

# Islamic Review

Edited by AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

Vol. XIII.]

[No. 7.

ZILHAJJA, 1343 A.H.

Annual Subscription, 10s.

JULY 1925.

Single Copies, 1

## CONTENTS.

Khawaja Nazir Ahmad .. .. .	Frontispiece
Notes.. .. .	PAGE 225
The Khwaja Nazir Ahmad—"The Son is the Mirror of the Father"—"Mercy to All the Nations"—"King o' the Moors"—Christianity and its Benefits to Mankind—"Broken Chords Want Strong Paste to Repair"—"Psychic Healing."	
Some of the Criticisms of Islam. By Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din .. .. .	235
The Law of Crime in the Qur-án. By Syed Maqbool Ahmed, B.A. .. .. .	244
Morality—Religion. By A. Khaliq Khan, B.A. .. .. .	253
Apostasy in Islam .. .. .	258
What is Islam ? .. .. .	263

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PUBLISHED AT  
THE MOSQUE, WOKING, ENGLAND

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
وَسُحْرُهُ وَبُكْرَتُهُ عَلَى رَسُولِ الْكَرِيمِ

# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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ZILHAJJA, 1344 A.H.

VOL. X. I.

JULY 1925.

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## NOTES

### The Khwaja Nazir Ahmad.

It is with feelings of the liveliest regret that we have to announce the impending departure from our midst of the Khwaja Nazir Ahmad, who for the past eighteen months has discharged the onerous duties of the Imam of the Woking Mosque, with notable distinction.

The Khwaja Nazir Ahmad is still a young man. Born on December 2, 1897, and educated at the Central Model School, Lahore, and at the Forman Christian College in the same city, he came to England in October 1916, and for a while studied Civil and Mechanical Engineering in the University of London, and Electrical Engineering at the City and Guilds' Institute, London. In 1918 he was appointed an Assistant Engineer for the Government Survey for the Hawswater Aqueduct in connection with the Manchester Water Supply. He became a member of the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple in March 1922, and was called to the Bar in the Easter Term of the present year.

It is, however, with the spiritual aspect of his career that we of the Mission are chiefly concerned, and a brief record of that aspect, of its experiences

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

and achievements, cannot fail to prove of deep and abiding interest to our readers. Endowed with an active and inquiring mind, together with the gift of perspicacity in no small degree, the Khwaja Nazir Ahmad early elected to think for himself in matters spiritual, and, as a consequence, had to face the terrible vicissitudes of the soul, which are the penalty of independent thought—vicissitudes of speculation, doubt, enthusiasm, and at times, it may be, despair—before finally reaching the haven of the Peace of God—which is Islam.

For over two years he made a careful study of the tenets of Christianity under Professor P. Samuels Lall. Dissatisfied here, he turned his attention to Hinduism, and for a year applied himself, under the able guidance of Pandit Diwan Chand, to a right comprehension of that complex creed. It is not unnatural, then, that there should follow the youthful period of agnosticism, which must needs come to all who speculate, in sincerity, on the so-called secrets of Creation. This lasted to the close of 1919, when, attending a lecture on the "Existence of God," delivered by the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din before an audience professedly atheist, his doubts were dispelled, and he became a convinced Believer.

In 1920 he joined the Mission Staff as Manager of the *Islamic Review*, becoming Secretary of the Working Muslim Mission in 1922, and in September 1923, Imam of the Mosque, at the unusually early age of five-and-twenty.

The period of his Imamatus will always be noteworthy for the fact that it witnessed the conversion to the true and only Faith of Sir Abdullah Archibald Hamilton, Bart. The moral effect of this memorable event alone can scarcely be estimated; but one of the happiest moments in the life of the retiring Imam will ever be that wherein a lifelong comrade and very dear friend was, through him, brought to embrace Islam. Besides this, over seventy souls

## NOTES

have accepted the Faith of Islam through the zealous efforts of the Khwaja Nazir Ahmad.

"The Son is the Mirror of the Father."

