

Islamic Review

Edited by KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN, B.A., LL.B.

[II.]

[No.]

JAMADI-UTH-THANI, 1342 A.H.

Subscription, 10s.

JANUARY 1924.

Single Copy

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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
شَحْدَةُ وَصَلَى عَلَى رَسُولِ الْكَرِيمِ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

JAMADI-UTH-THANI, 1342 A.H.

VOL. XII.

JANUARY 1924.

No. 1.

NOTES

Al Haj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

We quote the following editorial note from the *Bombay Chronicle* of November 9th :—

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the revered Imam of the Muslim congregation in England, and founder of the highly useful Woking Mission, is now in India. Few men have deserved better of the Muslim world in general and of Indian Muslims in particular than Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. His integrity is above suspicion, and his religious sincerity no less than the excellent work he has done for the spread of Islamic knowledge entitles him to the respect of Muslims everywhere. We are amazed to hear that such a man is being attacked in a section of the Urdu Press as if he were, or could be, a political intriguer; and we very much regret that the only ground of such attacks should have been furnished by some statements which appeared in the *Chronicle*. The present writer can assure the Indian public, from his personal knowledge, that H.I.M. the Khalifa Abdul Majid Khan is mentioned by name in the Khutba every Friday at the London Muslim House and was mentioned in the Khutba on the occasion of the Bakri-Id at Woking. Of one thing we are quite certain, and that is that whatever Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din did on a given occasion was done for pure religious reasons; and therefore should be treated with respect.

That such a note should have been deemed necessary by the Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, while it does not altogether surprise us, seems to suggest, nevertheless, that it would be well for us to make our position—the position of the Muslim Mission in England and of the *Islamic Review*—perfectly clear.

The Woking Muslim Mission was founded in 1913 by the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din to serve the cause of God (and from

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no other motive whatsoever), by spreading the Truth of Islam in the West, where the misconceptions and ignorance prevailing as to Islamic principles and teaching were at that time both colossal and profound.

Of the progress that has been made and of the work accomplished in these brief years, it is not for us to speak; but we wish to establish one fact beyond all doubt.

The Mission is not, and never has been, connected in any way, however remote, financially or otherwise, with the British Government. It is, and has always been, absolutely independent of and aloof from all political interests and considerations whatsoever—devoted solely to the furtherance of the purely devotional objects for which it was founded.

It would seem that certain disingenuously minded persons have seized on the circumstance of the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din's recent pilgrimage to Mecca, accompanied by Lord Headley, and their presence in the Holy City as guests of the King of Hedjaz, as evidence that Lord Headley was there really as a secret emissary of the Government of Great Britain, charged with a mysterious mission concerning Heaven knows what.

In this there is, of course, no word of truth. The suggestion would be merely laughable were it not for the mischief at the back of it.

Lord Headley's visit to Mecca was in the capacity of a devout Muslim, and in no other; in corroboration of which (if corroboration were needed), we may point out that so far back as 1914 the idea of the Pilgrimage was uppermost in his mind. In that year, when King Hussain, as such, had no existence, Lord Headley had actually booked in the s.s. *Persia*, of the P. and O. Company, when the outbreak of war, and the fact that the children he was leaving behind him were at that time quite young, compelled him to cancel his passage.

The Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din is now in India, directing the energies of the Mission from its Indian headquarters, towards, among other things, combating the new Hindu proselytizing propaganda. He is dealing with these absurdities on the spot.

But it is not in India alone, nor indeed among educated Indians at all, that a fantasy so grotesque looks for ready acceptance. Rather is it among the mass of the ignorant everywhere, and more especially of those who are not ignorant but unthinking, that any report, no matter how silly, is certain of a measure of belief, provided only it be sufficiently

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sensational, and attempts to cast mud where no mud should be.

We trust that the above statement has disposed once and for all of this *jeu d'esprit* of childish malevolence, and apologize to our readers for having been compelled to devote so much space to a task so ludicrous.

“A Religious Sensation.”

The *New York Times* of October 21, 1923, devotes almost an entire page to reviewing the work of the Woking Muslim Mission with titles such as “Active Mission at Woking”; “Official Moslem Organ in London Proposes Plurality of Wives to Solve Woman Problem,” and so forth. The “Bogey of Islam” is never too far away from the so-called followers of Christ to play on the ignorant minds of the Westerns. We, however, take it as a compliment that the contributor, Mr. W. G. Tinkom-Fernandez, is so much alarmed by our activities that he is compelled to pour out his vituperations at such great length in a leading American journal. To him Lord Headley “has done the incredible” in performing his pilgrimage to Mecca. We are told that “this logical and culminating step has caused a sensation among the Christian bodies, who have long regarded the presence of the Mosque at Woking, where polygamy is preached, as a social menace.”

Mr. Tinkom-Fernandez, while throwing gibes at “tolerant” England, proudly recalls the intolerant days gone by. He sadly reflects that it is now

Some years since Victorian England and India were shocked to hear that a high British official in Ceylon had embraced Islam and taken unto himself two wives. Needless to say he was discharged and prosecuted.

How Mr. Tinkom-Fernandez must be deploring his misfortune for being born in these days of comparative enlightenment! “Oh! that I had the sword of St. Dominic in one hand and the Bible in the other to have exterminated all these Muslim infidels!” seems to be, though he does not say that much, in his mind. But that is not all. With a dejected heart, losing faith, perhaps, in his Saviour, he brings home to his readers that Lord Headley is not the only British convert. “English men and women and their families,” he cries out helplessly, “are being slowly, but steadily gathered to the Faith of the Prophet. . . . Each number [of the *Islamic Review*] invariably contains pictures of English men and women of the upper and middle classes that have embraced Islam, together with their families.

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Among the names so far published appeared those of two Americans, one an ex-minister with the degree of Doctor of Divinity, and the other, judging from his portrait, an American negro of a highly refined and intellectual appearance."

This sheep of Jesus can hardly control himself when he reads in each number of the *Islamic Review* "rationalistic attacks upon Judaism and Christianity, the two great religions from which Mohammed derived the framework of his seventh-century faith."

What nonsense this man can write if indeed he seriously believes that Muhammad did derive the framework of Islam from Judaism and Christianity !

But perhaps he, from his Christian point of view, is right. He asks Lord Headley what his "scientific and practical mind made of the gross superstition, and even idolatry, he has seen at Mecca, of the slavery, lust and cruelty to which women in Moslem lands are subjected ?" He goes on to add that "Colonel Wavell, the last infidel pilgrim to Mecca, found a slave-market of concubines in close proximity to the Holy Kaaba. These human wares, publicly exhibited and appraised, had been stolen or bought into bondage as children, and the dealers offered to procure any sort of woman on order."

It must be these imagined aspects of Islam which gives Mr. Tinckom-Fernandez the utmost delight in claiming them as the legacies of the "two great religions"—Judaism and Christianity.

Colonel Wavell was only another Tinckom-Fernandez—a Christian, and perhaps quite as well up in the art of St. Paul—the only art which the Christians have developed to perfection—of telling lies for the glory of God.

This ingenious writer concludes his article, with a view, perhaps, to exciting the Christian spirit of love, by observing:—

Barely has the political conflict between Islam and Christianity ended at Lausanne, when the religious and social conflict begins in England. The town of Woking, itself harbouring the Mosque and the centre of Mohammedan propaganda for Europe and America, has elicited general concern.

With every number of the *Islamic Review* appear lively discussions of Jewish and Christian religious institutions and beliefs. In each number invariably appears the picture of English men and women of the upper and middle classes as well as their children, who have embraced Islam. Now that Lord Headley has returned a qualified *hajji* to give his new faith prestige in the eyes of his countrymen the average Englishman will begin to sit up and take notice of the menace of "Oriental Mormonism" in the British Isles.

