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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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NOTES

Al-Haj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

It is with feelings of profound joy and satisfaction—feelings that will be shared not only by every Muslim in Great Britain, but also by an ever-widening circle of Christian and other friends—that we announce the return to England of Al-Haj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the saintly Founder of the Woking Muslim Mission. During an absence of over two years, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din has, with tireless energy, set himself to the accomplishment of a great and arduous task in India; and though, in that period, the work of the Mission in England has not ceased to move steadily forward, its devoted band of workers will draw fresh courage and a new energy from his inspiring personality.

Eid-ul-Azha.

The Festival of Eid-ul-Azha was celebrated on Thursday, July 2nd, at the Mosque, Woking, in perfect weather. The weather, as we are, perforce, never tired of pointing out, is so important a factor in the celebration of our great Festivals here at Woking, that its mention in such a connection must always be regarded as something more than

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perfunctory. We have been singularly blessed in the past in this matter of weather, but we cannot reasonably expect always to remain immune from those dreadful days of darkness and torrential down-pour, which are the characteristic and the curse of the English climate at any time of the year.

Moreover, as we have remarked before in these columns, as the dates of the Festivals approximate more and more to the winter months, open-air celebration may well become an impossibility. When we are enabled to possess a building capable of accommodating, in the requisite degree of comfort, at least one hundred persons, we shall face each approaching Eid with the greater equanimity.

In spite of the fact of it being Thursday, a day on which it is not always convenient for many of our brethren to absent themselves from their occupations, upwards of two hundred persons assembled on the pine-fringed lawn, where the intermingling, brightly-clad groups, representing all the gorgeous costumes of the East, made a moving colour picture in complete accord with the blaze of the July sun, and Nature's harmony of gold and green.

In the unavoidable absence of Al-Haj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the Founder of the Mission, the prayers were led by Abdul Majid, M.A., Acting-Imám of the Mosque, who also read the sermon, by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, which is printed elsewhere in this issue.

Luncheon, consisting of most appetizing Indian dishes, was served punctually at 1.30 in large marquees erected for the purpose.

Among those present were Sir Ismail Sait, Sir Abdullah Archibald Hamilton, Bart., and Lady Hamilton, Al-Haj the Right Honourable the Lord Headley, members of the staff of the Egyptian Legation, Sheikh Bassan, Baghdad, and N. D. H. Abdul Gafoor and the Hon. N. D. H. Abdul Qadir of Ceylon.

Now that the unsightly factory, which has for so

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long disfigured the precincts of the Mosque on the south and east, is empty, dismantled, and for sale, would it not be possible to redeem a portion of our ancient territory, sufficient at least for erecting a Hall, or other building for use in inclement weather? The opportunity is there. Shall we be able to grasp it?

Diplomacy and National Interest.

The Great War has opened up new phases of diplomacy and of national interest. The attitude of the United States towards the League of Nations has been a source of perplexity to people on this side of the Atlantic Ocean. The League, which was to serve as a means of reconstituting the disintegrated elements of the social organism, was rejected at birth by the American nation, with whom, be it remembered, the idea of such a League had first originated. Such contradictory aloofness has resulted in the misunderstanding which it is challenging to-day. Popular opinion, on this side of the water, holds that a sense of national superiority, in the circumstances not a little grotesque, is holding the United States apart.

While not entirely in accord with such a view, we are forced to admit that it seems to hint at some other sentiment which is for the moment dominating the apparently intricate policy of America. She considers herself too big to join in the cosmopolitan brotherhoods which the League insistently demands, for she is obviously suspicious ever since the Armistice, and would seem to be anxious to "paddle her own canoe" in the rapids of overwhelming circumstances. That some such sentiment actually exists in America is probable enough. But it is not the official sentiment, although it may suit official policy to let it be assumed as an explanation for the present anomalous situation. American statesmanship is in the highest degree practical, and, usually, shrewdly diplomatic. The League of Nations aims at universal peace to the utmost extent that can be found

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practicable in an admittedly imperfect world; and the United States, which has always evinced complete sympathy with that high-sounding doctrine, may step into the arena, in the near future, though some notion of self-interest, natural enough, is keeping her out at present. Dollar-worship is a national quality which even the most sentimentally-minded American cannot disclaim. An astonishing standard of prosperity whets the appetite for still more, which is a universal psychological phenomenon, ever present in the history of human nature. American statesmanship thinks in terms of buying and selling to a degree which the older and possibly loftier European ideals have never assimilated. The end of the Great War opened a disquieting vista to American statesmanship.

The flood-tide of national prosperity can be maintained only by means of a great overflow into foreign markets. The markets of Europe become automatically closed to American trade by the simple reason of the extraordinary disparity of exchange. Therefore American statesmanship, thinking in terms of buying and selling, has to look elsewhere for the maintenance and increase of national and economic superiority. And in that contemplation was heard the call of the East. Persia and China, in particular, loomed with a spacious splendour upon the buying and selling outlook. But a dark cloud lay across the splendour, and the far-off purple horizon seemed darkened by a new phase of intricacies, and a strong opposition from the Japanese quarter, already substantially enriched with the spoil of war trade and trade conventions. So while on the one hand the questions of racial prejudice and the colour bar were launched, the other seized the opportunity of plying an oar in the yellow boat.

Character and Discipline.

What you are, matters most in the world. Be not led away with the idea that great importance

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attaches to what you work at, what you have, or what display you make—the great soul has no need for display or show; his work and what he is will acclaim him great, lives he in what obscurity he may.

Our work and all the circumstances of our lives are given us to this end—that they should mould our characters and either make or mar us, according to the will within us. No man has any power over you that you could not have over yourself; you can either be a slave to circumstances, or you can develop your own individual character.

“What! is he who goes prone upon his face better guided, or he who walks upright upon a straight path?” (Holy Qur-án, lxvii. 22).

If in your youth, when you are serving your probation, you are cut and bruised, and your life is hard with blows, be glad of it, and remember that you are in the hands of the Potter, as Omar Khayyám puts it, Who is moulding you according to His will.

You are to plunge bravely into the world of the living, and stand with no shelter, save what God gives us—go out into the open and grow out of yourself, grow above the pin-pricks, and petty worries of the drudgery of your daily existence, and be thankful from your heart if you begin by being little; from the small seed grows the great tree, with branches diverging in all directions.

It is character that counts! The refining that goes on in our inner selves, as we go through the mill of daily life, the fate we grumble at, the uncongenial work we hate, yet find ourselves obliged to do, the circumstances that make us feel so cramped.

It is a mistake to let ourselves think that we could do something great, had we but the right environment. We can begin here and now whatever we want to be, whatever we wish to do. Use your time, take the opportunity that is with you, and do not wait for the time that you think is coming; it will never come unless you begin now, for it

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lies with yourself—you can reach, from where you stand, any ideal that you sufficiently desire. Be self-sufficient, stand alone, with nothing between you and your God—for Islam has no intercession, everybody is to bear his own cross; take your stand by His side, and be master of your own fate. This does not mean that you are able to command it, but you are so far master over circumstances that an adverse fate does not cause you trouble. You do the will of God, and so learn self-mastery, and through the conquest of self you find your proper work. Your best faculties are released from the slavery of self to search out new ways, new means of employing the gifts, the talents, the genius, whatever it may be that God has given you.

The love of virtue is a different thing. You may wish to possess it; but it is not so easy to acquire. It calls for stern discipline of body, soul and mind; yet without virtue you cannot do the best work and the most lasting. What you have not, you can never give; what does not come from your soul, the world will find very little use for. If your heart is great, with good and holy thoughts, then, and only then, will you touch the souls of men, and they will listen attentively.