This ancient Arabic saying may be used on this occasion with a singular appropriateness, for in more than one respect the Khwaja Nazir Ahmad may be said to reflect the qualities of learning and piety which characterize his saintly father, Al-Haj the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. Retiring, modest, self-effacing to a fault, he has throughout been keenly alive to the weighty responsibilities thus early thrust upon his shoulders. So strongly was this apparent, when receiving into the fold of Islam his first convert, Mr. Abraham Hayes, a graduate of London University and an old class-fellow of his own, that, during the ceremony, he was trembling visibly. This weakness, if weakness it be, his indomitable resolution set itself to subdue; and in a very short time his dormant capabilities began to shine in his speeches of electrical vigour and astonishing eloquence, which those whose privilege it has been to hear them are, we venture to think, not likely to forget.

The Khwaja Nazir Ahmad leaves us, and his work here, with a promise that he will return to us, and take up once more in our midst those labours which have in the past been so abundantly blest.

With full hearts we wish him "God Speed."

"Mercy to All the Nations."

At a time when the forces of misconception and misrepresentation are more than usually clamant against Islam, the letter of Mr. J. Gun-Munro, F.R.G.S., of Dublin, to a recent issue of that prominent organ of Nonconformist opinion, the *British Weekly*, makes stimulating and refreshing reading.

May I be permitted (writes Mr. Gun-Munro), as one who has read the *British Weekly* for close on fifteen years, to voice a protest against a statement which must be profoundly disagreeable to many millions of citizens of the British Empire, one which is,

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

moreover, unfortunately typical of the utterances of many responsible Christians whenever they feel called upon to refer to the religion of Islam ?

I refer to the words attributed to the Rev. S. M. Zwemer, D.D., in your report of the last annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, namely : " Where missionaries have never been, the circulation of the Word had prepared the hearts of Mohammedans to receive with sympathy the message of Jesus Christ." Is it necessary, or profitable, for Christians who ignore the Prophet of Arabia to deny that " Mohammedans " respect and revere and believe in Jesus ? The added testimony should be gladly received by all who call themselves after him, " Christians."

Surely the learned divine cannot plead ignorance of that which he criticizes. He also said : " The Bible had created a new moral sense amongst Mohammedans, who no longer accepted the ideals of the Koran." The inference is clearly unpleasant. Is it possible that it could have been made after a reading of the Qur-án ? I would quote the Qur-án itself : " Whoever is blind in this world, he shall also be blind in the hereafter."

Surely the message of Jesus is service to God through love of fellow-man, and that can be possible only by an attitude of tolerance. Responsibility for the progress of the world lies heavy on Christian nations to-day, and I would appeal for a little more sympathy for the millions of Muslims who live, and have fought, under the British flag. It cannot be derogatory to Christians to acknowledge that

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

Mr. Gun-Munro is a recent convert to Islam, and the dignity of his rebuke, apart from its cogency, is in educative contrast to the controversial methods in favour with Dr. Zwemer and his satellites.

**" King o' the Moors."**

In the last issue of *Chambers's Journal* we find an article on the subject of slavery in Muhammadan countries entitled " King o' the Moors," by Mr. Macdonald Rae. Writing of the Crusading period, when the Muhammadans, assailed by all Christendom, were joined by their fellow-Muhammadans of the Mediterranean, Mr. Rae observes :—

Thus arose the famous depredations of the Barbary Corsairs, which lasted for centuries. The Christians captured during these

## NOTES

raids were enslaved, but appear to have been, on the whole, well treated. They were not compelled to renounce their religion, but those of them who voluntarily turned Mohammadans were given their freedom and enjoyed privileges. These facts are confirmed by the records of slaves which have come down to us. One of these is the famous author Cervantes.

The writer further comments upon the slavery still extant in the interior of Africa, whither English influence has not yet extended, and mentions certain districts where the barbarous institution of the public sale of poor slaves in open market is altogether checked and eradicated. Further, he is frank enough to admit that, as a matter of fact, the position of a Muhammadan slave often corresponds to that of the retainer of a chief in the old feudal times. He was not infrequently the trusted employee and confidant of his master, and could rise to a position of responsibility in his service. The tie which united the two was one of common interest, and often of affection. It was the master's duty to provide for his slave, and minister to his comforts, so long as he performed his duties faithfully, even in illness, infirmity, or old age.