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“Polygamy : A Problem in Nigeria.”

The Rev. E. T. Pakenham, M.A., writing in a recent issue of the *Church Missionary Review*, observes :—

Polygamy is universal throughout pagan and Mohammedan Nigeria ; the number of a man's wives is limited only by the length of his purse or the position he holds, and practically every young man looks forward to the day when he will have more than one wife.

He has the temerity to assert that “polygamy at all points is in conflict with Christianity,” and deplores the fact that the native African Church, despite its lofty ideals, has refrained from taking the higher standpoint on questions touching morality and polygamy. On the other hand, the negro Christians argue that “if polygamy were wrong God would have forbidden it, and Our Lord would have inveighed against it ; but that as a matter of fact there is no command given that a man should be the husband of one wife only.” When, however, they are reminded that Jesus “made no remark on the question of slavery, they find that the silence argument is not so strong as it appears, since none would deny that the removal of this pernicious system was a religious duty and in complete accord with the teachings of Christianity.”

This absurd plea is often put forward by Christians who love their infallible Bible, who swear by it, and on it, and do everything but read it.

Bearing in mind that it was not until the nineteenth century that slavery became illegal in Christian countries, and even then Christian slave-owners had to be bought out in some cases and fought out in others ; remembering also, that the slave-traffic flourished most exceedingly in those countries where Christianity was most powerful, the claim is a little difficult to understand. On the other hand, does the New Testament endorse the institution of slavery ? ¹

However, returning to Mr. Pakenham, we find him animadverting upon the lax morals of those Christian negroes who have “found” Jesus. He says :—

A woman who is dissatisfied with her husband can always find a man of her own choice who is desirous of having her. Sometimes she actually goes away to live with him until her husband divorces her through action in the native court, where the other man is ordered to pay him £10 compensation . . . after which the original husband has no further rights in regard to her.

¹ We have only to refer to Matthew v. 17, Ephesians vi. 5, 1 Timothy vi. 5, Titus ii. 9, Peter. ii. 18, etc., to see that Jesus and His apostles did, in fact, uphold slavery.

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This tends to confirm our opinion that Christian morals, in bulk, are the same all over the world. Mr. Pakenham's description is applicable to 95 per cent. of those English couples whose unfortunate lot it is to appear in a divorce court.

But the matter does not rest here. If a polygamist wishes to embrace Christianity, the Church insists that to save his own soul he must damn others and throw them on the streets—a demand which, as Mr. Pakenham is good enough to admit, “inevitably causes suffering.” If, however, a Christian becomes, in effect, a polygamist, he is debarred from the rite of confirmation and from receiving the Holy Communion—the gate of Heaven is closed against him for ever, or at least until such time as he shall cause some one else to suffer—but according to Mr. Pakenham he does not “withhold his hand when any of the Church funds need his help, and he pays his share of his Church's assessments.”

This reminds us of the Brahmin who, in the course of an electioneering campaign, said to an *untouchable*: “Brother, give me the vote, but away with thee!” The Church is only too glad to receive the help and money of a polygamist, but refuses even the sham consolation that it can offer. Proudly Mr. Pakenham tells us that “many such men have been the founders of the Churches in villages that had previously been untouched by the Gospel.”

These be thy gods, O Israel!

Polygamy in Islam.

Islam has been grossly misrepresented in the West as regards its marriage laws, and its conception of marriage generally. It has been asserted that Islam degrades the female sex and that it enjoins polygamy; whereas nothing could be further from the truth. To regard polygamy as an essential in Islam would be an unpardonable mistake. Islam is a universal religion. With its world-wide mission comes the necessity of providing for the requirements of all ages, countries and civilizations. Besides, the substantial laws—the Code of Islam, the Holy Qur-án—provide certain ordinances which are, in effect, remedial laws, deprecating their abuse, and laying proper restrictions on their use.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad found polygamy practised not only among his own people, but amongst the people of the countries adjacent to Arabia. No religion, no social system, has ever condemned polygamy. Moses

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had more than one wife. Mary, the Virgin Mother, according to some traditions, had a rival. Polygamy was never forbidden, curtailed or regulated by Jesus or his apostles. Polygamy prevailed among Christians for ages after Christ.

It may be argued, on the other hand, that Jesus by his practice condemned the institution of marriage; that if it had been possible, he would have abolished the very institution and made all his followers eunuchs for the Kingdom of God (Matthew xix. 12).

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, with a deep insight into human nature, could not ignore any one of its aspects; least of all an aspect of such importance as this. If he had condemned polygamy, it would only have resulted in the misery and loose morality which have become—nay, have always been—prevalent in the monogamous West.

He, therefore, under Divine inspiration laid down:—

And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then (marry) only one or what your right hands possess; this is more proper, that you may not deviate from the right course (The Holy Qur-án, iv. 3).

This is the *only* verse of the Holy Qur-án from which permission to marry more than one wife is derived. This verse neither enjoins polygamy nor permits it unconditionally. It allows it under certain circumstances only; and that permission, too, is given on a very strict condition, that if you cannot deal equitably and justly with all, otherwise, you shall marry only one. The extreme importance of this proviso, more especially when we remember the meaning which is attached to the word *adal*, equity, should not be lost sight of. The condition amounts in reality to virtual prohibition.

But whereas polygamy is permitted, monogamy is commanded. Then again, according to the Holy Qur-án, if a man does not preserve equity between his wives, he commits a sin. There is, and has been since the beginning of the world, no other religion which has made polygamy a sin in certain circumstances.

This verse which permits polygamy, was revealed after the murderous battle of Ohod, wherein several male members of the Muslim Commonwealth were killed, thus seriously reducing the male population. Many young girls had been made orphans, many married women widows; and it was necessary to protect them all. Here, then, was a situation

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which made polygamy a *necessity*. There were more women than men.

This is the stage through which the Western world is now passing.

The Holy Prophet, being a religious teacher and a moralist, could not recognize any such thing as "unmarried mothers." Modern society may condone or wink at adultery; Muhammad could not. If he had not permitted polygamy, even under restrictions, then he would never have deserved that respect, both as prophet and as social and moral reformer which he commands to-day from all impartial and unbiassed thinkers.

But the Holy Qur-án does not stand in need of any elaborate interpretations to make its meaning clear on this point: that polygamy is allowed under strict, very strict, and limited conditions, and that the Holy Qur-án declines to give any sort of licence for licentiousness:—

And you have it not in your power to do justice between wives, even though you may covet (it) . . . (The Holy Qur-án, iv. 129).

This verse, read with the verse that gives conditional permission for polygamy, leaves no room for any doubt that Islam has discouraged polygamy, and in so doing has adopted its usual course of appealing to human nature.

People in the West regard polygamy as intrinsically evil. Hypocrisy is the homage vice pays to virtue. The alleged monogamy of the West is really nothing other than polygamy without restriction or responsibility. "All men," says a leading London weekly, "are polygamist by nature and monogamist only by conviction, or, perhaps, by fear of conviction under the law which prohibits bigamy."

The Hereafter.

The essence of Islam is the unity of God, and the belief in the hereafter. Says the Holy Qur-án:—

Those who believe in Allah and the hereafter and do good, their reward will be with their Lord and they will be free from grief and sorrow.

