter. In the case of Muhammad, Mr. Wells would in vain search for a Judas who sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Not only was there no betrayal of him on the part of his associates, there was no lack of devotion to his person. Unlike Jesus' disciples, who thought discretion to be the better part of valour, bolting off at their Master's crucifixion, Muhammad's companions de-

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fended his life with a contemptuous disregard of their own. All these are facts of history, not enshrouded in the mist myth. It is therefore all the more surprising why a historian of Mr. Wells' standing should have lost sight of them when allotting marks.

"He had too many wives," goes on the criticism. The objection might suit the lips of a petty propagandist or a vulgar zealot, but surely not those of a man of Mr. Wells' learning and enlightenment. A man who leads a bachelor life, spotlessly chaste, right up to the age of twenty-five, in a hot Arabian climate, a man who in such prime of youth marries a widow fifteen years his senior, and a man who lives up to the good old age of fifty with a widow thus married—is it not wicked to find fault with a man of such abstemious habits, on this account. Who with a grain of sense would for one moment entertain the idea that towards the fag-end of his life—seven years in all—a man of such disciplined passions would all of a sudden relax the rigid simplicity of his life and marry for the sake of marriage? Nobility would see nothing but nobility in an unimpeachable character such as Muhammad.

How rightly G. Bernard Shaw observes:—

Had Mohammed been crucified before he ever had to spend a farthing of public money or control a day's public work, and had Jesus seen the Roman and Jewish power melt before Him and been made King of the Jews in earnest instead of in mockery, Mohammed would have been the pure unstained martyr and Jesus the soiled ruler and conqueror.

True greatness, says an Arabic proverb, is that which commands acknowledgment even at the hands of opponents. I should not like to conclude without reproducing an extract from Bosworth Smith's estimate of one on whom, long since, fell Carlyle's choice of "Hero as a Prophet." Unlike Mr. Wells, Mr. Bosworth Smith did not depend on translations for his knowledge of Islam, but got it direct from original Arabic sources. This is how that great Orientalist of

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Cambridge fame sums it up in his *Mohammed and Mohammedanism* :—

Head of the State as well as of the Church, he was CÆSAR AND POPE IN ONE, BUT HE WAS POPE WITHOUT THE POPE'S PRETENSIONS AND CÆSAR WITHOUT THE LEGIONS OF CÆSAR. Without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue, if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by a right Divine, it was Mohammed; for he had all the power without its instruments and without its supports. He ROSE SUPERIOR TO THE TITLES AND CEREMONIES, the solemn trifling and the proud humility of Court etiquette. To hereditary kings, to princes born in purple, these things are, naturally, enough, as the breath of life; but those who ought to have known better, even self-made rulers and those the foremost in the files of time—a Cæsar, a Cromwell, a Napoleon—have been unable to resist their tinsel attractions. Mohammed was content with the reality; he cared not for the dressings of power. THE SIMPLICITY OF HIS PRIVATE LIFE WAS IN KEEPING WITH HIS PUBLIC LIFE . . . the contemporaries of Mohammed, HIS ENEMIES WHO REJECTED HIS MISSION, WITH ONE VOICE EXTOL HIS PIETY, HIS JUSTICE, HIS VERACITY, HIS CLEMENCY, HIS HUMILITY. . . . By a fortune absolutely unique in history, Mohammed is a threefold founder of a nation, of an empire and of a religion. Illiterate himself, scarcely able to read and write, he was yet the author of a book which is a poem, a code of laws, a book of common prayer and a Bible in one, and is revered to this day by a sixth of the whole human race as a miracle of purity of style, of wisdom and of truth. It was the one miracle claimed by Mohammed—his standing miracle he called it; and A MIRACLE INDEED IT IS. . . . What more crowning proof of his sincerity is needed? Mohammed to the end of his life claimed for himself that title only with which he had begun, and which THE HIGHEST OF PHILOSOPHY AND THE TRUEST CHRISTIANITY WILL ONE DAY, I VENTURE TO BELIEVE, AGREE IN YIELDING TO HIM—THAT OF A PROPHET, A VERY PROPHET OF GOD.