"What's in a name?" said Shakespeare. "A great deal sometimes," we are constrained to reply. Call the Muhammadan slave a retainer, and all prejudice vanishes at once. Call him a slave, and the very name conjures up intolerable associations. Such are the facts, as represented by a Christian.

A Muslim in reality is one who extends a feeling of common brotherhood towards his fellow-beings. The English proverb, "Give a dog a bad name, and hang him," is applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, in the case of a slave. The very name of slave is abhorrent to every mind with any sense of self-respect or independence. But if the word be changed to "retainer," or "labourer," and the idea of loving and fraternal treatment be suggested to the mind, the whole trouble melts away and the intolerable associations with it.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

When a Christian retainer, in the "good old times," was content, and had no complaint to make against the generous treatment of his master, wherein lies the hardship for a Muslim retainer, every bit as staunchly attached to his master or chief, in "darkest Africa" or elsewhere, where the tide of social progress is yet at its ebb? This does not mean that Islam has ever allowed slavery. Islam has a fraternity as broad and universal as humanity itself. It has no invidious class distinctions. It has no colour or race prejudice. How, then, could it allow such a barbarous custom to creep into its social scheme? The most magnanimous amongst the early disciples of Muhammad was the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, and he liberated the great majority of slaves at the bidding of the Prophet. The only rule at that time concerning such persons as fell into the hands of the Muslims, was that they be treated mercifully and with consideration, as honourable creatures of the common Lord of all—Allah.

### **Christianity and its Benefits to Mankind.**

The Christian journals, and kindred literature of the day, are persistent in their endeavours, in season and out of season, to make us believe that it is through the Church, and only through the Church, that any amelioration in the lot of mankind has been brought about. The modern Church, however, can take but little pride in its past history. It is something to be kept carefully in the background. Incidents like the murder of Hypatia by St. Cyril, the destruction of the precious treasures and priceless books of the Greeks and the Romans, the burning of the famous library at Serapion by Theodosius, and the spirit of bitter persecution displayed by the Church towards the Indians of South America at the time of conquest, are but a few among many examples which would, in themselves, be quite enough to recall to us how glorious a history, and how consistently beneficial

## NOTES

to mankind, is that of the Church. We have no desire to rake up old unpleasant things: such an idea is very far from us. Who is there, indeed, who would dare to deny the beauty which lies in much of the teachings of the Church? But who is there, on the other hand, who would pretend for a moment to believe that the Church has produced, in the words of Bishop Godrie Kean, "the greatest benefits to humanity"? We admit, no doubt, that the Muslims of the present day are not worthy successors of their forefathers. We admit that Europe has made vast material progress. But are Europe and Christianity synonymous terms? Europe may well be proud of its social activities—its hospitals, colleges, schools, and the like. These we also appreciate. But how are we to explain away the attitude of the Church during the Middle Ages, towards learning, science, music and literature, which were forced to seek refuge in the Muslim lands of Sicily and Spain? The truth is that the schools, the hospitals, the colleges, and the rest, are not the fruits of Christian teachings; for Christianity, not to speak of Catholicism, has never encouraged learning. In Islam, the so-called Muslims are bad, but the teachings are splendid and complete; in Christianity so-called Christians are well advanced and progressive, but the teachings, although splendid, are incomplete. The root of the trouble lies in false premises: Islam and its teachings are regarded as responsible for the present condition of Muslims; just as, in Christianity, its teachings are set before us as the means and the instruments responsible for the progress and achievements of modern Europe. In conclusion, we would quote the well-known Muslim reformer, Djemal-ud-Din Afghani, whose words will perhaps give our Christian friends food for reflection. He was once asked: "How is one to account for the decline of the Muslim countries and the rise of Europe?" His simple reply was: "The Muslims have forsaken the



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

teachings of Islam, and the Christians have left the teachings of Christianity.”