See that you choose the hard way and reject all softness and luxury; your character cannot thrive on the sweets and pleasures of life—it needs a rough school, a hard, steep and strong way—a dull way, as you may call it; but it is only a means, and a sure one, to develop what is great and worthy within yourself.

Psychical Research.

Puzzling and weird occurrences have been vouched for among all nations and in every age. It seems, however, possible to relegate, to some extent, a good many alleged occurrences to superstition; but it is not possible thus to eliminate all. Nor is it likely

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that in the present phase of natural scientific development of knowledge and culture, we are acquainted with all the workings and phenomena of the human spirit, and have reduced them to such simplicity as to render them readily intelligible by all. Yet there are many who seem practically to believe in this improbability ; for although they are constrained from time to time to accept novel and surprising discoveries in biology, in chemistry, and in physical science generally, they seem tacitly to assume that these are the only parts of the universe in which fundamental discovery is possible, all the rest being too well known.

But whatever may be thought of the subject by the majority of people at present, it is worth while endeavouring to indicate the possibility that discoveries of the very first magnitude can still be made—are, indeed, in process of being made—by strictly scientific methods, in the region of Psychology ; discoveries quite comparable in importance with those which have been made from time to time during the last century in physics and biology, but whose opportunities for practical application and usefulness may, in like manner, have to remain for some time in the hands of experts, since, perhaps, they cannot at present be miscellaneously absorbed, or even faintly apprehended, by the multitude, without consequent danger.

It has been partly the necessity for caution—the dread of encouraging mere stupid superstition—that has instinctively delayed advance in these branches of inquiry until the progress of education should give a reasonable chance of a sane, balanced and critical reception by a fairly considerable minority. But, within the last century, allegations concerning psychological supernormalities have not only excited general attention, but have, notably, aroused the interest of careful and responsible students, both in the domain of science and in that of letters.

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No phenomenon was to be accepted, while serious research was on foot, which could not make its position good in the face of crucial, repeated and convincing tests. Every class of asserted fact was to have the benefit of such inquiry; none was to be given the benefit of any doubt. So long as doubt was reasonable, the phenomenon was to be kept at arm's length, to be criticized as far as possible, and not to be embraced blindly as true.

It is often cursorily imagined that an adequate supply of the critical and cautious spirit necessary to such investigation is a monopoly of the professed men of science. It is not so. Trained students of literature, not to mention experts in philosophy, have shown themselves as careful as any professed student of science. They have even displayed an excess of caution and vigilance. But, to be frank, scientific incredulity has been so long in growing, and has so many and such strong roots, that ages must pass before it can finally be stifled, even under a mountain of facts.

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THE FIRST COMMAND

By AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

It was in the cave of Hira that the mantle of Prophethood fell on the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The first message of his call was couched in the following words :—

Read in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot. Read and your Lord is most Honourable. Who taught (to write) with the pen. Taught man what he knew not. Nay : man is most surely inordinate. (The Holy Qur-án, xcvi. 1-6.)

A message free from personal or tribal predilection, and at the same time so grand and so majestic—the Gospel for human upliftment. God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, when he was deputed to liberate the Children of Israel from the thralldom of

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Pharaoh. This was the main object which called forth the ministry of Moses. He had also to raise his brethren in Israel to a nation of conquerors and rulers. But he could not accomplish the latter object. Anyhow, his mission was more or less of a tribal nature. Then comes the son of Mary, and the spirit of the Lord descended upon him from Heaven, in the shape of a dove. His message was that *the son of man was the son of God*, with whom his Father was "well pleased." I do not propose to dwell at length on these two messages that Moses and Jesus respectively received from the Most High, at the beginning of their Call to Divine Ministry. Suffice it to say that the mission of the one concerned the affairs of a tribe singled out from thousands of tribes of the world, while that of the other spoke of the personal aggrandizement of some particular personality.

But Muhammad is given a message of quite a different character, soaring above individual or racial interest. It speaks of man as a class. It tells of the highest aim that a son of man is capable of reaching, and of the ways wherewith to accomplish that grand object. The message, in so many words, speaks of *reading and writing*, and of learning sciences unknown to the world in the time of the Prophet. The message is of a universal character, and brings the whole human race within its area. Ponder over the words of these three messages given to the three Prophets, and one becomes impressed at once with the largeness of the soul of the last Prophet. Man is the best product of nature so far as the physical world is concerned. Physical growth reaches its consummation in his frame, and yet this all comes out of a blood-clot, as the above quotation from the Qur-án shows. The Creator of man, as the sacred words tell, Who raised a wonderful creature like man out of a clot, now intends to raise him to the height of mental, moral and spiritual culture. He informs man of this His grand object, through Muhammad; and in the

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very first revelation He discloses the way, and the means whereby to reach that goal.

To put the whole case in a nutshell, man has achieved all that he now possesses through knowledge and science—science that was not known in ancient times, and therefore rightly called modern science. The Qur-án says the same thing. It speaks of knowledge unknown to man before, and the fact that modern science received its inception at the hands of the Muslims, and flourished afterwards, speaks volumes for the portentous prophecy conveyed in the first message to Muhammad (may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him).

No doubt the world was no stranger to reading and writing before Islam, but these arts were confined to a few sanctuaries and convents. The rest of the world had no knowledge of them. How could they come into vogue when the very use of paper was unknown before Islam? Skins of animals, stone tablets, animal-bones and tree-leaves supplied the scanty material for ancient lore to be written upon. Such things could not help the furtherance of reading and writing. Muslims invented paper and gave a large impetus to learning. In fact, reading, the use of the pen, and the learning of “knowledges” not known before, i.e. modern science, were the three chief factors that worked out the greatness of man and brought him to the honourable position he holds now in the whole universe. Here again I would quote the first message to the Prophet, and leave it for you to find out for yourselves whether the very three factors of human magnificence have not been mentioned in these words.

Read in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot. Read and your Lord is most Honourable. Who taught (to write) with the pen. Taught man what he knew not. Nay: man is most surely inordinate. (The Holy Qur-án, xvi. 1-6.)

A man may write volumes to extol the “master,”

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or the prophet whom he follows, but facts are, after all, facts. The grandeur and universal scope of the message to Muhammad eclipses those to Moses and Jesus; and the coming events proved the truth of each. Moses did liberate the children of Jacob from the Egyptian bondage, and Jesus did speak and preach of "Our Father in Heaven." But "Ours" were the Israelites. They were his sole concern. He would weep for Jerusalem; he would go after it like a hen after her chickens. The coming Evangelists, no doubt, widened the scope of his mission to limits never imagined by him. But in his own lifetime he would not throw pearls before swine. He would not give the bread of the children to the dogs. In short, both Moses and Jesus came with missions of a limited scope and of a limited object. But Muhammad comes with a universal mission. He looks to mankind for his ministry. He makes the whole human race his concern. He makes the whole world his diocese. Again, he comes with an object peculiar only to mankind. If Moses stands for liberty, and Jesus interests himself in sermonizing upon love and meekness, Muhammad thinks of something else; without which, liberty, love, meekness or any other human moral, cannot work properly. There is something else in humanity which, if it remains undeveloped, will make of man a brute of the worst type. I mean, wisdom, the power of reasoning and logic. Animals have the sense of liberty. They do care for it. They go after freedom. Love and meekness are also not unknown to them, but man has been given that which has been denied to the animal kingdom. He possesses a peculiar mentality and a consciousness not possessed by animals. I mean, his intelligence. Muhammad stands for the development of this differentiating and characteristic human faculty. In it lay the greatness and grandeur of the human race; and it could not be worked out except through reading, through writing and through learning things

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unknown before. Do we not find the same in the very first revelation to Muhammad as quoted above?