THE SWORD OF ISLAM

SOME THOUGHTS ON DISARMAMENT

It is characteristic of educated human nature that, having attained to a state of security that has come to be regarded as normal, it must forthwith set about criticizing the ethics of the process by which

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that security has been reached—demonstrating, as it were, to all whom it may concern, the rottenness of the ladder by which it has ascended. The motive might with equal plausibility be ascribed to the expert in altruism or to the dog in the manger, but it is ill work meddling with motives. It is enough to point out that so long as the less advanced sections of humanity—our black brethren in Africa for example—take heed diligently, and hearken to the message, Western civilization need never go in fear of a Black Peril.

“We have,” argues educated humanity, “made ourselves secure by the use of the sword. But were we justified in using it? We think not.” “If we had not used it,” argues the Die Hard section, “we should not now, perhaps, be in a position to consider the question at all”; and again, “A measure of worldly well-being is essential to the evolving of a complacent and altruistic philosophy”; and yet again, “It is only in an era of peace that men have time to talk rubbish.”

Such reflections cannot pretend to give a complete answer, but they contain the germs of a suggestion; and, in the kingdom of the Abstract, what reply can do more?

Can civilized man, in his corporate or national capacity, afford to neglect armed force? Islam has never regarded such neglect as either desirable or even possible. Christian Scribes (and Pharisees) have for centuries affected to treat war unrelievedly as an eruption of evil, rather than a possible, even necessary, instrument of ultimate good. “They that take the sword shall perish by the sword” has been, quite arbitrarily, regarded as the watchword of a Divine Pacifism, to the exclusion of that equally orthodox aspect of Christianity which would not shrink from a literal interpretation of the Church’s mission of warfare.

Islam, on the other hand, has never discounten-

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anced the use of the sword in a righteous cause ; but the cause must be a righteous one—self-defence, the overthrow of a tyrant, the righting of a wrong—and neither for sordid ends nor for the forcing of conscience. The sword is to be drawn in God's cause, which is to say that every man's religion—no matter what it may be—is a sacred thing which it is the duty of Islam to protect by force of arms ; and in the Sword of Islam the Peace of God finds its earthly champion.

If we were to grant (which is reasonable enough) that it has been difficult for the Church militant to eschew at all times the use of the carnal weapon, and assume for the sake of argument (which is a tougher business altogether) that she has done all in her power to avoid it, then there might be some excuse for her reproaching another faith on the score of blood-guiltiness.

But the record of Christendom from the conversion of Constantine—and more especially in the matter of the Crusades, black with religious ferocity and a holy zeal for killing that bade fair to choke the gates of the New Jerusalem with corpses—makes that aspect of Christian propaganda which seeks to lay upon the Prophet's followers the burden of the world's bigotry and bloodshed, mere special pleading of a particularly disingenuous type, somewhat suggestive of the ostrich.

Perhaps it was the stultification of a deluding gospel that cried "Peace" where there was no peace, that set the Church so bitterly against the new religion from Arabia, with its frank recognition of the reality of the problems of this world.

The first concern of religion is, after all, with such problems, and it would be well to inquire wherein lies the sin in the use of force with respect thereto ; not so much for resonant ideals—the maintenance of right or chastisement of wrong (which in themselves have generally been insufficient to stir a nation's sword

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in its scabbard) as for the comparatively humdrum but necessary business of self-defence ?

The first essential to a nation's existence is a national pride—and national pride is bound up in the respect of other nations ; and if the national voice is to be made audible at all in the councils of the world, there must be a sabre worth rattling.

Pre-war Germany was nowhere popular, but was everywhere respected. The ex-Kaiser's aphorisms with reference to the " mailed fist " made liberal-minded and advanced persons jeer, but had their intended effect, none the less.

Long ago, in the late eighties, when President Cleveland had gone to somewhat excessive lengths in that favourite pastime—beloved of a free and enlightened people—of " twisting the Lion's tail " over some obscure question connected with Venezuela and the Monroe Doctrine (at that time a promising diplomatic infant), Lord Salisbury also vindicated the soundness of this principle. His device of the " Flying Squadron," an exceptionally powerful force—over and above those Fleets that are always in being—fitted out at a moment's notice and despatched forthwith, from Spithead, for an undisclosed destination, cleared the diplomatic air in a gratifying if bewildering manner, and proved an excellent substitute for the modern " formula," more efficient than a year of " conversations," and obviated altogether the necessity for the latter-day quest for " avenues."