This is the oft-repeated message in the Holy Qur-án. *Yaum-ul-Akhar* is the phrase used for the hereafter. The word *Yaum* means any period of life, whether it be a moment or eternity. Thus the coming moment and the hereafter are both implied therein, though it is generally taken to signify the great future that will begin for each of us in the life beyond the grave. But, each and every significance

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of the phrase *Yaum-ul-Akhar* comprehends in its scope the next brief moment. Thus the Holy Qur-án contains a great and timely warning for the Muslims of to-day. The promised success from Allah is, therefore, concerned with our forethought in this life. Those who laud the past and strive not for the future are marked for destruction. Past glory may inspire us with new zeal and exhilarate the heart ; but these emotions, worthy though they be, if they do not spur us on to the "upward path," to achieve something that is lost, are but a passing passion, a vain thing. The Muslim mind has become obsessed with past glories ; and in consequence the Muslim has lost all his worldly conquests one after another, and a blight has fallen on him everywhere ; yet he never reflected that the same glories of which he is so proud were won by his ancestors who lived for the future.

The Gospel of Action.

Faith without words is a dead letter in Islam. The Christians, in spite of their dogmatic belief, the failures and disappointments of their missionary campaigns, strive hard for "Moslem evangelization." Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer confesses that "a hundred years of lives poured out and tears and blood, a hundred years since Henry Martyn's day, and the evangelization of the Mohammedan world is not yet . . . a confession of failure—'we have taken nothing.' In Persia they have secured, after fifty years and more of missionary effort . . . fewer than 300 converts from Islam." Speaking of Turkey, Dr. McCullum says : "All our work is practically destroyed : not a single church of Moslem converts in existence in all that Turkish area after a hundred years of foreign missions." In North Africa, including Egypt, Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria and Morocco the total number of Muslims who have been converted does not exceed 500. And yet these cold facts do not discourage the Christian missionaries. They believe in action in spite of their utter failure.

What are Muslims doing ? The whole Christian world is wide awake and astir ; but the Muslim slumbers. It is his duty to sift out the right ideas from the wrong and to live up to the right ones only. There is no mention of "faith" alone in the Holy Qur-án. Faith with good actions is the recurring theme of the Book. A Muslim cannot be a *Momin*—a true believer—if he fails in action. Ours is a living Faith coupled with good deeds.

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The Holy Qur-án does not speak of a tribal God. It tells of a God of all nations, a God who knows no favouritism with Whom actions alone carry weight. If we turn our backs on the Holy Qur-án, the Revealer of the Qur-án will do the same to us. But the remedy of this ill is not far to seek. The Holy Qur-án provides it for us.

If you do good, you will do good for your own souls, and if you do evil, it shall be for them. . . . It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you, and if you again return [to good actions]. We too will return [to your reward] . . . surely this Qur-án guides to that which is most upright and gives good news to the believers who do good that they shall have a good reward (*Sura Bani-Isráeel*).

The Call of Islam.

To-day we are another year older owing to the wonderful experience which we possess. The past gives us a greater hope of a rich reward ; and with satisfied conscience we strive for the future.

The West is now passing through the most eventful period of its existence. Christianity with her dogmas is in the melting-pot. The failure of the Church is bringing forth stupendous results. The lawless selfishness of man has had its surfeit ; now it craves, it yearns and cries aloud for a more reasonable, a more rational rule of life to take the place of dogmas. Congresses, conferences are everywhere being held which bear a vehement testimony to the hankering of man after truth. In short, the West is at last awakening to the religion of nature—to Islam. The firm conviction that our labours, however humble, are urgently needed in the cause of Islam urges us to stabilize and enlarge our activities. The immensity of the task that lies before us compels us to the admission that we are scarcely able to meet the demand single-handed ; and all the more so because of the lack of adequate means. We invite, therefore, one and all, each and every servant of Islam, to help us in the cause.

The only means of access to the otherwise impregnable heart of the West is literature. Can we produce it in a quantity sufficiently large to meet the demand ? The answer lies with our Muslim brothers-in-Faith. We have many books at hand which cannot be printed for lack of funds. It is for Muslims, who wish to follow the noble example of the Holy Prophet, to do their duty. Nothing, not even lack of funds, can restrain us from doing ours. It is our heart-felt

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desire to be worthy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace); to walk in his footsteps, to sacrifice our worldly ambitions in the cause of Allah.

Muslims, bethink you, of what your Faith means to you, what your Faith has done for you. Will you not do something for your Faith?

“ We shall soon show them our signs in remote regions . . . ” (The Holy Qur-án).

We give below the names of our Muslim brothers and sisters who have recently embraced Islam :—

Capt. Ernest B. Underwood—Basheer (British Columbia); Edward Turner—Jalaluddin (London); Edward Charles Fost—Emaduddin (Leek); Iwan M. Way—Mubarik (Col., U.S.A.); P. J. Gaffney—Abdul Ghaffor (Dublin); Samuel James Burrnows—Suleiman (Battersea, London); Cecilia Marion Rose O'Reilly—Rafia (London); Eugene Gaspard Marin—Saleh Muhammad (Tangier); H. P. Burgess—Abdul Bari (Twickenham); F. Stuart Campbell—Abdul Samih (West Africa); George Crook—Abdul Jalil (Brighton); Annie Spieget—Amina (London); Mrs. Katson—Khadija (London); F. MacFord—Fatimiah (London); Laurence K. Hyde—Abdullah (Min., U.S.A.); A. E. S. Mondezic—Abdul Aziz (Trinidad); Charles G. Hanson—Hamid (Manchester); Alexander Solomon—Suleiman (Wylde Green); S. J. F. Cole—Abdul Sattar (Freetown); R. S. Miller—Abdul Rashid (London); A. H. C. Burkett—Abdullah (Trinidad, B.W.I.); Mrs. Forah—Zuhra (London); Frederick K. Haigh—Abdul Samad (Folkestone); Abraham Haynes—Ibrahim (London); Selim Haines—Saleem (London); Mary Morrison—Mariam (London); John Barry—Yahyia (London).

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. **Thursday Debates** (British Muslim Society) at 7.30 p.m. **Qur-án and Arabic Classes**—every Sunday at 3.30 p.m.

Service, Sermon, and Lectures every Sunday at the Mosque, Woking, 11.30 a.m.

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PRAYER

By RUDOLF PICKTHALL

To deny the efficacy of Prayer is tantamount to denying a man's own right to be considered a sane, sentient, and sensible being. We may doubt, but we hesitate to deny. Reason, ready at all times to set her red flag flying and her Carmagnole whirling at the faintest hint of anything incomprehensible in the polity of Faith, does not revolt at the idea; and Common Sense, though admitting—willingly, for a wonder—that it may pertain to a region out of range of its own understanding, sees nothing repugnant to itself in the notion.

Man is not really happy unless he be conscious of a higher authority, of an ultimate Court of Appeal—away and beyond his own control. He may flout it, neglect it, disregard it, but to feel that it was not there at all would cause him the gravest disquietude. The most autocratic of despots would probably go mad were it not for the thought—instinctive generally—of One greater than he; however much, in the intoxication of power and the pride of life, he may affect to despise such considerations.

The atheist, if such a person really exists at all, is easily the most miserable of all men, not because he has cut himself off from the “consolations of religion” (whatever they may be) as from the fact that he realizes that he is hopelessly alone—that there is no appeal from his own stupidity.

And Prayer is man's sole means of communicating with this higher authority—of laying his case before the ultimate tribunal; though he can have no accurate conception of Him to Whom that Prayer is addressed. Failing that, he must imagine Him as best he can, and his instinct it is to regard his Maker as One, in some vague way or other, of like passions with himself, or if not actually like, then

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sufficiently so, at least, as to render Him capable of understanding and, above all, sympathy.

The potter bears no resemblance to the vessels which he fashions of clay, but he knows what is wrong with them, and how it came about, and can make allowance for what after all is his own doing. Reason may boggle at such a conception; but Common Sense—for once at variance with its ancient crony—will be the first to admit that the conception of a Personal Deity is the only conception that will ever be of any avail in curbing, controlling, or even influencing in any serious degree, the unruly wills and affections of sinful men. An abstraction will never be of any use, simply because man, be he gentle or simple, learned or untutored, foolish or wise, will never in his innermost heart believe in an abstraction; and it is of the very essence of Prayer that it be addressed, not to Something, but to Somebody.