But how could Humanity work out her greatness and reach her goal, if man did not know of his capabilities as well as of his shortcomings? He must know the extent of his progress and the ways to reach it. He must also know his deficiencies and how to avoid them. Could there be any better object for the mission of a prophet than to enlighten humanity on these things? But in this respect all different philosophies, creeds and persuasions of the ancient world could not avail. Evil in man was their chief theme. They all emphasized the evil side of human nature. The Church in the West made sin an inseparable component of humanity; the teacher of Zoroastrianism made man a plaything in the hands of the Spirit of Evil. Buddha could not see anything but trouble and tribulation surrounding man—and that as a consequence of something evil in the nature of man—and his whole salvation was forfeit. The old Sages of Brahmanism could not see anything beautiful and sublime in the God-made world. They saw their happiness only in detachment from it. In short, man did not appear to the ancient world as an entity possessing something good and noble in him. But Muhammad strikes a new note. He gives us the true anatomy, if the word be permitted, of the human mind. Verily, the Qur-án says: "We created man, of goodliest fibre, and made him the lowest of the low, but those who believe and do good deeds, for them is the reward uncut." Man was a microcosm, possessing in himself all that the other units in the universe possessed separately. He was of the best make, but with evil inclinations of the worst type. His capabilities were unlimited, and his destined progress knew no bounds. But if he could soar to the highest of the high, he could also descend to the lowest of the low. This was all unknown to him. Nor did he know the way to develop his powers

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and avoid the snares that beset him. A prophet from God was needed to bring such a message, and I say that one cannot imagine a better mission for such a prophet, than that of bringing the required enlightenment to humanity. It was the mission of the Prophet Muhammad. If Moses, Jesus and many other prophets of the world can rightly be accepted as messengers from God by their respective followers, Muhammad (may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him), undoubtedly has got a prior and better claim to universal allegiance as a true messenger from Allah. I wish to say here a word as to another peculiar trait of humanity which, if not worked out properly, will make hell of a heaven. I speak of our sociable nature. Man must live in society. He cannot be happy without it. Beset as we are with numerous behests and cravings, our inability to satisfy them by individual effort demands the formation of society. We must look to each other's need. We must serve others and be served by them. But the self-seeking nature in us, if not properly controlled, makes havoc among us, and creates all the trouble around us. Oppression, persecution, crimes, offences, disputes, war—all these are the outcome of this peculiar medley of self-seeking tendencies and the sociable nature in man. We need some sort of sacrifice in favour of those around us. We need to cultivate a spirit of brotherhood to improve the said tendency. In this respect, Muhammad can rightly claim to have discovered the specific remedy. He laid down principles of universal brotherhood, and succeeded in establishing it, in his own lifetime. Through this institution he purged Arabia of all its troubles.

The world cries aloud for peace, and peace is still far off. The Great War ended only to lay the foundations of a still greater war. It may break out at any time and reduce humanity to nothing. But if you wish to observe true fellow-feeling, and

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experience the genuine spirit of brotherhood among the heterogeneous units of humanity, that alone can bring peace into the world, go to Mecca and see the drama of fraternity being acted to-day as it really is—the day of Pilgrimage. All man-made barriers of distinction removed, all colour and race-prejudices brushed aside. Men of all rank, plebeian and patrician, clad in the same sort of cloth. Father or son, brother or sister, mother or daughter, the only word for addressing each other according to their age, among those who are strangers to each other in language, colour and race. Everyone trying to serve another, and abstaining from receiving anything in lieu thereof, everyone willing to offer his all for the benefit of the other, everyone rejoicing when deprived of his own goods, if they do but go to meet the others' need. Self-seeking tendencies could not work to the injury of others in such circumstances. This scene of true fraternity goes on for at least five months of every year in Mecca. Mecca has rightly been styled a City of Peace. But to-day Mecca has lost this, its enviable beauty. Those who have lived for centuries in peace within the four walls of this Town of Peace are on "pins and needles." Those who, tired of the world-sordidness and selfishness, used to resort to that centre of true self-abnegation and selflessness, which alone can bring happiness to man, to-day find insurmountable difficulties in their journey thither. But who is responsible for it all? Who has marred the happiness of the Muslim world? The question is not a difficult one to answer. Not Ibn-i-Saud or Ali; they are the instruments and creatures of circumstances. The catastrophe has been brought forth by those who for their imperialistic desires brought Mecca and Hedjaz within the scope of their world politics, making Pilgrimage to Mecca a subject of their political consideration; by those who think that their land-grabbing tendencies cannot work well unless Mecca comes indirectly under their jurisdiction;

SOME OF THE CRITICISMS OF ISLAM

by those who have been wrongly regarding Pilgrimage to Mecca as a subterfuge to cover political gatherings. Ask Lord Headley, and from his personal experience he will give the lie to these hallucinations of Western politicians. The Khilafat and the Pilgrimage have long been thorns in the flesh to astute diplomats. One, they think, they have shattered to pieces, and concerning the other they are devising schemes.

These are, at least, Muslim impressions in general. Some call the British Government a Muslim Government, because Muslims constitute the great majority of British subjects. If the Government is wise, it will respect our susceptibilities. We are entitled to look to it for the redress of all these wrongs. We do not wish it to interfere in the affairs of Mecca; but we know that Mecca can be restored to its *status quo* without such interference being so apparent as to cause offence even to the most sensitive.

SOME OF THE CRITICISMS OF ISLAM

By KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

(Continued from Vol. XIII, No. 7, p. 244.)

THE PARABLES OF THE QUR-ÁN.

THE last book of God is not a Book of legend and stories. It refers to certain events in the lifetime of the other prophets, and mostly of the house of Jacob; but it takes them to illustrate certain truths which the Book intends to teach to its readers. Some of its narratives differ from those on the same subject that we find in the Bible. This divergence of detail in the two Books has invited criticism from some of the European writers, tending to impeach the claim of the Qur-án to be of Divine origin. The Qur-án could not come from the All-Knowing God, the critics say, if its version of the said episodes differs from that given in the Bible. The logic, with all its plausibility, betrays a fallacy. They start with premises the truth

of which is yet to be established. Undoubtedly if the version of the Bible be admitted as coming from God, the claim of the Qur-án as coming from the same source must fall to the ground. But, thanks to present-day researches, and the Higher Criticism on the Bible, the position of our critics is not tenable. The Bible is admittedly full of folk-lore. Many of its legends have been discredited, so much so that clergymen of high distinction in England, in 1916 refused to take oath as to the genuineness of the Scriptures, or to accept them as Divinely inspired. No one now believes in the ark of Noah, and the story of Jonah's fish. The first five books of the Old Testament, they say, did not come from Moses. They would not suffer the Prayer Book to remain on their tables, because it contains certain psalms that should be expunged from the Bible. The concluding eleven verses of the last chapter of St. Mark and the well-known verse in the Gospel of St. John that supports the belief in the Trinity, have been proved to be an accretion to the oldest manuscripts—a fact which was discovered by the first English translators of the Bible, in the days of James I. If the Biblical records are, then, deficient in genuineness, they cannot supply good criteria for testing the claim of the Qur-án to rank as the Word of God. The Qur-án need not turn to these Scriptures for its truth. It has got in it inherent proof to substantiate its claims. As regards the end of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who, as the Talmud says, “rebelled excessively against the Most High,” we find some divergence between the statements of the Qur-án and the Bible. The Bible does not mention that the body of Pharaoh, when he was drowned with his hosts, was cast ashore; but the Qur-án says :—

When drowning overtook him he (Pharaoh) said : I believe that there is no God but He in whom the children of Israel believe, and I am of those who submit.