It is not recorded of the " Flying Squadron " that it went anywhere or did anything in particular, beyond emulating in a maritime and mysterious manner the example of the brave old Duke of York and his thirty thousand men ; but it demonstrated clearly enough the intimacy of the relationship between national and individual psychology, and that an aggressive manner is not without value in matters of high policy.

Disarmament schemes are mooted periodically,

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taken more or less seriously according to the mood of the moment towards economy, and regularly dropped. Why?

Because, while the visionary propagandist of the theory may sometimes be in real earnest, those to whom falls the duty of drafting a practicable scheme never are. These latter are simply engaged in their usual occupation of out-manceuvring each other—"the trivial round, the common task," with a novel and illusory setting.

Thus, in the last great disarmament triumph—the Washington Conference, with its agreements as to naval reductions—we find that the net result of the arrangement will be to make the United States the world's dominant Naval Power in ten years' time, if not before.

It will be remembered that the suggestion of the Conference came from the United States. This is doubtless an unfortunate coincidence and nothing more, but it tends most impishly to support the contention of those sceptical souls who, dwelling in outer darkness, maintain that disarmament schemes are, and have always been, synonymous with humbug—and will continue to be so, while human nature remains what it is and mankind—individually and in the mass—is concerned at all with self-preservation.

To be termed warlike has never been deemed a reproach to a nation, and, if war be indeed a curse, it is such an ambiguous one that it is likely to be the last that shall be removed from the earth—and civilization alone will never do it.

For nearly two thousand years Christendom has professd to look forward to the time when wars shall cease—that is to say, to the time of her Lord's Second Coming, as foreshadowed in the Book of the Revelation. But alas for such hopes! Influences have been at work; Higher Criticism, broadening outlooks and general enlightenment to a perfectly unlimited extent, have whittled down that Second Coming

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from an actual and awful manifestation to a mere figure of speech, meaning just as much or as little as may suit individual tastes.

Consequently, at the present time, there would seem to be nothing except the mutual asphyxiation of all nations simultaneously ; the gradual cooling of the earth's surface ; or the chance impact of an errant comet, to prevent the continuance of war, in one form or another, till time shall be no more.

Idealists of the Wilson type—who nevertheless persist in viewing nations as individuals in the aggregate—have attempted to solve the problem of international bickering; by the setting up of the similitude of the policeman.

Just as the comfortable blue form of the Metropolitan Police Constable, symbolizes the powers whereby the ratepayer of Upper Norwood is enabled to sleep soundly in his bed, so the somewhat nebulous protection afforded by a nondescript assembly composed of a number of irresponsible individuals—more or less eloquent—and known as the League of Nations, is to be adequate inducement for the nation to eschew army and navy, just as the Upper Norwood ratepayer has eschewed revolver or knuckle-duster.

But the policeman is of no earthly or other use unless he is taken seriously, and even then his power is limited.

Centuries of police constables and their equivalents have not, for example, availed to remove the burglar, who indeed, to judge by the popular fiction of the day, brings to the exercise of his profession (or is it art ?) a keener zest and more loving pride as the years roll on. How then shall the League—in the intervals of passing resolutions and issuing reports—hope to succeed in the matter of the international malefactor, or to achieve anything greater than that which falls to the lot of any other unwieldy alliance of mutually distrustful nationalities ?

Democracy, after all, has the defects of its qualities,

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and what might just conceivably be possible in a world of benevolent despots—which would to some extent be analogous to a community of friendly individuals—is, for democracies, as we conceive of them nowadays, with policies and ideals ever at the mercy of a shifting, ill-informed public opinion, a consummation scarcely to be realized.

Wherefore, while the world remains as it is, and a constant succession of obstinate and perverse generations seek vainly for a sign (because they have neither the desire nor the capacity to find it), so long must the sword, tempered by restraint, generosity and forbearance—the sword of Islam—remain, not the cancer eating away the heart of the world, but the surgeon's knife by which the disease of the body politic may be kept at bay—and (who knows?) perhaps one day removed.

RUDOLF PICKTHALL.