With any religion that has its work to do in the world, that is concerned, not with abstract holiness, but with the ultimate betterment of mankind by example as well as by precept—that owns to a duty towards its neighbour as well as towards its God; or rather sees the latter wedded to and one with the former—God is still Somebody—Somebody who listens. And if we did not take this for granted, we should not pray.

Tennyson's famous lines on Prayer have been so often quoted as to be in danger of becoming not only hackneyed, but misunderstood.

More things are wrought by Prayer
Than this world dreams of

may have truth, as referring to the strengthening influence on character and moral fibre of a life of regular prayer, and the habit of thought that Prayer engenders. But that is not our motive for Prayer. It is nobody's motive for prayer; nor is any such

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idea remotely at the back of our minds when we pray. If that were the only reason for it, we should never pray at all. It would not be worth while. The idea, on the other hand, of petition and answer, of the individual request and the granting of that request, is always with us. There is not one of us but can point, in his own life, to some example of answered prayer. Some profess to be able to point to many. "Coincidence," say our sceptical brethren—and coincidence it may be, but we are pretty sure it is not. At least there is a doubt about it, and the benefit of the doubt is not with coincidence. We do not stop to ask ourselves how it is possible for God to hear and weigh and answer individually (as does the Being of our limited conception) the countless millions of millions of His creatures. Imagination itself is staggered—the thing is so manifestly impossible. And yet if God be Omnipotent (as our limited conception of Him does concede)—a Being transcending all powers of human comprehension—surely this is only one of many instances where those limited power of comprehension are transcended. If God be Omnipotent—when once that is granted, there is nothing impossible about it; the difficulty disappears. Reason and Common Sense must perforce agree to this, and so agreeing, be also actually at one with their ancient adversary Faith, if they would have the grace to admit it.

The Muslim (and the Christian too, for the matter of that) is concerned with no such speculations, when he prays. The voice of the Lord speaking through the Holy Prophet is warrant enough for the prayer of the former—a sure guarantee that there is always, to all his petitions, Somebody who listens. "And your Lord says, 'Call upon me, and I will answer you.'" So prayer, being man's privilege—the means whereby he may imbue himself with the attributes of God—has become a recognized custom, divinely

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ordained, with Muslim and Christian alike. But there is a danger in custom—

God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world—

and by use and familiarity a good custom, outgrowing and forgetting the goodness which gave it birth, may well become a curse. And so it may be with Prayer.

Herein lies the true reason for the pomp and ceremonial by which the Catholic Church sets so much store; for that Church has realized the limitations of frail humanity and the sheer necessity—for very many—of some outward means whereby to ensure, as far as is possible, a frame of mind in which it shall be fitting for mankind to approach the Throne of Grace. And even these, however salutary for the vulgar, must, in the case of those who officiate at them, tend to wither into dry and meaningless forms.

A century ago, when the religious pulse of this nation beat a thought more healthily than it does to-day, there were days of National Thanksgiving for God's mercies signally vouchsafed to us, and days of National Humiliation when, by token of some crushing disaster, it was felt that the wrath of God had descended upon a sinful people. These were godly customs, with a kernel of sincerity in them, a stimulus to the earnest, a reminder to the thoughtless, an illumination to the ignorant.

They were not everyday occurrences, and it is not so long ago—but it is significant to reflect that to-day only the Thanksgivings remain—and they, not as praise to God for His infinite mercy, but merely as the symbol of a great nation patting itself on the back. The Name of God has become an excuse for pageantry and display to the glory of Man; nay, the very thought of God as a living God would seem to have disappeared—for we no longer think of

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National Humiliation. So soon has a good custom begun subtly to corrupt the little world with which it has immediate concern. Even the two-minutes' silence of Armistice Day is not what it tried to be in 1919. In a few years it will, if it exist so long, become revolting. The spirit has gone out of it. Perhaps it was never in it. Such dramatic gestures are not for the crowd.

As in public prayer, so in private prayer, for the public life of a nation is but the reflex of its private ideals and principles. The saying of prayers five times a day, or night and morning (as is the Christian mode) may through sheer regularity of performance, become one of those good customs corrupting those who practise it, and through them the world, by a sense of piety which is false, and of well-doing which is entirely without justification. It need not be so, but the danger is great, and there is a pressing reality in the Christian exhortation to "Watch and pray." We should be constantly on the watch, and nobody ever is; principally because nobody ever tries.

All these things, however, constitute neglect of prayer—an obvious peril, and therefore the more easily to be guarded against. But there is another more subtle, which springs, not from neglect, but one may almost say from over assiduity, not from disuse, but from abuse. It, too, is the outcome of custom.

Regularity and method are excellent principles of life. To be regular in prayer is a duty that cannot be too seriously impressed upon children, for it is in the early years of our life that a good custom is really at its best; before it has acquired the power to corrupt. And these regular habits of prayer once formed, to grow up in them must tend to become a safeguard, a Divine protection in the struggle of life. But even this has its danger. The child, in omitting his prayers, is taught to regard himself as

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having sinned. Therefore regularity is apt to become his chief aim, if he is a conscientious child, and this tends to the habit of thought that prayer, or the act of prayer, is in itself a virtue. It becomes a sort of antidote ; a charm with something of the potency of enchantment ; a spell ; a species of white magic ; just as in the Roman Church, the saying of a specified number of Paternosters or Ave Marias or both, may be regarded as counterbalancing a specified measure of sin. It is easy enough to get this habit in private prayer, like any other habit, anywhere ; but it is the most difficult thing in the world to induce ourselves to realize that we have got it.

Man's primitive instinct for self-justification stands in the way, and, curiously enough, the thought of God would seem to have receded into the background.

When we are firmly fixed in the habit of praying, we have often almost reached the stage of forgetting to Whom we are praying—the stage at which prayer becomes worthless, and recoils upon the head of him who prays. We pray to One in Whom our belief is no longer a living thing ; for if it were otherwise, if belief be alive and real, prayer can never be perfunctory.

“ There are some who say : ‘ We believe in Allah and the Last Day ’ and yet they in no wise believe ” (Holy Qur-án, ii. 8). And again : “ There is a disease in their hearts, so Allah hath added to their disease ; and they shall have painful chastisement, because they lied ” (ii. 10).

But there is yet another class of prayer ; a form of devotion, not at all insincere, in no sense perfunctory, performed in all humility, in all reverence, in all faith, if you will, but yet by reason of some strange mental kink—arising it may be (and generally is) from an over-cultivated egoism—which worships God in what it assumes to be His proper sphere, that is in Heaven ; and takes His cognizance of earthly things

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to be confined in general to world events or world tendencies, and in particular, to the circumstances immediately surrounding the utterer of the prayer, to be exercised as he, the utterer (though he would not dream of admitting it even to himself) shall from time to time be pleased to direct, appoint and advise.

It is a preposterous habit of thought, but by no means unknown. Such a supplication presupposes a Deity with strange limitations, and takes account neither of Omnipotence, nor Omniscience, nor yet of All-Wisdom.

And there is the prayer of him who prays for blessings on himself with a wrong, unatoned for, already done to his brother, or in his heart, the prayer of him who seeks forgiveness for himself while plotting vengeance on another; the prayer of the unbalanced mentality which, were it not for the infinite mercy of the Most High, would become the deadliest of weapons, not against others, but against the poor soul himself who so prays, or deems himself praying.