What ! now ! and indeed you disobeyed before, and you were of the mischief-makers.

SOME OF THE CRITICISMS OF ISLAM

But We will this day deliver your body that you may be a sign to those after you.¹

These verses show that the body of Pharaoh was cast ashore and was delivered to his people to be preserved as a sign to the coming generations. This Qur-ánic statement, which gives a version of the story quite different from that which appears in Exodus, aroused criticism in the West. The statement itself was considered as sufficient to throw doubt on the claim of the Qur-án as a Revealed Book, because the Bible was silent, nor did history show that the body of Pharaoh had been preserved. But modern Egyptian archæology substantiates the Qur-ánic statement. The body of Rameses II, the Pharaoh of Moses, as preserved among the mummies in Egypt² has been discovered. This instance in itself is sufficient to prove the unreliability of the Bible narratives, and the truth of the Qur-ánic version. The discovery has been made in our days, and could not be known to the Holy Prophet, especially when the world's knowledge, based upon the Bible, was otherwise. This one instance in itself establishes that the Qur-án comes from a Divine Source. It not only discloses what occurred after Pharaoh was drowned, but it also refers to our own times, when the drowned body should be brought to light. The words of the Qur-án, "But We will this day deliver your body that you may be a sign to those after you," are conclusive. "Those after you" proved to be our generation, who come some thirteen hundred years after the Prophet Muhammad. The Qur-ánic narrative speaks of two events, one that occurred some two thousand years before him, and the other that occurs in our day. How could the Holy Prophet have such an exact knowledge, expressed in the clearest terms without oracular ambiguity? "That you may be a

¹ Al-Qur-án, x. 90-92.

² *Encyclopædia Britannica*, art. "Mummy."

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sign to those after you ”—a prophecy proved literally. Can my critics refer to any prophecy elsewhere that has been given in unambiguous language? But apart from the historical parables in the Qur-án, the Book reveals many a scientific truth of quite recent discovery. It establishes that the Book given to Muhammad did come from Allah, and that the Voice he heard, with its message for humanity, was from the Most High.

To do full justice to the subject would require a voluminous book. The Qur-án abounds with references to this subject, upon which, however, inasmuch as it scarcely comes within the purview of the present article, I must perforce content myself with a few observations. It should, however, be borne in mind that the Sacred Book is not a treatise on material science. It lays down a general and a universal principle that everything, on any plane in the world—physical, intellectual, or spiritual—is governed by the same laws. The whole universe, emanating from one Great Mind, is under a sort of Monism. Whatever obtains in one plane, the same works in all other planes. It is with this principle in view that the Book so often refers to various natural phenomena within the cognizance of our senses, in order to elucidate and illustrate moral and spiritual truths promulgated in it. By way of induction, verities on physical planes are referred to by the Qur-án to explain truths uncognizable by ordinary senses. It is in this connection that the Qur-án discloses certain truths that have only recently come within scientific knowledge. For example, as to the Emanation of the Universe, the Qur-án speaks of some kind of “ Light ” that gave birth to the whole universe in its most embryonic form ; and out of the said Light arose electricity.¹ The first form, of our

¹ Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the earth ; a likeness of His light is as a pillar on which is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass, (and) the glass is as it were a *brightly shining star* . . . gives light though fire touch it not (Al-Qur-án, xxiv. 35).

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globe, in the words of the Qur-án, was a burning fiery gaseous matter, that afterwards assumed the form of some kind of water. Then, speaking of rocky mountains, the Book says that the earth being in a tremulous condition, so much so that one could hardly stand upon it,¹ rock and mountain came into creation, to balance the earth and make it steady. Not the animal or the vegetable world only, but everything in any order—from ether up to man—came into existence only through pairs of different things. In this respect, the Book of God lays down a principle of universal applicability when it says: “And out of everything We created pairs.”² As to the appearance of life, science still holds a diversity of theories. It is as yet a riddle, inasmuch as life appears suddenly in the organic world; it acts as an overseer, and arranges all the material received by every organism in its proper form and place. Some have held that the vivifying principle descended from certain planets. But the Qur-án is very clear on the point. “Water,” it says, “gives birth to life.”³

Concerning the creation of man, the Book speaks of him as an essence of clay; various things that come out of the earth contain in them the essence of everything in it, culled forth in their best form. Man takes them in, in his food and drink, which give birth to genital seeds. Things that grow out of the bowels of the earth come, in the first instance, from the upper regions, either in the form of the light that each luminary sheds towards the earth, or through water that descends from above. The light, as well as other ethereal matters, thus coming down from the heavens, passes to the recesses of the earth, and makes her pregnant. The earth then gives birth to

¹ And He it is who spread the earth and made in it firm mountains (Al-Qur-án, xiii. 3).

And He has caused great mountains in the earth lest it might be convulsed with you (xvi. 15). And He created the mountains as pegs (lxxviii. 7),

² Al-Qur-án, li. 49.

³ xxi. 30.

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her various products—vegetables, minerals, and other things that contain in them starch, sugar, grease, condiments, proteids, phosphorus, and liquids. These things give birth to the genital seed. The seed becomes located in the womb, where it passes through other evolutionary stages up to the human consciousness. These truths have recently come within our knowledge, but the Qur-án has spoken of all of them with scientific accuracy.

And We send down water from the cloud according to a measure, then We cause it to settle in the earth, and most surely We are able to carry it away.

Then We cause to grow thereby gardens of fruits, and from them do you eat.

And a tree that grows out of Mount Sinai which produces oil and condiment for those who eat.

And most surely there is a lesson for you in the cattle. We made you to drink of what is in their bellies, and you have in them many advantages.¹

And certainly We created man of an extract of clay.

Then We made him a small life-germ in a firm resting-place. Then We made the life-germ a clot, then We made the clot a lump of flesh, then We made (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, then We caused it to grow into another creation, so blessed be Allah, the best of the Creators.²

I need not comment upon these verses. They are quite clear in themselves.

I have made mention of seven things necessary to constitute the protoplasm. The Qur-án, of course, does not name them in scientific phraseology ; nevertheless in the above quotations it speaks in the clearest terms of those things that constitute plasmic congeries, not excluding even “condiments.” As to the starry world, that begins its work at night-time by piercing into the seams of the earth, thus making her pregnant, the Qur-án says :—

Consider the heaven and the comer by night ; and what will make you know what the comer by night is,—the star that is bright, piercing, and making things pregnant. . . . Consider the heavens that pour and the earth that receives and splits (with plants).³

¹ Al-Qur-án, xxiii. 18–21. ² xxiii. 12–14. ³ lxxxvi. 1–3, 11–12.

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The quotation reminds me of another wonderful revelation that Science has only recently discovered about the liquid nature of the ether in which stars float. The Qur-án says, when speaking of the heavenly bodies :—

All float in their respective sphere.¹

The subject, as I said before, needs a book to itself which, if God wills, will very soon see the light of day from my pen. But what I have said here supplies ample food for thought to the seeker after truth. These revelations could not have been made, even by a trained scientist, in the days of the Prophet. They could only be revealed by the Omniscient Lord, the Knower of the Seen and the Unseen.