FRIDAY SERMON

HINDRANCES TO SUCCESS

“GEMS OF PUREST RAY SERENE,” FROM THE QUR-ÁN

THE text of my sermon forms the last two chapters of the Qur-án, where the Muslim is exhorted to seek refuge in the Lord from certain evils, otherwise insurmountable, in the course of his earthly career—that is to say, his progress towards success. A book which proclaims man's success as the main aim and purpose of the revelation it contains could have no more fitting finish than this. Success, in the sense in which the word is used in the Qur-án, means to actualize potentialities—the development of man's several capabilities each to its highest pitch, self-expression or self-realization—which can-

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not achieve significance without self-determination, which, in its turn, is the first step towards the goal. A Muslim is not worthy of the name if he fails to put forth his utmost efforts to this end, and a book from God could surely have no better message for humanity than this—to mark out clearly the path that he must follow, the straight path (*Sirat-i-Mustaqim*) to self-realization. The way must needs be hedged with difficulties, and set about with pitfalls; and all these, together with the means whereby they may be avoided, have been mentioned in the Qur-án; but the two concluding chapters of the Book, which I have quoted, speak of these evils in the face of which man is helpless—when his only refuge is in Allah's mercy.

Thirteen hundred years ago, this Book proclaimed that great truth which only recently dawned on Western minds through Herbert Spencer—the truth of the evolutionary character of everything in the universe on every plane—physical, moral, mental or spiritual. The first Divine attribute, *Rabb*, clearly indicates the truth of evolution. Everything in Nature has its dawn; just as the sun increases ever in its light and heat from dawn on the far horizon to noon in mid-heaven, so there is a dawn for everything in the universe, and in that dawn are gradually disclosed, in each thing, its inherent qualities if not handicapped by external causes. The dawn, or, to vary the similitude, the budding out of a thing, constitutes its first stage or process, and, its future successful growth depends upon the right performance of that process. A man may do his best, yet his efforts may be nipped in the bud and come to naught. Wherefore we seek refuge in the Lord, Who is the Opener of all things.

Everything from God is good. Its abuse or misplacement is evil; from which it follows that everything has in it some inherent evil, though that evil only operates through man's mishandling.

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Sometimes it is just our ignorance that leads to it, and in such case we have only to pray to God that He will keep us from the evil side of the things that He has created.

Next comes the evil that arises from our wrong judgment. At each turning-point of our life, as each event happens, we grope in the darkness; with all the light of experience and knowledge at our command, we are still in the darkness. How many schemes come to nothing, and how much energy, time and wealth is squandered through the taking of a wrong step, or through indiscreet judgment. Sometimes in the heat of the moment we are liable to take a step which lands us in irretrievable ruin. Often we are in a hopeless dilemma and do not know what to do. That is, in the words of the Qur-án, the utterly dark hour, from which we have only to take refuge in God. Then, somehow or other, we arrive at a decision and begin to work out our schemes; but suggestions often come from other quarters, and induce us to change our plans. Such suggestions may be prompted by good or evil motives or impulses. Pessimism, timidity, bad advice, each and all can shake our resolution. At times, too, envy or malice prompts others to try and thwart us. All these are evils which are more or less out of our control and no one can hope to be successful in his career unless God comes to his help. We are always in need of other people's advice, and bad advice will bring the most promising of plans to nothing. And pessimism, jealousy and malice are the inspiration of bad advice. It may come from a quarter apparently well-disposed towards us, without exciting our suspicion, and prove our very ruin. Here again are some of the insurmountable evils from which we have to take refuge in the Lord, the five evils mentioned in the last chapter but one of the Qur-án. But there are two other kinds of evils which can frustrate all our efforts towards success—I mean,

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evil inspiration, or an incitement to do what is wrong, coming to us either from other men or from the unseen world. The inanimate nature that surrounds us sometimes prompts us to do evil things. The dark hours of the night minimize the risk of detection, and hence supply an impulse towards evil. Anything which is unseen and materially intangible in its effect may come from an unseen being, sentient or otherwise, and is then called, in Arabic, *Djinn*. Thus, we have to combat six evils on our way to success—the evil side of all created things; faulty judgment; resolution weakened or shaken by wrong suggestions, or through envy, hatred or malice of others; evil inspiration prompted by man or by things unseen. The text of the sermon speaks of them, and we have been exhorted to seek refuge in the Lord, in the following words:

Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn from the evil. He has created and from the evil of utter darkness when it comes, and from the evil of those who cast evil suggestions in firm resolutions; And from the evil of the envious, when he envies.

Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of men, the King of men, the God of men, from the evil of the whisperings of the slinking devil who whispers into the hearts of men from among the djinn and the men.

The world of Islam is once more on a fair way to rebuild and restore its house, which had come near to falling into ruin chiefly through economic pressure from the West; and Muslims must always pray God to guide them, whether they grope in darkness or walk confidently, as they think, in the light. They need self-determination in all their doings. They must look to God and their own judgment, rather than to their neighbours, be they East or West. They must achieve steadfastness of purpose, nor suffer for one instant any whisper of pessimism or of envy of racial rivalry to taint or tamper with their just resolve.

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UMAR THE GREAT

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By MASUD ALI VARESI, M.R.A.S.

I. Before Islam

THE world has witnessed the glorious deeds of great personalities destined to make an imperishable name. It has seen, with indifference or a beating heart, the rise and fall of mighty nations and empires. But the long list of conquests made by a Bedouin within the short period of ten years, six months and four days possesses a peculiarity of its own. It challenges the historian to show a single parallel instance as compared with the majesty of events it commemorates. The conqueror was of a humble nature, simple, good, virtuous, outspoken and independent. He was, nevertheless, remarkably iron-willed, powerful, and commanded universal respect, admiration and veneration.

There has always echoed a heart-rending wail of woes and indescribable calamities from the beaten, but the triumphant forces of Umar the Great have been welcome to people down-trodden under the intolerable yoke of governors and rulers of their own class or denomination. The victorious trumpet of Umar's armies has been a veritable harbinger of happy and prosperous days. All history bears testimony to the undeniable truth that the onward march of an army has been almost always characterized by incendiarism, sanguinariness, cold-blooded murder and vices of all descriptions which no language can delineate. On the other hand, the history of the early warriors of Islam, and of Umar particularly, is a bright golden page, a noble and resplendent exception to the general rule formulated by martial scenes in other ages. That Umar has brightened the hearth and cheered the heart of his fallen enemy and brought happiness to his homestead is an un-

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disputed historical phenomenon which baffles the most bigoted historians. The Caliphate of this second successor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), besides the extension of vast territories, the great beginnings of important events in profusion, the strength and propagation of Islam in contrast with other Caliphates, eminently distinguishes itself by the noblest human aspirations like chivalry, bravery, courage, determination, perseverance, national modesty and honour, self-sacrifice, self-help, fraternity, toleration, truth, regularity and honesty, unknown in any other homicidal age. A man who, in the simplest and cheapest attire, earning his livelihood by the sweat of his brow like an ordinary labourer when millions of lives and coins were at his disposal, giving out political, administrative and theocratic commands, organizing and commanding the movements of armies in distant theatres of war when no railway and telegraphic communications existed, when literacy was almost extinct among his countrymen, upsets majestic empires, causes the irrevocable fall of the most haughty, the richest and proudest nations, not for his personal glory or self-aggrandizement, but all in the path of Allah, is a character deserving the most careful study by the historians of to-day and of all times. Thus the man lived, and so he was, not as a demi-god of mythology but as a great historical figure. With this short preamble we attend to the ancestry and the early days of our hero before he embraced Islam.

The Arabs are generally the descendants of Adnān or Qahtān. Adnān owed his descent to Ismail (peace be on him). Fahr-bin-Malik was the eleventh in descent from Adnān. Now Umar the Great was the twelfth in descent from Fahr-bin-Malik. The community termed the Quraish are the descendants of the latter. The Quraish produced ten great men, and the different tribes were called after them, as (1) Hashim, (2) Ummia, (3) Naufal,