“Woe to the praying ones who are unmindful of their prayers” (ii. 147). To those, that is, who have omitted to come before the Presence of God with clean hands; those who have lost the spirit of prayer, have forgotten what prayer is. Prayer is not a luxury or a mental opiate, or a form of graceful compliment to Almighty God, or a poultice for raw consciences, or a talisman that will open doors of which we are too lazy to turn the key; nor an atonement for sin; nor a species of spiritual insurance premium against hell-fire; nor any one of the hundred and one conveniences for which the mind of semi-devout man is too prone to mistake it.

Prayer is a duty which God requires of all men. Prayer regular and Prayer sincere. “Surely prayer is a timed ordinance for the believers.” And though its regularity is a matter of Divine Command, out of range of man’s speculation and adjustment, which

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cannot be whittled down or evaded, the test of sincerity must be the test of every man's own heart; and the measure of that sincerity each can ascertain for himself if he is honest with himself.

"Surely prayer setteth indecency and evil very far off; and verily the remembrance of Allah is the greatest, and Allah knoweth what ye do."

WOMAN : HER SUBJECTION, EXPLOITATION AND EMANCIPATION

By KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from p. 395, Vol. XI, No. 11.)

CHRISTIAN writers are accustomed to pronounce upon the moral conditions of the Ancient Greek and Roman civilizations a condemnation which is seldom mitigated by any consideration of their better aspect. To indict entire civilizations is easy enough when every redeeming feature is ignored. Vice is often more interesting than virtue, and affords admirable scope for rhetorical description; and the splendid crimes of pagan Greece and Rome are a tempting theme alike for the novelist, the preacher and the historian.

If the darker side alone is worthy of consideration, then there is ample ground for an unfavourable verdict. Perhaps the deepest stain is the moral depravity obtaining in the two ancient Empires. But this was far from universal; the very periods in which it was most prevalent being adorned by some of the noblest examples of virtues and heroism recorded in history.

It is urged that the social and political position of woman was determined by her physical weakness, that "cave-man's law"—might is right—prevailed, and that in consequence woman came into a position of subjection to man. One would search in vain

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for any basis for this presumption. No doubt, in some degree and under certain conditions, social life involves the dependence of woman upon man. But that is not subjection. Dependence may involve subjection; but it is not a sequence. Curiously enough it is with the more civilized people that the subjection of woman begins to appear.

Many superficial observers are led astray, and so profoundly impressed by the contemplation of a state of affairs different from their own, that they mistake perfectly clear lines of demarcation for a moral valuation. Merely because the female sex is forbidden to do this or that, it is concluded that woman has no rights against man. But this is far from the truth. Certain things are taboo to the man, others to the woman. Generally the position and rights of woman are clearly marked, invariably recognized and quickly enforced. Of course ill-treatment of woman does sometimes occur, as with every other people, and they may even suffer from brute force. Take, for example, the case of the primitive savage. He regards woman as different from man, but not inferior; and besides, superiority and inferiority are late conceptions. Starcke rightly remarks that it is improper to assume that "the savage feels a contempt for woman in virtue of her sex." It is, indeed, not difficult to show that the popular assumption that savage women are without status or rights is as often as not ill-founded. For example, a woman among the Hottentots is supreme in the house; as is also the case with the Red Indians of North America. There, in most cases, a husband cannot give away anything belonging to the lodge without the consent of his wife. Livingstone relates his surprise at the refusal of a native to accompany him on a journey because his wife would not give her permission. The Nootkas consult their women on all matters of importance. In Nicaragua no man is allowed to enter the female market-place. The

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natives of the Marquesas forbid their women to use a canoe, it is true; but, on the other hand, men are also excluded from certain female quarters. Among the Khandhs of India nothing was ever done without the consent of the women, and the same was the case with the Pellew Islanders. Among the Bechuanas the mother of the chief is always present at council meetings, and he can hardly decide anything without her consent.

Unseen agencies, of course, play an important part in the mentality of savages. To them the obvious consequences of sex life are supernatural phenomena. Primitive people, as Mr. Hartland shows in his *Primitive Paternity*, ascribe birth to the agency of tribal ghosts. Dr. Frazer, in *The Golden Bough*, cites a number of instances gathered from various parts of the world to illustrate the same point; and throws considerable light on the immaculate conception of Jesus.

Turning to ancient civilizations, we find that in Egypt women held, politically and socially, a higher position than was vouchsafed to them in Greece or Rome. Professor Wilkinson, in his *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, points out that the respect shown to woman was such that they took precedence of men. This is also borne out by the rule of the Line of Matriarchate. The daughters and wives of the kings succeeded to the throne like the male branches of the royal family. This privilege was not rescinded, even though it had more than once resulted in a contested succession. It was not a mere influence that women possessed, but "a right acknowledged by law, both in private and public life. They knew that unless women were treated with respect and made to exercise an influence over society, the standard of public opinion would be lowered, and the morals and manners of men would suffer; and in acknowledging this, they pointed out to women the very

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responsible duties they had to perform to the community." ¹

WOMAN IN ANCIENT GREECE.

In treating of Greek women we have the difficulty that almost all we know of women is derived from men. Men rarely write dispassionately of women; they are either in love with them or hate them. They have their own sweet or bitter experiences of them; and can only write in accordance with that experience. Besides, the history was not only written by men, but it was written for men. This fact must be specially remembered when dealing with the utterances of the comic poets, for women did not act in the plays, nor is it probable that they were even present at the comedies. No great stress must, therefore, be laid on the wild abuse of women which can be culled from Greek writers. We find Simonides of Amorgos, an early satirical poet, dividing women into ten classes, of which only one he points out is good.² One, Susarion, says :—

Listen, O People, Women are an evil, but nevertheless, O Countrymen, it is not possible to have a household without evil, for to marry is an evil and not to marry is an evil.³

Another comic poet, Philemon, says : "Woman is an immoral necessity." Euripides was especially a woman-hater. He says :—

Terrible is the force of the waves of the sea, terrible the rush of river, and the blast of hot fire, terrible is poverty; and terrible a thousand other things; but there is no such terrible evil as woman. No painter could adequately represent her; but if she is the creation of any of the gods, let him know that he is a very great creator of evils and a foe to mortals.

Passages like these could be quoted in hundreds, but they really tell us very little. They could be matched by a very large number of sayings of the

¹ *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians.*

² Stobæus, 78, 61.

³ *Ibid.*, 69, 2.

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same and other authors in which woman is praised to the heavens.

In the Homeric Age women were meek ; but this was the inevitable result of the character of the age. Might was right. The strong arm alone could assert a right. The warrior, who carried away a charming maiden as a prize of his valour, whose destiny was thus always uncertain, held his own life in his hand. For to-day if he sacks the house of another, to-morrow his own may suffer the same fate ; and, indeed, his wife, the prize he had won with the force of his arms, may be carried off and become the slave of his conqueror, his own lot being to perish mercilessly by the cold edge of the sword. But women were not warriors and had to depend entirely on the protection of men.

Such was their external position. But actual facts prove the contrary. Nowhere in the whole range of literature are women found to be subjective to such a sway. The physical force is entirely in the background. Nothing but affection, regard and deference to women appears to be the rule of the day. Women, indeed, would seem to be faultless. Even Helen of Troy, the beautiful cause of so many disasters to Greeks and Trojans alike, is guiltless. The blame is laid at the door of Paris who carried her off by force.

In the Homeric poems the man loves his wife and she loves him. Beautiful, indeed, is the picture of married life which Homer draws. "There is nothing," he says, "better and nobler than when husband and wife, being of one mind, rule a household."¹ And such household he portrays in the halls of Alcinous, and Arete and in the Trojan home of Hector and Andromache ;² but still more marked and beautiful is the constant love and unwearied fidelity of Penelope, awaiting through the long revolving years the return of her storm-tossed hus-

¹ Od. vi. 182.