MORALITY—RELIGION

By A. KHALIQ KHAN, B.A.

(Continued from Vol. XIII, No 7, p. 258.)

No anthropologist would ever deny the fact that morals have a smaller range of action and influence than Religion, into which, indeed, they become eventually absorbed.

It now becomes necessary to consider, for a moment the idea of Life after Death. The belief in this idea has had a reformatory influence on the individual mind, and has exercised a very distinct control over individual life and action. It means accountability for one's deeds on earth, the consequences of which happen partly here ; while the full extent of all they have involved will be made known in the hereafter. This idea has through all ages greatly assisted in the establishment of morality. But later on, among the profounder thinkers, the strong-willed persons, this idea of God and of His exposing the consequences of our actions, good or bad, and of His being a stern,

¹ Al-Qur-án, xxiii. 40.

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corrective Judge, was wonderfully changed into love; so that they never thought of His wrath, but only of His love, obeyed His commandments from love, not fear, and made His Love the goal of their life, for which they strove mightily, even at the sacrifice of property, home and life itself. But the truth is that it is impossible for us to see the living God, unless a death comes first over all our earthly passions and desires. The day on which death comes over our earthly life is the beginning of the triumph of the spirit over the flesh. This is very beautifully depicted in Islam, and is summed up in the words of the last Prophet: "Die before natural death overtakes you." This can never be achieved until we have a real belief in His being, and a strong conviction in His help, and in His hearing our humble supplications, which is the nucleus of Muslim faith and life. This further produces a kind of energy and strength that thrill our very being, so that we begin to face boldly any obstacle in life, any trial or tribulation. The strong conviction is the effect of belief in One God and accountability of our action to Him; such belief in such a Being was the past glory and achievement of the Muslims. Morality certainly cannot engender such a strong conviction as does Religion. It is here that Religion stands above and beyond Morality.

The idea of fear in our conception of the Supreme Being is very conducive to morals; but if that idea stand by itself and be once shaken, the whole religious structure falls to the ground; man loses the restraining influences of Morality, and his religion degenerates into a thing of rites and ceremonies, becoming ultimately a shadow without substance, a cult without essence, and a habit without meaning.

You can find this sublime aspect of Religion, degenerated into a cult, in Judaism, described by Christ as Pharisaism; in Christianity described by Luther as "a system of good works"; and later on, in Lutherism, described by Herbert Spencer as ortho-

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doxy, in each of which the degeneracy has become such that a sense for moral feelings is paralysed altogether. Then it is that a hotbed of fanaticism is prepared for further destructive conflagration. Now it remains to see whether Religion and Morality, in origin so closely connected and seemingly so inseparable, have become thus linked by circumstance or by chance, and whether a complete code of Morality without Religion, a code strong enough to stand the hard test of time, is a practical proposition for the future. These questions are at the moment of great importance, and demand a reasonable solution.

We find that modern scientific discoveries and the present-day social tangles have shaken the foundation of morality in the minds of the young, and, so to say, have corroded them; with a resultant weakening of the theory that Morality and Religion are inseparably connected. The educated class has acquired a peculiar abhorrence of the Church; while the materialistic tendencies of the age have not only infected individual minds, but have already a strong grip on the masses.

This is the case with every religion which after ages even, or decades, may turn into formalism or fanaticism, losing its pristine purity, while the outer structure—that is to say, the formalism—remains to delude the majority into the idea that it is the essence. But in the time to come, when riper mentality and cultured minds realize, in the light of scientific truth, the weakness of all these self-made ideas and mysteries, a truer philosophy on a sound basis will come to the fore, and a wave of general reformation will result. So here the opposite theory has sprung up—to wit, that Religion and Morality, like Metaphysics and Ethics, are distinct systems. Moreover, it is asserted in educated circles that the individual life is altogether separate and independent. That life is, indeed, a thing quite separate and independent of any

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conception, which we may make concerning the present constitution of the world or its environment.

A man may be a sceptic, materialist, atheist, polytheist or agnostic, uttering blasphemy against God, and still be a member of the commonwealth or society. His morality, his judgment on his own moral values, need not be reflected in his conception of the social constitution. Religion is looked upon as a private matter, rather than as an essential element in the structure of Society. Nationalism has taken deep root in its stead. Morality and the social constitution do not overlap. The whole individual life has undergone a sudden transformation, and this evolution of thought, the belief in the Life after Death, has lost its strong hold on youthful minds, with the result that the idea of our accountability for our actions has faded into oblivion.

This belief, though, with many, purely academic, yet when viewed as a practical reality must always constitute a most effective influence on the individual mind. Islam is up against such a destructive transformation. In Islam the conception of the Unity of God and the belief in the Life after Death, serve as a strong impetus to noble and selfless actions, where, but for their presence, callousness would gain predominance in human character, destroying human life and distorting action.

But inasmuch as immorality is not always the result of unbelief, so the moral life is not always that of belief, and *vice versa*. A man with no special belief (religion)—that is to say, a belief free from any sort of dogma—may be quite as honourable and trustworthy as another, and sometimes even a zealous idealist; while, on the other hand, the man who strongly believes in Church dogmas, and takes these to be the essence of life, is apt to be proud, crooked in his dealings, and unworthy of Christ himself. We may, then, conclude that Religion and Morality are neither quite inseparable, as some philosophers

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take them to be, nor quite one, but they overlap one another according to the circumstance and period. We see that what is the demand of Morality, finds realization in Religion. It is here that we can discriminate between the lives and characters of the respective heroes of each, the Philosopher and the Prophet—the former a man of much theory and little practice, the latter an eminently practical personality—and at the same time a model for Humanity in its highest aspiration.

Religion raises and beautifies individual life. It leads in the new democracy; while Morality never idealizes or beautifies any action that smacks of the material.

“The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.”

“For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” Is it not somewhat too grave a risk to take with life, to give excessively of time and attention to the material things which are transitory and perishable? These are the things that one day, when the silent summons comes, as come it will to all of us, we leave behind, and we realize that they cannot help us even the tiniest bit, when we return to give an account of our talents and our stewardship to the God Who gave them.

Each individual has his problems, and each has his points of weakness and his elements of strength. There are times in the life of the strongest and the richest, as well as of the poorest and the weakest, when the insufficiency of the self is keenly felt. It is here, then, that the strongest man turns to Religion for aid, and to its source—the Fountain Head of Purity and Glory.

No great personality can ever be imagined as devoid of that mighty uplifting religious sense. It is this secret that has caused wonders to be worked in the personalities of the prophets, seers, sages and

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reformers, and all the great mystics down through all ages; and no personality in the world is more beautiful or more winning than he through whom the Spirit of God habitually radiates, and in whom faith, courage and tranquillity merge into the forms of love, sympathy and goodwill for all. Verily, such an one is "imbued with the colour of God," and absorbs the rays of His Everlasting Mercy. He is lifted into the sense of the eternal, in the midst of the overwhelming difficulties, the problems, and even the sorrows of common life, where a philosopher, moral man though he be, has neither the courage to advance nor the backbone to resist.

It is on account of his spiritual basis and strong religious conviction, nowhere found in the moral sphere, and that inner sense which recognizes the essential oneness of all life with one common centre, that no man can live unto himself alone and be happy. The established laws of the universe are all against such a theory of existence—and that is why the self-centred life is always unhappy and filled with remorse and discontent.