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(4) Abdud-Dahr, (5) Asad, (6) Taim, (7) Makhzum, (8) Adi, (9) Jamha, and (10) Samha. Umar is the descendant of Adi. Adi had one brother, Murra, a paternal great-grandfather of the Prophet. Thus the eighth great-grandfather of Umar and the Prophet was their common ancestor. The Quraish were the keepers and priests of the Kaaba, and the different temporal and ecclesiastical functions, duties and obligations were distributed among them. The descendants of Adi, from generation to generation, were the arbiters of disputes, and as such were not only, as bound by the provisions of this office, men of sound judgment and keen intellect, but acknowledged and brilliant orators also. Adi's descendants used to live in Safa, near Mecca, but hard pressed by the Banu Abdush-Shams tribe, they sought the protection of the Banu Salm. Thus inter-relations were established between the two. Accordingly, Umar inherited from his distinguished father, Khattab, a house between Safa and Marwa, which he converted into a halting-station for the comfort of the *Hajees*. Many shops attached to this plot of land remained in possessions of Umar's descendants for several generations. Umar's mother, Khantama, was the daughter of Hashim-bin-Al-Mughira, the distinguished Field-Marshal of the Quraish community.

Umar was born forty years before the Hijrat, or Flight of the Prophet from Mecca. Little is known of his early years. Who could then think that the boy would one day rise to be a great personality, would reach the zenith of national glory and would win moral and political laurels of running success lending to history an everlasting fascination of a wonderful and great nation.

When Umar attained the age of discretion, his father laid on him the duty of grazing camels in the plain of Zajnaan—an integral constituent of the national characteristics of the Arabs. The whole day the boy performed his duty with indefatigable

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energy, and when evening approached he naturally wanted rest, which was never allowed him by his father, who punished him mercilessly. The plain was situated at a little distance from Mecca. During his Caliphate, once Umar passed through the plain. It reminded him of the early scenes of his life, and he exclaimed with tears brimming in his eyes, "Allah is great! There was a time when I used to graze camels here in a shirt of felt, and was punished by my father when I sat down exhausted. To-day there is none to govern me save Allah above!"

With the dawn of youth, Umar indulged himself in noble pursuits and callings embraced and felt indispensable by the aristocratic Arabs of those days. The history of families and their genealogical tables, military training, wrestling and oratory were accomplishments inherited by Umar. His ancestors down to his father had the distinguished rank of plenipotentiary, or national representative. They acted as arbitrators of communal factions also.

Umar triumphantly defeated his rivals in the arena of Ukaaz.¹ He was a champion wrestler, and an accomplished horseman. He always jumped upon a horse when riding, and seated himself so strongly as if nothing could shake him from his seat.

He was an enlightened and a brilliant orator. His distinguished qualifications had helped him to be elected as an ambassador by the Quraish before he embraced Islam.

~~by~~ He had a refined taste for poetry, and knew all its best pieces by heart. He must have developed this fine taste in the training-ground of Ukaaz.

¹ Ukaaz was a place near the Arafaat hill, where a great national fair like the modern exhibitions was held annually. All the great and leading men of Arabia accomplished in different arts and callings used to attend it to prove their worth. Only those were eligible to the arena as competitors who were specialists in their various callings. The best poets and orators of Arabia had received their training here.

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He was, however, so much engrossed in the beauties of Islam when he embraced it later on, that he gave little thought to these different recreations.

He had also learnt reading and writing. Book education was almost rare in those days. It is known on the best authority that at the time of the call to Muhammad there were only seventeen men in the Quraish community who knew how to read and write. One of these men was Umar-bin-Khattab.

Having been perfectly trained in the different arts of the day, Umar turned his attention to seek means of livelihood. The national calling of Arabs was trade and commerce. He naturally resorted to it. It made him prosperous, and added to his intellectual development. He visited foreign lands and called on the leading men of the various soils. The commercial enterprise afforded him means to pick up lessons on self-respect, high-mindedness, experience, dealings and transactions. He, moreover, developed different other virtues before he embraced Islam. The travels to foreign lands and countries should be pregnant with interesting and important facts, but no historian has taken pains to collect them. The great scholar Masūdi, in his well-known work *Murawwaj-uz-Zahab*, says: "There are many facts connected with the travels made by Umar-bin-Khattab during the days of his ignorance to Iraq and the kings of Arabia and Persia. I have dealt with them at length in *Akhbar-uz-Zaman* and *Kitab-ul-Ausat*." Unfortunately these erudite works have become extinct now.