² Il. vi. 429.

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band, Ulysses; ¹ the heroic love of Alcestis, voluntarily dying that her husband might live; the filial piety of Antigone; the wonderful devotion of Chelonis to her husband; the majestic grandeur of the death of Polyxena; the gentle goodness of Agesistrata, which ended in her death; the saintly resignation of Iphigenia; the wonderful self-sacrifice of Cratesicleia—all these are “pictures of perennial beauty,” says Lecky, “which Rome and Christendom, chivalry and modern civilization, have neither eclipsed nor transcended. Virgin modesty and conjugal fidelity, the graces as well as the virtues of the most perfect womanhood, have never been more exquisitely portrayed. The female figures stand out in the canvas almost as prominently as the male ones, and are surrounded by an almost equal reverence.” ²

Indeed, Homer almost always represents married relations as happy and harmonious. The Homeric women were respected and nothing was withheld from them. “They mingled together at marriage feasts and at religious festivities. They took part with the men in sacrificing, or they went without the men to the temples and presented their offerings.” ³

In the Historical Age of Greece the Spartan women were not merely stronger in body, but took a deeper interest in all matters concerning the State than those of the Homeric period. They sacrificed everything, even maternal feelings, to their care for the community. But their courage was also a moral courage. “Adultery was almost entirely unknown.” ⁴ They owned private property. Aristotle affirms that the Spartan system threw a great deal of land into the hands of women; that many of the wives were better educated than their husbands. He accuses them of ruling over their husbands. “And what

¹ Od. xxx. 210.

² *History of European Morals*, ii, p. 118.

³ Donaldson: *Woman*, p. 19. ⁴ *Ibid.*: *Woman*, p. 31.

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difference does it make," he asks, "whether the women rule or the rulers are ruled by women? for the result is the same." Professor W. St. Chad Boscawen remarks that woman then possessed a freedom that has long been denied her under Christian rule. They held land and property in their own right, they engaged in trade, appeared in the law courts as litigants, and the property of a wife was carefully guarded against encroachment by the husband.¹ By the Hammurobi Code, property settled on the wife remained hers absolutely. The dowry given her at marriage remained her own; she could bequeath it as she pleased; and various other civil rights were clearly guaranteed to her.

Turning to the Athenian age we find Plato urging strongly the claims of woman for equal education and legal rights. In the fifth book of the *Republic* he says:—

And so in the administration of a State, neither a woman as a woman, nor a man as a man has any special function, but the gifts of nature are equally diffused in both sexes; all the pursuits of men are the pursuits of women also, and in all of them woman is only a lesser man.

Plato draws the conclusion that woman should be the companion of man and share with him in the toils, and cares of government; only that in the distribution of labour the lightest task should be assigned to woman; as she is naturally weaker in body.

In ancient Greece, therefore, there existed a basis both in philosophy and fact, on which Christianity could have improved the position of woman.

¹ *The First of Empires.*

(To be continued.)

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THE CHARACTER OF MUHAMMAD

By MASUD ALI VARESI

XVI

SELF-RESPECT

It may be presumed that one so gentle, affectionate, tender-hearted and humble of heart, would be in danger, perhaps, of losing the respect and esteem of others, to say nothing of his dominating influence. But the Almighty God had gifted the Prophet with such a high and discerning sense of character that the influence he exercised on others was of a degree and potency never attained by the most powerful of emperors. He never rebuked anybody; he always treated others with a fascinating affection and mildness of temper. His companions would feel it a privilege to sacrifice their lives for him, and to undergo any possible hardships gladly for his sake. His plain, open and unassuming life was, in fact, the reflection of God's beautiful and enchanting glory.

Khareja bin Zaid Ansari says that the Prophet was endowed with a keen sense of self-respect; and that nothing was ever said or done by him to the disapproval of his audience (Shafa, p. 61).

He was usually silent; nor ever uttered a word needlessly. If anybody was guilty of any undesirable conduct, he would tender him an affectionate piece of advice. His speech was clear and elaborate. It was neither so lengthy as to include superfluous and irrelevant facts, nor so brief as to be shorn of its essentials, and unintelligible to others. He would never burst into a peal of laughter, so as to expose his teeth to view. He simply smiled. His companions followed him as best they could, and would never laugh; for to follow him was the adoption of sacerdotal and prophetic beauties. His conver-

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sation dealt with injunctions, trust, modesty and virtues. People never spoke loudly in his presence. No unpleasant talk, nothing indecent, ever crept into his company. Whenever the Prophet would begin to speak, the audience listened with bent heads. Silence reigned there supreme. He spoke most accurately and clearly. Hazrat Ayesha (eternal blessings be on her) accordingly says: "The Prophet spoke so distinctly that if anyone liked to count, he could count every letter of his speech" (Mishkaat, p. 442).

In the same way his manner of walking was also characterized by extreme modesty. He would neither walk so swiftly as to cause inconvenience to others who might be with him, nor so slowly as to suggest lethargy and exhaustion. In a word, temperance marked him in every respect. Abu Masud (Peace be on him) says that a man came on the day of the victory of Mecca to speak something to the Prophet. But he trembled, for he was overawed by the presence of the Prophet. "Do not be confounded," said the Prophet. "Speak with ease. I am no king. I am also the son of a daughter of the Quraish community who ate dried meat" (Shafa, p. 59).

Before the treaty of Hadibiya was concluded, a chief named Arwa ibne Masud went to the Prophet as a plenipotentiary of the Meccans. During the discussion, the representative of the enemy wanted to touch the Prophet's beard with his hand (as was the custom with some people. Mughira ibne Shūba (Peace be on him) was standing behind the Prophet armed, and he removed the emissary's hand with the edge of the sword, saying, "Remove your hand from the beard of the Messenger of God." Eventually, when the man departed, and joined his army, he addressed them thus: "O fellow-members of my community, by God, I have seen many grand courts of great kings, I have visited Qaisar, Kisra and Najjashi as an ambassador. But God stands my

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witness that I have seen no king honoured so profoundly as Muhammad is honoured by his companions. By God, when he spits, it does not fall on the ground for the people stretch their hand reverently and devoutly to receive the spittle, and they rub it on their faces and bodies. When he makes ablution they contest lovingly to be the foremost in getting the water that falls down. When he issues some command, they run fervently to carry it out. When he talks, the people around him lower their voices, bend their looks and do not see him face to face on account of the profound reverence they bear towards him. He has sent you a message of peace, and it behoves you to accept it" (Bokhari, pp. 378 and 379).

This was the prophetic glory. It was not the glory of a despot or a king. Who in the world has been so deeply loved by his devoted companions?

If we only try to follow his footsteps, irrespective of any social and public consequences to ourselves, we are bound to be freed from the contagion of many an evil.

XVII

CHEERFUL TEMPER

WIT and humour should be harmoniously tempered with the development of other faculties. Any transgression made in this respect simply mars the beauty of a human character: it obscures the virtues of men and eventually deadens the highest and noblest aspirations which otherwise should have been his chief ideal. Wit and humour should, at the same time, not be so fearfully confined to their lowest functions as to run the risk of fading altogether. They must be so judiciously and finely blended with other moral attractions as to possess their own unique worth and fascination. There are many humorists in the world, but there are few

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who, at the same time, retain the dignified seriousness of their nature. In the case of spiritual leaders, it is noticed that they frequently look upon themselves as too pious to tolerate the slightest humour. There is no doubt that their attitude in this respect is to a considerable extent justifiable, because they belong to a class always absorbed in solving the problems of life and death, and pondering over the complications of metaphysics.

It is, however, temperance only which, while preserving a sagacious and honest seriousness, nevertheless retains humour and wit as well. But such dispositions are, strictly speaking, few.