The love that is real is always characterized by a spirit of ready and helpful service. It is always the men of a spirit higher than the level of a system of social morality intended for a small sect or community, who have pushed the world along, who have stood firm, and have beaten back the forces of selfishness and tyranny, injustice and greed; and who have cleared the way that men might rise more readily to higher and yet higher planes of mental, moral and spiritual elevation. It is the men with high spiritual ideals and strong convictions who will be the great dynamic forces in this gigantic social and economic reconstruction that lies immediately ahead of us to-day.

The spirit is worth more than the letter, and loving ministration more than burnt-offerings and sacrifice. God does not want men merely to be

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sociable in a sort of family circle, with laws for the regulation and organization of a small sect or community, or even nation on a small scale ; but to extend their law, or morality, into a feeling of common brotherhood and cordiality to all mankind. And no law or religion agrees so accurately with the above definition as Islam—which means the Message of Peace and Concord for the human race.

This is Islam, which tells us how to live and let live, on this earth, which is God's, and that every creature of His has an allotted share in it. This, the last and best organized religion, finds its expression Godward, and manward, with a proportionate balance ; not like some other religions that incline unduly either to the one or the other.

From a psychological standpoint, the holding up of a high ideal, the concentration of thought upon the social ideals of the last Prophet, Muhammad, who is called "a mercy for all," and in whom we find the greatest model for humanity, will produce results that cannot be easily understood by a mere materialist. This and the idea of the Life after Death—that is to say, of accountability for our actions—is the power that can make a man immune from the evil round about him, and even give him power over environment itself, to make it subservient to the great cause which he has in hand.

Here, then, is the line of demarcation between the spheres of activity of the lives of a prophet and a philosopher. Both enjoin good ;—but the former by his example, while the latter by his precept. And example is better than precept.

Bu Ali Sena, the wise saint, was once questioned by one of his staunch pupils as to why he would not claim to rank as a prophet ? The great and serene master, after a deliberate silence, asked the pupil to go and stand naked in a tank just in front of the house. The pupil being annoyed for being so abruptly held at bay, and being unable to follow the

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wit of the rejoinder, in a deprecating voice appealed to his master's sense of reason as to why he should direct him to stand in water on such a cold bleak winter's day. The master laughed and said there lay the difference between a philosopher and a prophet. How dared the pupil ask him to put forward a claim to be considered a prophet when he had not been able to win one such disciple, sufficiently devoted to sacrifice his life for him without launching out into arguments to show why he ought not to be asked to do so !

Let us try to find a solution for the present-day social tangle. The conflicts between Capital and Labour, the struggles, the hatred, the enormous losses, the utter uselessness of it all, entail an infinitely greater loss than if the two parties were at actual war with the most deadly of modern weapons ; for one side can never destroy the other without feeling the loss and realizing its share of the destruction.

Consider, moreover, how much after all there is of interdependency. What would the capitalist, the employer, do without his employees ? And what would the employee do without the carefully managed organization of his employer ? They cannot give an answer, nor can the State. It is here that Religion steps in.

Now each must rise, somehow or other, to the plane of putting himself in the other's place. It is this alone, this goodwill element, that will effect a "getting together" on a truly sensible basis ; with the honest Islamic desire, eager to stand each in the other's place, and thus be enabled to see how it is that the interest of the one becomes likewise the interest of the other.

Then will an enlightened "self-interest" permeate and bind together the discordant elements into one harmonious whole. Otherwise the capitalist with his aristocratic traditions and dignity, without realizing the situation of the labourer and his environment,

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will callously set to work to extract as much labour and energy out of the labourer with as much zest as the labourer will infuse into his task of extracting as much pay and doing as little work as practicable.

Islam's chief object in view throughout all its institutions is to raise humanity; and the second branch of its precepts relates to man's duty towards man. "The person who violates his brother's right is not a believer in the Unity of God," is a teaching that deserves to be written in gold. Islam abolishes all invidious class distinctions. Mankind is but a family, according to the Holy Qur-án, which says: "O men, We have created you all of a male and a female, and then made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the noblest amongst you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most careful of his duties" (xlix. 13).

Take, again, the case of nations and international relations; saturate them with the right sort of spirit of common brotherhood and love. Take them higher up than the sphere of national morality and an otherwise prejudiced mentality, to the humanitarian moral circle, and then these petty quarrels will dissolve, prejudices disappear, and international animosity will no longer perturb the international representatives in the League of Nations. This sort of right spirit can only be engendered by a religion which is simple as well as natural, sufficient to fold in its universal embrace the whole of humankind—a consummation which could certainly never be accomplished by morality with its limited sphere of activity.

The long-looked-for League of Nations has not as yet been much of a success, in spite of its claims to a higher morality and more polished civilization; nor has it, as yet, been able to reconcile the jarring elements of society, in the way in which Islam, with its pristine purity, its simple and universal organization, still attracts millions of pilgrims of different

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racess to Kaba, the house of Unity, from all quarters of the world, without friction. Many are the nations and communities represented at the great yearly Muslim League at Mecca. Hajj is the real bond of the Muslim Unity. Why? Because it is a religious institution that carries more weight and more force than a moral precept. Here, too, we find Religion taking predominance over Morality, whose circle is small and not universal.

The immense armaments of the Powers can only be reduced if this spirit of love animates the international mind, and a common Court of Arbitration be established. The laws of reason and mutuality can be founded on love, to take the place of prejudice, race-hatred and destructiveness, the waste of money and energy, the mobilization of destructive forces and the shuddering horrors of "after the war."

Islam's democracy has a religious root. It encompasses humanity. Its idea of common brotherhood and peace must be sought for, if the nations who have been at each other's throats can find such a thing. It would serve as the mightiest force for the regulation of social, economic, moral and civic well-being.

We must remember also that where there is love there God dwells.

ISLAM AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF EUROPE

By DR. H. MARCUS, PH.D. (Berlin)

(Translated from the German by ABDUL MAJID, M.A.)

ISLAM is the youngest of all the great revealed religions of mankind. It is also the most modern of them—that is to say, the most advanced and progressive. The question, then, arises: Is there such a thing as progress? And if there is, wherein does it manifest itself? The question has been discussed endlessly. Wilhelm Dilthey, who probably thought

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most deeply over this problem, comes to the conclusion that, at least, progress of human intelligence and knowledge is a well-established fact. Before him, Hegel visualized the history of the world as one process of a steadily advancing consciousness. All progress is, therefore, in the first place, rational—a progress of Intellect. And it is this rational characteristic which distinguishes Islam. Islam, of all the religions, is by far the most rational; for it demands nothing of you which cannot be brought to agree with the human intellect; nay, it says clearly that all its teachings are necessarily derived from Intellect. In Islam, the historical remains in the background, yielding place, as it were, to the eternal substance of truth. And in contrast to other religions, Islam wishes to keep itself in consonance with the progress of learning and thought. Now as Islam attaches very little importance to dogmas, and as it allows its followers a great freedom of thought, there is in it no such fearful conflict between belief and knowledge as that which is splitting the European mental life of to-day.

The rational, moreover, is the atmosphere in which pure philosophic thought moves. The thought of the eighteenth century, of the so-called classical or philosophical age, was especially rational; nay, rationalistic. It was first in the eighteenth century that voices were raised demanding a natural religion. Such a natural religion is offered by Islam.¹ The greatest thinker of the eighteenth century is Kant, whose 200th anniversary was celebrated a few months

¹ Cf. free rendering of the following verses :—

“Surely the religion which gives a true knowledge of God and directs in the most excellent way of His worship is Islam” (The Holy Qur-án, iii. 18).