To estimate the measure of social benefit that accrued to the world during the period when Europe was Christian in the real sense of the word, one need only go through Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe*, Gibbon's *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and Humboldt's *Cosmos*, translated from the German by Sabine. And we make no grotesque or excessive claim when we assert that it is by imbibing, often unconsciously, the spirit of Islamic teaching and principles, that Europe is continuing to progress; for it was these principles which transformed the savage Arabs into a learned nation, at a time when the whole of Europe was plunged deep in the darkness of ignorance.

### “Broken Chords Want Strong Paste to Repair.”

Dr. Samuel Zwemer, a veritable locomotive of energy and enthusiasm, who believes it is the duty of every true Christian to present his Gospel (if any) to the Muslim world, is on a journey to England. He has on many occasions expressed a desire faithfully to interpret to the Christian all that is best in Islam; and as for the dogmatic beliefs in the Christianity of to-day, for these Dr. Zwemer has devised a number of highly attractive, if rather vague, solutions. He pleads for the study of Islamic literature—the task to be undertaken by a band of preaching enthusiasts, good in quality rather than quantity—to be spread amongst the previously neglected Muslim population in India. A little while ago, Dr. Zwemer had occasion to address a fairly large audience at the annual meeting of the Derbyshire Branch or District of the Church Missionary Society, and in his remarks he laid great emphasis on the gravity of the task before Christianity, which has found itself face to face with Islam, and is fully conscious of the strength and unity of its adversary. We

## NOTES

should like all true Muslims to give the project a cool and dispassionate consideration, and at the same time to recall the verses of the Holy Qur-án which run: "They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths, and Allah will not consent save to perfect His light, though the unbelievers are averse" (Holy Qur-án, ix. 32). "And neglect the other important one, that surely Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition by effort" (xiii. 11). "Trust in God; but first tie thy camel," are the words of the Holy Prophet, so let us gird up our loins and be up and doing, not sit with hands folded and waiting for the day to dawn. Strive to brush aside dogma and mysticism, that are not God-made, but man-made interpolations; and with one stroke erase the evil consequences attendant upon them by the aid of that supernatural force in Islam, before which, as history proves, no power, wealth or might can stand. Let the Christian missionaries, good in heart, but corroded in thought, run their course for a while, until the inevitable stumble, which will give the race to Islam.

### " Psychic Healing."

No serious attempt is made by the generality of the medical profession to deal with their patients by encouraging the exertion of the will—that spiritual element which is able to predominate over matter. A prevalent disbelief in the psychical side of life would seem to debar the medical profession from taking the only steps that can possibly prove effective. To enter upon a detailed discussion for the purpose of accumulating evidence which certain minds are constitutionally incapable of accepting, would be merely to weary our readers. If justice can be rendered more certain and more unerring by evidence obtained through supernatural methods, and if such mental ailments as neurasthenic and

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

maniacal tendencies, hitherto deemed incurable, can be alleviated, or even entirely eradicated, by psychical treatment—as indeed has long been the practice amongst the Muslims in the East—then surely here is a wide field open for human endeavour for the amelioration of the present condition of the human race.

When once the medical profession has ceased to shut its eyes to spiritual facts, there may yet be hope for many poor victims of these scourges that still infest the earth. What is required of psychical research generally is a more practical outlook and a deliberate choice of such research, as a profession or occupation, by those who are convinced of its value. There are many noble souls who have investigated these phenomena fully and with painstaking perseverance; and who have much to offer, as a result, to such of the public as may be able to understand—or are willing, with a serious mind, to strive to grasp and assimilate—what is presented as a truth. For we find that every kind of incident can be explained away, quite convincingly, on the assumption of telepathy, or of abnormal or hitherto unsuspected powers latent in the human mind. God has created man in His own image. The mind is a piece of machinery with marvellous cells, untested as yet, which possess the power of collecting images and concepts, and of exhibiting the same at the command of the will whenever exerted.