The Prophet was gifted by God with a character including all the finest and noblest faculties of human nature. He was serious, he commanded respect and veneration, and at the same time possessed a cheerful wit. He was unceasingly engrossed in the divine mysteries, in the intricacies of natural phenomena, in the spiritual aspects of life and death. These all had become known to him by the loving-kindness of the Merciful and Loving God, Who had made him perfect in every respect, had brightened up his mind with all knowledge. But along with these divine gifts, the Prophet always looked cheerful and accorded a warm reception to every one who saw him. Accordingly, Jurair bin Abdullah says: "Ever since I embraced Islam, the Prophet never forbade me to call on him. And whenever he saw me, he began to smile" (Shamael-e-Tarandi, p. 17).

Little children occasionally went to him. The Prophet played with them, and sometimes passed cheerful remarks on them. For instance, he used to call Anas affectionately and humorously the Zul-Aznain, or the shopkeeper. (Shamael-e-Tarandi, p. 18).

In the same way, once, there was an unpleasantness between Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Fatema (May peace be on them). (The former was the cousin and

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son-in-law of the Prophet and the latter the daughter of the Prophet and the wife of Hazrat Ali.) Hazrat Ali went to the mosque and slept there. By chance, the Prophet called at their house and learnt the whole affair. He went to the mosque, and woke up Hazrat Ali. As Hazrat Ali was lying on the floor, some dust had clung to him, so the Prophet endearingly called him Abu-Turaab. From this moment the word became a name for Hazrat Ali and so popular as to make the real ones obscure and forgotten (Bokhari, p. 929).

Once the Prophet promised somebody the gift of a camel. When the man came, the Prophet told him that he would give him the offspring of a she-camel. The man objected, and said that the young one of a camel was of no use to him. "Are not camels the young ones of she-camels? What else are they?" said the Prophet. This made the matter clear. The man had misunderstood his meaning. He had simply for the sake of fun called a camel the offspring of a she-camel. The man had misconstrued the meaning of the word as the youngling of a camel (Shamael-e-Tarandi, p. 18).

Once an old lady named Umme Zubair called on him and asked him to pray for her to God to grant her a place in heaven. "O Umme Zubair, old women will not be admitted into heaven," replied the Prophet. The poor woman was sorely disappointed at this reply, and she asked him the reason why old women will be debarred from entering heaven. "Have you not read it in the Qur-án that God will create young and virgin the ladies who are entitled to heaven? How then will old women go into heaven?" responded the Prophet." The Prophet meant to say that old age will be out of question in heaven, that all will be young in heaven, and so to call them old was not justifiable (Shamael-e-Tarandi, p. 18).

These facts not only shed light on the cheerful

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nature of the Prophet, but, at the same time, show the truth of his words also. They prove that even in joke he never uttered a lie. People said to him once: "O Messenger of God, you joke with us." "Yes, but I never say anything which is untrue and unlawful," said the Prophet (Shamael-e-Tarandi, p. 18). The Prophet has repeatedly ordered his followers that they should never speak a lie even in joke.

The Prophet never sought to hinder people from innocent enjoyment, and this was because God had clearly pointed out to him what was hurtful to man and what was not. He was perfectly sensible of the fact that piety and virtue were no hindrance to wit, that the latter was an essential ingredient in human existence to enliven one's spirit. It was only on this understanding that he himself indulged it. Accordingly Hazrat Ayesha (Peace be on her) says: "Once the Prophet was at my house, when Hazrat Abu-Bakr (Hazrat Ayesha's father) came in. It was an Id day. Two girls were singing the same song which the Ansaar had composed after the battle of Ba-aas. (This battle had taken place three years before the Flight into Ous and Khazraj.) Hazrat Abu-Bakr (Peace be on him) said that they were the instruments of Satan. The Prophet did not pay any heed to these words. Hazrat Abu Bakr (Peace be on him) repeated his words: "O Abu Bakr, let them sing. Do not tell them anything. Every nation has a day of rejoicing, and to-day is our Id festival," exclaimed the Prophet (Bokhari, p. 559).

A tradition from Barida runs that the Prophet was once going forth to battle; and that on his return a negro slave-girl approached him, saying: "O Messenger of God, I have made a vow that on your safe return from the battle I will sing before you, and will play the drum." "If thou hast made this vow, then sing, and play, otherwise not," answered the Prophet. The slave-girl began to sing and play

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the drum. In the course of this performance, Hazrat Abu Bakr, Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Usman came there, but she continued her singing and playing. But when Hazrat Umar came there, she was frightened and hid herself, and sat on the flat drum (*daf*) (Mishkaat, p. 476).

Hazrat Ayesha (Peace be on her) relates: "One day the Prophet was present. We heard the sounds of children coming from outside. The Prophet got up and saw that a negress was singing and dancing, and children were standing near her. The Prophet asked me also to see the fun. Consequently I got up and, resting my chin on his sacred shoulder, hid myself from view behind him, and saw the performance. He asked me several times if I had seen it to my heart's content. I replied in the negative. The fact was that I wanted to see more of the attention and love he bore to me than the fun itself. In the meanwhile Hazrat Umar had come up and the throng dispersed" (Tarandi, p. 529).

The Prophet bore cheerfully the persecutions hurled at him by his enemies. One day he exclaimed, "See, how Allah has saved me from the words of abuse and curses of the Quraish. They wish me evil, saying that I am liable to be impeached, notwithstanding the fact that I am Muhammad, i.e. good and praiseworthy (Mishkaat, p. 439). The Prophet meant to say that they wished evil for one who was not good, so their prayers in that respect may take effect only when one was not good, and he only could take evil therefrom who was not good. He himself was good, and so the evil that they wished for him could carry no weight. And if they could know what Muhammad was, they would never speak evil of him.

These examples illustrate not only his cheerful and bright temper, but also demonstrate the beauty of his moderation. His character is a transcendental truth to us; it is a precious lesson to us as to how we should comport ourselves with our relations,

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friends and others ; and how we should wade through life and its numerous complications. We should be careful in making jokes with others, or remarks upon others. There should be a distinctive line of demarcation drawn between what we should do and what we should absolutely avoid. We ought to have a careful regard to precision and propriety and abstain from unnecessarily wounding the susceptibilities of others. Where humour is uncultivated, a regular appetite for witticism, coupled with an unbalanced state of mind as regards social conventions, is sure to lead to disaster. Temperance is the watchword of a good and loveable life.

Remember these words of the Prophet: "Be careful, abstain from too much laughing, for it deadens the heart and fades the facial attraction" (Mishkaat, p. 353).

Do not overlook this sound and invaluable advice of the Prophet: "Deplorable is the case of one who invents a falsehood to make others laugh."

THE END.

ISLAM AT THE CROSS-ROADS

By the REV. DE LACY O'LEARY, D.D. Pp. 215 (Kegan Paul), 6s. 6d. net.

THE "sick-man" of Europe has miraculously recovered. A dead Turkey has sprung to a new life. This along with other disturbing elements in the world of Islam has caused a stir in Christian countries. They wish to go to the root of the matter and to find the "obscure impulses" at the back of this sudden change. To them, Islam that had slumbered long is reviving with new strength and new aspirations. They wish to determine the varied, and as yet uncertain, reactions of this awakening world of Islam toward Europe.

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The millions of Muslims, in their rising tide, are to the West as the Armageddon numbers of the Bible. The battle has not as yet been fought, and the more far-sighted among them are doing their utmost to prepare the West for the coming struggle. It is clear to all students of Bible prophecy that the cry of "Peace" is woefully premature. Peace is assuredly to come, but not yet—not until this monster of Islam is destroyed. "There is coming on the world a great struggle between Christianity and the forces of Islam," declares the Lord Bishop of Southwell. Great Britain, it is urged, will probably be wanted to complete the drying up of the Euphrates, the ending of the power of Turkey and the subversion of Islam. "It would be happy if we were there on that day, the chosen instruments of Providence, to fight the predestined fight and win the predestined victory," declares another Militant of the Prince of Peace.