“Islam responds to and supplies the demands of human nature and God has created man after the model of Islam and for Islam, that is to say, He has willed it that man should devote his faculties to the love, obedience and worship of God. It is for this reason that Almighty God has granted him faculties which are suited for Islam” (The Holy Qur-án, xxx. 30).

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ago. It is really astonishing to find that, notwithstanding the difference of the historical customs—which will be, none the less, quite intelligible after what has been said above—it is possible to establish innumerable points of concord between Kant and Islam.

Kant, in his *Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft*,¹ gives the German philosophy a fundamental turn from theory to reality. Kant deals with the practical shaping of life through the intellectual ideas: God, freedom and immortality. And this, too, is the view of Islam, which says that the practical shaping of man's life in all cases must precede everything. Especially, Islam cannot and will not seek to understand and tolerate the difference and the distance between theory and practice, the distance which one encounters in Europe and at which Kant, as he grew older and older, shuddered all the more. Kant's "regulative ideas," God, freedom, immortality, are, as central ideas, analogous to those of Islam, and they function with the same significance. The great principle of the Kantian ethics runs thus: "Do as you would have all others in your place to do." And Islamic moral teaching gives expression to the same idea in various sayings. The principle of Kant lays the foundation of a course, better than any other principle, in the good of society and the feeling of common love for mankind. The general love for mankind is the highest postulate of the Islamic view of life, which values a good action more than all the other virtues. Islam, moreover, deduces the love for mankind in another way, namely, from the all-oneness of God, Whose children men are. And here Islam coincides quite independently with, and borders on, the wisdom of Spinoza, whose highest principle is composed of the all-oneness of God. Spinoza's conception of causality, which declares the necessity and the compulsoriness of every kind of occurrence, bows to the will of God, in like submission

¹ "Criticism of Practical Reason."

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to that professed by Islam. The true conception of the Muslim faith is closely connected with Spinoza's *amor dei intellectualis*.

Kant demands moral conduct of man, not only that the moral conduct of an individual may beneficially affect the collective social welfare, but also because an individual himself receives a personal value therefrom, as becoming worthy to be classed as man, only when he behaves morally. Similarly, Islam attaches a great importance to the fact that we should do good because every good deed which we perform perfects our own selves first; every good act that we do exerts, at the same time, its influence on us, and, through practice, makes the good in us our second nature.

In teaching us to think not only of others but also of the ego, Islam connects the social with the individual position. And in this way we get a side-light on Nietzsche, who, too, believes, like Islam, that we, through the discipline of our own being, can attain to higher and ever higher stages of self-perfection, the last of which would be manifested in the "superman." Nietzsche discloses the ideal of the superman as a perspective for the development of humanity in this world. But Islam goes a step farther than Nietzsche, because it believes that the progress begun in this world is to be continued in the life hereafter. The paradise of Islam is not, as the European is erroneously accustomed to picture it to himself, a place of voluptuous and sensual enjoyment, earned in reward for a life of abstinence; but a place of new and unimaginable possibilities of development for the soul, after it has cast away its earthly limitations and worldly trappings. Our earthly life is, according to the teachings of Islam and the Islamic view of the world, only a step in an endless process of education, which is represented by the worldly course of events and happenings.¹ One

¹ Cf. Maulvi Muhammad Ali's elaborate Preface (pp. x-xii) to the Holy Qur-ān.

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can see very easily that ideas like these were first cultivated by Lessing among the German thinkers. And Goethe feels the same when, after having, through his eighty years, ransacked carefully all earthly things, he says that he wished that fate was duty bound to allot him in his life hereafter a new and greater field of work !

Islam distinguishes three stages of inward ripeness: the stage of material and physical existence, the stage of moral life, and the stage of perfection—that is to say, spiritual perfection.¹ Islam does not condemn the physical aspect of man in the way Christianity does. Islam recognizes, like Nietzsche, the importance of the body for the mind ; and, like him, Islam demands the disciplining of the body, but never its mortification. Heroic discipline of the physical and animal that is in us—this is the aim of the Islamic fasting month. But again, fasting should not annihilate physical existence in the manner aimed at by the various ordinances, to that end, of mediæval Christianity. Christian asceticism possesses a character which is detrimental to the interests of life ; Islamic asceticism, on the other hand, possesses a character which is helpful to the interests of life. Discipline is self-control. Spinoza coined for it the phrase “ control of passions and emotions.” The great means for the subjection of passions is a powerful and a good will. The good and strong will is demanded by Islam of everybody. And the good will is, according to Kant, the only real good on the face of the earth—*summum bonum*. One sees that there are everywhere points of coincidence between Islam and the deepest European thought.

Now the question arises : What criteria should the good will use to distinguish between good and bad ? And herein we find in Islam a vast differ-

¹ The reader may compare with advantage the well-known book by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, entitled *The Teachings of Islam*, Lahore, 1921, pages 8-121, on this aspect of the subject.

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ence in comparison with other religions; for the criteria of other religions are absolute, while those of Islam are modern—that is to say, relative. Judaism demands of you justice as the absolute, the only criterion; Christianity, charity and love for one's neighbour, but Islam demands of you that you should, at every time and occasion, adopt the right middle course between the "too-much" and the "too-little," both of which are evils. The old Latin formula, "*Fiat justitia, pereat mundus*," which means "Let justice adopt its own course, no matter if the world be annihilated for it!" shows that "every extreme leads us into bankruptcy" (Goethe). This aphorism tells us plainly that justice, too, can turn into a destructive callousness, if it be made use of mechanically; conversely, again, love can lead us to instability and lack of steadiness, from its very lack of hardness. This is why Islam refrains from giving absolute rules for obedience and allegiance. And inasmuch as Islam is the most rational religion, it expects from its followers, above all, an independent process of thought in which the right middle course in the conflicts of conscience and life in the individual, is left to the believing Muslim, to be decided by himself according to the situation and the circumstances of each several case. Nay, it is only the power of his own decision which raises man from the physical stage to the moral stage. And here it is that we find the key to that which we, in Europe from time immemorial, have been terming "Oriental wisdom." It is the tolerant weighing of both sides of a situation and the finding out of the right middle course between two extremes. It is the capacity to rise above party considerations, while remaining a member of a party. Wherever it becomes possible for us Europeans to adopt such an attitude, there we speak of it and advertise it as "scientific objectivity." This scientific objectivity is the self-understood element

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of the life of an Islamic man. But all the same, the principle of the right middle course between the two opposites is not unknown to European philosophy. We owe this to the great Greek thinker Aristotle, who founded his Ethics on this very principle. But it has never forced its way into the religions of Europe—that is, it has never, as in the Orient, become, as it were, a commonplace of life.

The tolerant consideration of every point of view in the belief that such consideration will reveal the right middle course, celebrates its highest triumph in the point of view which distinguishes Islam, above all, from other religions. It is the “doctrine of Prophet-hood,” common to all the revealed religions. To a Muslim all the prophets of all the peoples—Moses, Christ, Buddha—are the apostles of God of equal rank. And again it is the teachings of these prophets which Muhammad (peace be upon him !) claims to summarize, to condense, to comprehend, to recapitulate and to supplement, but never to abolish and abrogate.¹ In this way we have in Islam, really in the religious domain, realized that which hovered as its greatest task before the philosophy of, say, a Leibnitz : “*coincidentia oppositorum*,” which means the union and amalgamation of contraries and contrasts. Thereby Islam offers probably the best, the most excellent, example of that historical “synthesis” which was delineated by the historical philosophy of Hegel.