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## SOME OF THE CRITICISMS OF ISLAM

### SOME OF THE CRITICISMS OF ISLAM

By KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

OURS are the ways of realities. We have had enough of theories. Experiment and observation alone will bring conviction. Facts have taken the place of concepts. We wish to read everything in the light of events. Academic discussion, if designed to convince us, must be explained in terms of facts and figures. The world-conflagration of the Great War has of itself established some of the verities of Islam. Those who were wont to assail Islam with hostile, even virulent, criticism, have been compelled, by the exigencies of the situation thus created, to adopt the very teachings that they condemned before. The Phoenix of the West built for itself a funeral pyre and fanned it to a blaze by the flapping of its wings; but it rose again from the ashes a different bird. Germany kindled the fire with wonderful rapidity. She alarmed the Continent. Belgium fell; and the Spirit of Self-Preservation—a life-tendency in human nature—began to gaze with intent eyes at those who believed in the Sermon on the Mount, which taught the turning of the left cheek when the right cheek was struck. But the philosophy of having both cheeks buffeted did not appeal to the Western mind, which could not see its way to accept the wisdom of the Prince of Peace. This was no time for the olive-branch—the mailed fist seemed in every way preferable. The Church in the West has excelled rather as an exponent of State-craft, than as a custodian of human conscience. So said a recent Premier, and so it proved to be in the days of the war. “I come with sword and fire.” These words of Jesus were preferred to what he uttered in the Sermon on the Mount. The belligerent spirit came to the surface when a number of clergy in cassock and surplice, headed by the Bishop of London, marched in procession to Hyde Park on the afternoon of June 9, 1915. When the

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Marble Arch was reached, the Bishop of London, mounting a cart, delivered an address, from which I quote the following :—

“All those passages in the New Testament which conscientious objectors quote are misunderstood and misquoted. . . . If we saw a blackguard ill-using a little child, should we stand still? No, we should deal with the blackguard speedily and vigorously. Smaller nations will fight for their rights, and stronger nations must assist in hauling the bully off the little nations of the world. . . .

“We must drive the invaders out of the lands they have despoiled. If we had sat still and dared nothing, the women and children of Britain would have been treated as those in Belgium.”

The Bishop of Chelmsford, in dedicating a motor-ambulance for the use of wounded soldiers at Ilford in the month of June of the same year, said that the war was going on, for it would be folly and crime to put aside the sword until the purpose for which we had drawn it had been secured.

These war homilies, coming from such high dignitaries in the Church, could not fail to produce the desired effect. They began to resound from every pulpit and platform. But a thinking mind saw in them a psychology that, compelled by circumstances, was prone to follow Muhammad and the Qur-án, and to close the Bible, for the time being. The Law of Conscription received the support and sanction of the Church; but the conscience that had received its mould from the clear tenets of Jesus came to the surface in the person of the “conscientious objector.” He regarded the use of the sword as against the teaching of the Master even in self-defence. He would rather go to prison than take his place on the battlefield. Many a “conscientious objector” became the guest of the King within the four walls of imprisonment, and their conviction did not perturb the mind of the Church. In acting on the principle

## SOME OF THE CRITICISMS OF ISLAM

that the sword must be unsheathed in defence of life and property, England and her Allies became Muslim. In the words of the Qur-án :—

Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed, and most surely Allah is well able to assist them. Those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say : Our Lord is Allah. And had there not been Allah repelling some people by others, certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered.<sup>1</sup>

This was the earliest permission given to the Muslims of the day of the Prophet, to fight. The words clearly show that the war was first made by their opponents on the Muslims ; they were expelled from their homes for full thirteen years. The Prophet and his companions were subjected to every kind of persecution, so much so that the Prophet had to flee to Medina for his very life. Other Muslims followed him. But the Meccans would not leave him even at Medina, the place of his refuge. They pursued him with an army, and the Prophet had to come out of Medina in self-defence, under the Divine Order conveyed to him in the words quoted above. That the Prophet was not on the offensive, but on the defensive, can easily be appreciated by mere reference to the locality of the first three campaigns—Badar, Uhud, and Ahzab. The distance between Mecca and Medina is more than a hundred and fifty miles. Badar is at a distance of thirty miles from Medina, and Uhud only twelve miles from Medina ; while the scene of the third battle was Medina itself. The town was besieged by the Arab Allies. Is it, now, difficult to ascertain who was the aggressor, and who on the defence ?