To a Christian the whole vast problem of Islam versus Christianity has taken gigantic shape, looming up sudden, monstrous, terrible, just when he fancied his victory was complete. "What sinister influence has undone the triumph of only four years ago?" asks Canon William Barry. The answer is obvious and is to be found in the New Testament:—

They that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Dr. O'Leary demonstrates the dangers but suggests no solution. In discussing the present crisis in the world of Islam, he takes a great deal of trouble to investigate the causes and symptoms of that crisis. To his credit be it said that he handles the question with the utmost delicacy and tact; though we cannot, however, in all sincerity say with impartiality. He places the facts before the reader, from a Christian point of view, in a most lucid manner; but at times he is carried away by his convictions. For example, among other causes,

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he attributes Muslim feeling against Europeans and Christians to the fact that "the modern tendency in Western life is towards sex equality, and this certainly is not acceptable to Islam." And, again, he perceives that "the theory of democracy which tends to teach equality of Muslims and non-Muslims is one of the Western influences which are detrimental to religion"; for, as he explains at an early stage, a Muslim takes "religion to denote a social grouping which causes its members to regard all outsiders as aliens."

The author is at pains to establish that Islamic civilization rests upon a solid foundation of the Persian and Hellenistic culture of the Græco-Roman world. He maintains that the mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad was confined to Arabs only; and that his sole object was to bring them a knowledge of the unity of God, to inform them of the hereafter, and lastly to establish their common brotherhood. "God sent Muhammad," says Dr. O'Leary, "to introduce these benefits among the Arabs. But the Arabs were not willing to accept these new conditions . . . so Muhammad, confident that the fraternity of the Arab race was the purpose of God, took up arms against them and made war until they were forced to admit the principles of fraternity and confessed the One God to whom as Eternal Judge they were responsible."

But in this the author is merely telling an old, old story; and straightway contradicts himself by remarking that the legend of fanatical Muslims "forcing Islam at the point of the sword upon conquered races, is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated." Was not the Holy Prophet himself a Muslim?

Dr. O'Leary then tells us that "there was no intention in the days of the Prophet, or his early successors, of carrying the religion of Islam beyond the Arabs." But that is not true. From the very

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first the Holy Prophet maintained that his mission was universal; and besides he himself sent letters to the royal courts of Syria, Persia, Egypt and Abyssinia, inviting them to embrace Islam. Surely, Hercules, the Governor of Syria, Chosroe Pervez, the King of Persia, Maquaquis, the Emperor of Egypt, were not Arabs. Dr. O'Leary must be aware of the original letter addressed to Maquaquis which was discovered by some French travellers in 1858 in Upper Egypt, and which is now in the Ottoman custody at Constantinople.

Dr. O'Leary goes into a lengthy discussion, with somewhat unnecessary historical data, to establish that the Turkish Khilafat is open to question. He tries to show that the many so-called sects of Islam do not recognize the Turkish Sultan as the Khalif. But, with us, the main consideration is not the right possessed by the Sultan to be regarded as the Khalif of Islam, but the fact that the Sultan of Turkey has been regarded by many millions of Muslims as the *de facto* Khalif; and no amount of historical data can either strengthen or remove that belief.

Dr. O'Leary, as a Church dignitary, has availed himself of the opportunities afforded by his subject to show that Islam, instead of being a united body, is distracted by a sudden growth of nationalism. Time will show how far he is a prophet. There is much that could be written on the subject of Pan-Islamism, to which the author devotes his last two chapters, but want of space compels us to refrain from any such attempt.

Describing Muslim "reaction against the West," Dr. O'Leary remarks that the chief activity of the Working Muslim Mission is discernible "in the attempt to commend Islam to non-Muslims; and to commend a liberal type of Muslim teaching as a reasonable religion for the Western world"; and that it is "making a very definite effort to improve the

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attitude of the English people towards Islam, and to secure for it a fair and just hearing. . . ."

There is much interesting matter in the book, and it will well repay perusal for a reader who bears in mind that it is an *ex parte* statement of the case, though none the less valuable on that account.

KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD.

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Kings of Arabia. By HAROLD F. JACOB. Pp. 294.
12s. 6d. net. Mills & Boon, London.

This book presents a history of Aden, the bordering tribes and their rulers, and is critical of the indifference manifested by the Home and Indian Governments. The author is very well disposed to the Arab psychology, and extols them for their virtues, at the same time holding the opinion that the Arab *national* ideals are not likely to reach complete fruition owing to the inborn spirit of independence and freedom which is the Arab's birthright. The unity of the Arab race is religious rather than political. The book, in addition to its political and historical theme, gives some interesting matter in connection with folk-lore and general ethnological and social science.

Studies in Biblical and Semitic Symbolism. By MAURICE F. FARBRIDGE, M.A. Pp. xv, 288.
10s. 6d. net. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.

This field of research is wide and well-tilled, but no writer has more definitely devoted his studies and research to the exclusive Semitic and Biblical symbolisms than has Mr. Farbridge. The author has collected an imposing array of facts, and shows correspondences, which involve laborious study, in comparative mythology. He has produced a volume which is not only fascinating but illuminative, and

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should be read by everyone who is interested in the problem of religious origins, a problem which is of vital interest to the Oriental religious student. The development of Semitic and Biblical symbolism is dealt with, passing through its various stages of tree and plant worship ; as is also the influence of the animal kingdom in moulding religious thought and symbol. An interesting chapter is devoted to the quasi-occult influences attributed to the power of number as given in the Qabala and the Pythagorean system.

The Shrine of Wisdom. 5s. per annum, post free.
Lincoln House, Acacia Road, London, W. 3.

This periodical aims at aiding the human soul in the quest for union with the One God ; to contribute towards the synthesis and unification of the wisdom of the ages as revealed in the philosophy, religion, and mysticism of the great known Teachers of mankind ; and to enshrine such aspects of this wisdom as are calculated to elevate, enrich, and expand the human consciousness.

The autumn number contains some very interesting matter dealing with hermetic and mystical symbolism. An article is devoted to the Divine Pymander of Hermes Trismegistus, in an attempt to simplify the abstruse nature of that valuable mystical tract. A selection from St. John of the Cross cannot fail to interest Sufi students. An interesting and readable periodical, which cannot fail to interest and will amply repay reading.

R. V. L.

WHAT IS ISLAM ?

WHAT IS ISLAM ?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teaching. For further details please write to the Imam of the Mosque, Woking.]

ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word Islam literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission; as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus to maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHETS OF ISLAM.—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, i.e. the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR-ÂN.—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-ân. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, but, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-ân, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number: belief in (1) Allah; (2) angels; (3) books from God; (4) messengers from God; (5) the hereafter; (6) the measurement of good and evil; (7) resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state, in this life.

The sixth article of faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number: (1) declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) prayer; (3) fasting; (4) almsgiving; (5) pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine of Mecca.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship one God—the Almighty, the All-knowing, the All-just, the Cherisher of all the

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Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the heaven and the earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

FAITH AND ACTION.—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith is of itself insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden, and none can expiate for another's sin.

ETHICS IN ISLAM.—"Imbue yourself with Divine attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels and leading him to the border of Divinity.

THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.—Men and women come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainment. Islam places man and woman under like obligations, the one to the other.

EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

PERSONAL JUDGMENT.—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

KNOWLEDGE.—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

SANCTITY OF LABOUR.—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

CHARITY.—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.