Now as the teachings of Kant form the red thread which runs through the whole of modern philosophical thought, it is not astonishing to learn that a reflection, a speculation such as ours is, should also return to the old philosopher of Königsberg. As contrasted with lesser and more flexible minds, Kant has grown continually, with his advancing years of life, to be unyielding and consistent in his moral demands. Although an old man, he still comes forward, under

¹ Compare Qur-án, xcvi. 2-4.

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the most difficult political circumstances, to champion democracy as the best and the most just form of State, and to uphold the cause of eternal peace amongst the peoples. Kant, the greatest German philosopher, is a democrat and a pacifist, very much in contrast to the greatest German General, Moltke, who believed that an eternal peace was a chimera—a phantom. But Islam is on the side of Kant. It preaches democracy as the broadest basis for the selection of the ablest leaders. And “peace” is, again, that word which, of all the expressions of his language, springs most frequently to the lips of a good Muslim. For “*Assalam-o-alai-kum*” (“Peace be with you”) is the daily greeting of a Muslim.

The fact that the spirit of Islam and the spirit of Europe should touch one another in so many fundamental thoughts, creates for both of them, on account of the truth contained in these ideas, the right to hope that with a larger understanding for our Oriental brethren and friends, there would come into existence a world-State of humanity and a good world-citizenship, in the place of the present world-State of jarring nationalities, and a citizenship whose groping ideals can reach no farther than its own State.

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

THE following letter will prove of interest to our readers:—

To the Editor of the INVERNESS COURIER.

SIR,—The letters from Mr. J. G. Macpherson and Mr. C. A. Welch in your issue of March 17th have been mislaid, or they would have been answered long since, but the delay is not of very much consequence because the subject is one which should not be hurried; indeed, it is unwise to show haste where the issues are so easily confused, and where men's feelings often get the better of their judgment.

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Your correspondents have both failed to grasp the point I wished to emphasize. It is this: the dogmas of Christianity are so many stumbling-blocks to the advancement of true religion; whereas the sister religion of Islam—with *exactly the same ends in view*—is almost entirely free from such obstacles. Making the dogmas of vital importance is emptying the Churches. Crimes against God and man alone should be considered as being of vital importance—what I or any other man chooses to “think” of the Trinity or the sacraments can hardly be of the smallest importance one way or the other. A matter of mere belief cannot be held to be of vital necessity, because no harm is done by thinking, whereas the commission of sins constitutes a danger to our fellow-creatures.

It seems to me to be a question of great moment in these days, how far religion should be hampered with complicated appendages. It is also a hopeful sign that people are beginning to question whether a belief in such entanglements is really necessary for their eternal salvation. We all know that these dogmas of Christianity had no more to do with Christ than the excesses of a mad Mullah had to do with Muhammad; but we do know that they were introduced into an alleged Christian Church by monks and priests who aimed at power—*temporal* power. The power was gained, as is shown to this day, by a free exploiting of the terrors of the unknown.

The creed of Athanasius is perhaps the most glaring and impudent instance of sacerdotal jugglery to be found anywhere. It was purposely made a complicated puzzle which was incapable of solution except with the aid of a priest.

The “holy” man *had* to be called in to interpret the jargon and, once in, he made full use of his opportunities and gained temporal advantages by the promise of heaven—to which he alone had the key—and by enlarging upon the horrors of hell, down the sloping path to which he had full authority to kick anyone daring to doubt the Catholick Faith, or failing to “think of the Trinity” in the manner prescribed in the Athanasian Creed. There is good in all religions, and there is much good in Christianity, in spite of the hard cruelty expressed in its condemnatory creed: the good is there, not because of the dogmas, but in spite of them.

A matter of mere belief or opinion should never entitle any man to perdition. Because I am less credulous than another, should I have a lower place in the next world? Because I am perfectly candid, and open my heart to God, and say exactly what I really and truly feel and believe, will He frown because of my honesty to Him, to Whom “all hearts be open, all desires known”? It seems utterly contrary to the most elementary justice to condemn anyone to everlasting damnation for believing or not believing anything. What right has any man to bind another’s conscience?

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

When a mere boy I never could reconcile the doctrines of Christianity with my own inborn conception of justice, mercy, and truth. It all seemed so hard and cruel that the murder of the poor carpenter's Son should have been rendered necessary just because something had gone wrong with the scheme of creation for which the Great Creator alone was responsible. Sin had somehow crept in and spoilt things to an alarming extent ; but how was the state of affairs to be made better by murdering an innocent person ? Here was the idea of the pagan god who had to be propitiated by the shedding of innocent blood. In very ancient days certain tribes were in the habit of allowing their priests to tie a youthful victim to a stone altar and cut out his heart with a flint knife and then to hold up the bleeding heart to heaven and exclaim : "Now is the angry god propitiated." But it is surely time for us to give up such crude ideas concerning the Almighty Creator ? The modern Christian is still bound by his faith to believe that, but for that murder on Calvary, the God whom we worship as Almighty and All-Merciful, would have been compelled to condemn the whole of the human race to *everlasting* perdition as a punishment for a few shortcomings and errors in the puny span of our poor mortal life ! Over sixty years have passed since such thoughts first came into my head, and as I firmly believe that all things good come from the God I love and worship, and have unceasingly prayed to, so I also believe that these convictions were implanted in my mind to save me from falling into the error of looking upon the Almighty as a being capable of cruelty more hideous than that of the most bloodthirsty human tyrant who has ever trod this earth. There is nothing in the world so valuable as the truth ; and ever since the world began the jugglery of priestcraft has done its best to intimidate the credulous, frighten the timid and disguise the truth. Just seven years ago the following verses appeared in the *Muslim Review* under the heading : "The Sacrificial Vista."

"To pacify an angry god
The primal savage poured out blood
From victims, innocent and young,
And deemed such murders right and good.

Then idols rose and priestly power
Increased, and Moloch's victims cried—
The altars reeked from hour to hour
As "substitutes" in torture died.

Then, later still, we find the rack,
The thumbscrews, pincers, red-hot knife,
Applied to make men change their faith
In God, the Author of our life.

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This avenue of senseless crime
Is trod to-day, just as of yore—
Men laud that murder as sublime
Which killed the Being they adore.

With ruthless pertinacity
The pagan cult still holds its sway ;
And death and blood on Calvary
Alone for us could win the day.

To make "wrong" "right" by added wrong
Is tried at every point adown
The sacrificial vista long
With craven fear, lest God should frown.

O God, whose mercy shineth forth
Wilt Thou wreak vengeance on thine own ?
Can murders foul appease Thy Wrath ?
Can cruel deaths for sin atone ?

The man-made dogmas of the past,
In many forms still hold full sway—
We pray that change may come at last,
When darkness meets the light of day."

EL FAROOQ (Lord Headley).

[Our minds should, I think, welcome all that science, in search for Truth, can teach ; and we should take to our hearts the Religion on which hang the fewest shackles of idolatry and superstition.]

Yours faithfully,
HEADLEY.

Ivy Lodge, St Margaret's-on-Thames,
London,
May 31, 1925.

Friday Prayer and Sermon.—At the London Muslim Prayer House
—III, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, London—every Friday
at 1 p.m. **Sunday Lectures** at 5 p.m. **Qur-án and Arabic**
Classes—every Sunday at 3.30 p.m.

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