This led to a general state of war throughout the whole country, where offence and defence came from both sides, and which brought down that Revelation

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qur-án, xxii. 39, 40.

from the Most High which may be termed the Muslim Ethics of War :—

And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you out, and persecution is severer than slaughter. . . . But if they desist, then surely Allah is forgiving, merciful. And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah. *But if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressor.*<sup>1</sup>

The holy verses put the object of the fight in the clearest possible terms : “ Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed.” “ And fight with those who are fighting with you, and drive them out from whence they drove you.” Who would question the righteousness of the war, if it was waged for such a necessity ? “ But if the enemy desists, there should be no hostility, except against the oppressors.” A Muslim should not wage war when “ persecution ceases, and men are not forced to accept or renounce a religion, but are at liberty to profess any religion, of the truth of which they are convinced, for the sake of their own God.”<sup>2</sup> The words “ religion should be only for Allah ” cannot be taken to mean Islam, as the very words that follow them make the sense quite clear. “ But if they desist, then there should be no hostility.” There should remain no compulsion in the matter of religion, as the Qur-án says elsewhere, and everyone should be at liberty to hold any religion he likes. The Qur-án thus lays down the broad principle of religious freedom for which one searches elsewhere in vain. It deserves to be noted that the lives of Muslims are to be sacrificed, not only to stop their own persecution by their opponents, and to save their own Mosques, but to save churches, synagogues and cloisters as well, and thus to establish perfect religious freedom.

Has any other religious teacher taught that noble

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qur-án, ii. 191-193.

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Ali's English translation of the Qur-án, p. 89.

## SOME OF THE CRITICISMS OF ISLAM

principle? Or is there a single direction in the Sacred Scriptures of any other religion, that its followers should lay down their lives to protect the places of worship of other religions? Muslims closely followed these directions, and every commander of an army had explicit orders to respect all houses of worship. Can it be said with any show of plausibility at all "that Islam spread with the Qur-án in one hand and the sword in the other"? Can our critics point to one instance when even a single person was forced to accept Islam at the point of the sword, in the days of the Prophet or his Caliphs? I assure them that all their efforts in such a direction will be in vain. The Great War, however, came in time to disillusion the world of all the misrepresentations and misinterpretation that had been fathered on the Muslim Ethics of War. Muslims fought on the same principle which compelled the Allies to unsheathe the sword at the outset. But the civilized nations of the present-day world could not desist from hostilities, where a Muslim's religion would have rendered a continuance of the struggle impossible.

The Great War has, however, created circumstances similar to those which caused the promulgation of the institution of polygamy, as it existed in the days of the Prophet. The very creation of man and woman with sexual instincts, and the functions to be performed by each for the procreation and maintenance of the species, makes the connubial companionship of man and woman, as it were, a birth-right. It is said that the Great War has left in Germany six times as many women as men. Similar statistics come from France and other belligerent nations. But natural passions cannot be killed. If neither religion nor legislation can devise any desirable scheme for solving the difficult situation that faces modern civilization to-day, a species of moral leprosy must supervene that will contaminate the whole social fabric. Polygamy is the only solution.



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

It should not be forgotten that the institution of polygamy was permitted by the Qur-án at a time of war, in the days of the Prophet, when numberless widows and orphans had been left without any protection or help. Polygamy is not an injunction in Islam, but only a permission. It is not a substantive law, but a remedial or emergency law, and should not be brought into operation unless circumstances shall be such as to justify it. A Muslim may not have more than one wife ; except under certain restrictions. Equality of treatment is the essential in the case of a plurality of wives ; and any violation of this is a great sin. No doubt it excites revolt in woman ; but a woman cannot be married without her free consent. She need not marry a polygamist, and if she fears that her alliance with an advocate of monogamy may result in a change in the views of her husband, who may marry again, she may insert a proviso against such a contingency. Marriage in Islam is a civil contract, and both the parties can enter into it under certain conditions, the infringement of any of which, of itself, nullifies the contract. A woman is at liberty to marry a person, under the condition of his not taking another wife. The violation of that condition will be sufficient to entitle her to divorce her husband and, if so provided in the contract, claim reasonable damages. She is also at liberty to separate herself from her husband, and refuse him conjugal rights, compelling him at the same time to maintain her. Islam thus provides woman with every weapon to protect herself against polygamy, if her nature revolts against it. Islam came to give a code of conduct to cover all the ups and downs of life.