In a word, Umar's skill at the theatre of Ukaz, and the distinctions achieved by him during his travels, won him a privileged position among the Arabs, who made him their national representative or plenipotentiary.

(To be continued.)

WHAT THEY THINK OF US

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Unrest in India.

“The British Empire is in itself a little world comprising many nations—yet with a preponderance of Muslims; from which circumstance the British Government is sometimes styled a Muhammadan Government. It is at the same time a Christian Government. Both religions have the same belief in God—both agree in that the whole duty of man in each is to walk humbly with the Lord, and, if the desire so to do find a place in the hearts and minds of those who are called upon to fill the responsible positions of the Government, peace may yet be assured.” Such is the opinion expressed by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, Imam of the Mosque, Woking, in his book, *The House Divided: England, India, and Islam*, in which he most ably and very clearly explains the causes of the present unrest.

In his opinion the Indian situation is by no means past cure. Lack of knowledge and a paucity of imagination, he states, are at the root of all the trouble. Ignorance is the enemy—ignorance indicative of the barrier set between two peoples; ignorance inducing neglect and indifference of Great Britain towards India, and ignorance breeding suspicion and distrust of India towards Great Britain. Nothing but knowledge—engendering mutual understanding, and consequently sympathy and goodwill—can remove it.

The Imam regrets that the Press does not give more prominence to and welcome discussion on Indian affairs and the Indian point of view; even if it would use its influence by the lighter methods of the picture and the chatty paragraph it would be a step in the right direction. All Near Eastern matters have come to be regarded as a tug-of-war between Christianity and Islam, which, of course, they are not, and there is a tendency on the part of some people, who have never had anything to do with Muhammadan people, when they refer to Islam, to put their minds back centuries and imagine themselves to be mail-clad Crusaders about to destroy Saladin. This is born of ignorance. Islam harbours no animosity against the Christian, and the followers of Christ ought not to have hatred towards Muslims.

The Imam writes as a devout Muhammadan and a friend of Christians (as he must be if he follow the teaching of Muhammad and the Qur-án), as a British Indian who believes in the destiny of his people and his country, and as a citizen of the empire and a loyal subject of the King. His *bona fides* admit of no doubting. He sees portions of the empire drifting further apart because ignorance and religions not properly assimilated cloud the understanding of the people, and he has done his best to illuminate the darkness in which many people in England and India are groping. Not only does he show how India has become revolutionary to the core, and how now even the Sikhs, the most loyal

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of all castes, have joined in the general all-Indian conflict with the Government, but he demonstrates by many quotations from the Qur-án that Islam and Christianity as taught by Jesus are branches of the same tree, and he sees no reason why they should remain for ever at daggers drawn.

In 150 pages he has given a careful and well-reasoned diagnosis of the ills which affect Britain and India alike, and of the risks we are running in trying to foster an anti-religious feeling against the Turks. And his warning comes not a minute too soon. The Caliphate is a purely religious question, and we have not much to do with it. If the appointment of the new Caliph is in accordance with El Qur-án, as it appears to be, there is no reason why he should not receive the same respect from Muhammadans as was the wont of the Sultans.

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din firmly believes that the British sense of justice is not dead, and in this book he has endeavoured to enlighten English opinion on the different questions which are uppermost in the Near East and in India. May we suggest that he perform a similar office for the benefit of the people of India and Asia Minor? He has given us quotations from the Qur-án showing that Muslims do not cherish any hostile feeling against Christians because Jesus is one of their prophets. Will he now draw the attention of Muslims and others to those passages of El Qur-án which enjoin that there shall be no perfidy or falsehood, that advantages shall not be abused, and that they shall be faithful in all things, proving themselves ever upright and noble and maintaining their word and promise truly?

Reconciliation with Islam, desirable as it is, cannot come from our side alone. There must be reciprocity, and the Imam of Woking could help materially in this connection if he were to take as much pains to enlighten Eastern opinion on Western ideals, and the difficulties that have to be overcome, as he has taken in presenting the case for Islam and India to the Western world. He is to be congratulated for the masterly manner in which he has handled several very knotty problems and for the moderate tone of his able argument. May it be productive of much good.—*The Nottingham Guardian*, December 30, 1922.

TABLE TALK

By

KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

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