Criticism of Muslim polygamy, in its virulent form, comes from a race which is, in practice, infinitely more polygamist than are the Muslims. Marriage, in its naked form, is only a connection of man and woman. It is only the interest of the coming generation, and the ascertainment of fatherhood, that gives

## SOME OF THE CRITICISMS OF ISLAM

it sanctity. Take the institution in its primitive form, and you will find the Westerner more of a polygamist than are the people in the East. The latter, to a very limited extent, and, moreover, in a legalized form, do that which the former does unscrupulously, in an illegal way. Neither by legislation, nor by religion, has the human world, since its beginning, been able to remedy these two evils—the unbridled brutality of man under his excited passions, and the helplessness of a woman. Unless and until the world is purged of these two weaknesses, the Muslim institution of polygamy is the only thing possible. It dignifies womanhood and comes as a blessing to the issue of male and female connections. An innocent woman who has fallen a victim to male brutality, will only be adored and cared for so long as she retains her charm or beauty. But alas! she is shown the door when the rainy days come. She has no claim on the property or heritage of the man. Is not the honourable position of being a second wife, under the sanction of society, much to be preferred? I have never heard of any society that has been able successfully to uphold the Utopian ideal of the lasting companionship of one man and one woman. But if it be an impossibility, the interests of the woman and the protection of her rights need a system like that of Muslim polygamy. The prophetic eye of the Last Prophet saw that the conditions obtaining in his times were likely to rule the coming generations; and he provided the remedy.

Ascertainment of paternity is a necessity for the welfare of the coming generation. Nature compels every man to look after those who come out of his own loins. This brought forth the institution of marriage and gave it a sanctity. But what of the fate and condition of those harmless children whose parents came together illicitly? Why should they bear the stigma of illegitimacy? Why should they suffer the hardships of bastardy? Why should a

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

woman be compelled to conceal her shame, and have recourse to painful operations in order to save her from the infamy of motherhood without a husband? Why should these issues of illicit connection be deprived of the right to inherit the property of a man from whom they inherit the body with all its diseases? The deceived woman must suffer the consequences of her indiscretion, but why should the innocent children share the shame with her? These evils glare at Western civilization with baleful eyes. They are the blot on the escutcheon of the people in the West. We see very little of it in the East. If religion, ethics, and legislation have failed, till now, to work out human salvation from this degradation, Muslim polygamy is the only panacea that can confidently be resorted to in quarters where this moral poison is sapping the social fabric. And again I say that polygamy is not—if I am allowed to use this metaphor—a food. Monogamy is the natural food, polygamy is a remedy, a medicine to be administered to certain diseased conditions of life. It entails hardships, no doubt; but no person on his sick-bed can expect sweetmeats from his medical attendant. He must take medicine, however bitter and unpalatable it be. Polygamy is a permission, again I say, and not an injunction, and will cease to be necessary in human society, when men and women see realities of life as they are.

I come with no apologies for my Prophet, who purged the institution of polygamy of all its evils. His own example is the example of nobility and charity. Could a gentleman who, in the prime of his life and youthful vigour—as was Muhammad at the age of twenty-five—married a widow of forty years of age, and led an exemplary life with her for full twenty-seven years without thinking of another wife, though allowed to by the society he was living in, be regarded as a person ruled by passions, if after the death of his first wife he takes in marriage a virgin

## SOME OF THE CRITICISMS OF ISLAM

and some widows (many amongst whom had passed the age of marital relations), with the sole object of giving them protection and the wherewithal to live? They had many claims upon him. Their husbands had given their lives for the sacred cause; and the noble ladies had been left with no one to look after them. To keep them under his roof and provide for their needs without entering into marriage relations with them, would have set an example that would do more harm than good in the world. Such treatment, charitable as it was, even under the roof of a prophet, would lead coming generations to various abuses. Some of the widows might have found new husbands; efforts were made as well in this direction; but no other person from among the companions of the Prophet was willing to accept their hand in marriage. The Prophet had to do so. The ladies could not be lodged under the roof of those who did not stand in the prohibited degree of relationship. The only commendable and virtuous course was the one adopted by the Prophet. Besides, we cannot criticize a custom, if respected by the people of the time, and not leading to any immorality and injustice, in the light of ethics, subsequent in growth; especially when the conditions are changed.

Monogamy that rules modern society should not be taken as a Christian verity. Only two centuries before, polygamy was in vogue in Christendom. Many bishops were allowed to keep several unauthorized wives besides the one in Church wedlock. The law of monogamy had its genesis from the Institutes of Justinian. Judaism, Hinduism, and almost all other ancient religions, allowed polygamy. And is it not strange that those who come with their criticisms of us, forget that their own prophets believed in the plurality of wives? Abraham, David, Solomon, and many other patriarchs of the house of Jacob; Krishna, and many others, with the fame of sanctity and righteousness, gave the benefit of their

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

roof and protection to more than one wife. The blessed Zoroaster, so the tradition goes, also married three wives.

Nay! do you say that Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes were Jews or Christians? Say: Are you better knowing or Allah? And who is more unjust than he who conceals a testimony that he has from Allah? and Allah is not at all heedless of what you do. *This is a people that have passed away: they shall have what they earned and you shall have what you earn, and you shall not be called upon to answer for what they did.*<sup>1</sup>

(To be continued.)

### THE LAW OF CRIME IN THE QUR-ÂN

By SYED MAQBOOL AHMED, B.A.

(Continued from Vol. XIII, No. 6, p. 222.)

THE main heads of crimes (or sins against the rights of man), and punishment for the same, are laid down fundamentally in many verses of the Qur-ân, particularly in those revealed at Medina. They form the basis of Islamic jurisprudence, which elaborately classifies crimes and the nature of their punishment; deriving the authority not available in the Qur-ân, from the actions of the Prophet himself, and his four rightly-guided successors. I need not go into it, beyond what the Qur-ân has laid down, for that is the purpose of my present remarks. The following passages relate to crimes and their punishment in the Qur-ân :—

#### 1.—THEFT.

And thieves, man or woman, cut their hands as a punishment of their deeds. This has been appointed by God, and God is all knowing and all powerful. And if he repents after his misdeeds and reforms himself, he shall be forgiven by God, for God is the Forgiver and merciful (*Almaida*, vi).

The Qur-ânic injunction with respect to thieves is

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qur-ân, ii. 140-141.

## THE LAW OF CRIME IN THE QUR-ÁN

very much the same as was given through Moses to the Israelites; and Jesus has also recapitulated the same law, when he said: "If thy right hand commits a sin cut it off, it is better to remain armless than to be thrown into hell with a sinful arm, etc." This is an extreme punishment for thieves, *who cannot be reformed otherwise*. It has now been generally accepted that jail has failed to correct habitual thieves. It only confirms them in their habits, and makes them quite at home with jail life. The theory that such thieves, when put to work in jail, come out of it with the habit of following any trade taught them there, and become honest and useful members of society, has been shattered by repeated experience. Such have never been found to follow any trade taught in the jail, but only that for which they were sent to jail. England did well to hang thieves till very recently, for there is no other way of getting rid of these pests of society; and nothing short of putting such in perpetual irons, as an alternative, can deter them from their profession, and save others from their ravages. The perpetual manacling of their hands, or permanent deprivation of that sinful instrument, is what the Qur-án means. As I said, this punishment has been specially enjoined for habitual thieves, but it is quite inconsistent with the purpose of the Qur-án to go to such lengths with those who have not become confirmed in their habits. A handless man will also proclaim and warn others to beware of him. The modern Turks have adopted the Code Napoléon in place of the Qur-án, probably because the Turks, as a race, are reputedly an honest people, and this emergency has never arisen among them; but if they had been in India, and had come in contact with those professionals to whom it is their birthright and a caste obligation to follow the profession of thieving, they would have been wiser to adopt the measures given in the Qur-án. A false notion of soft-heartedness and civilization, is costing

the British Government in India, many crores of rupees annually, for keeping watch over these gentlemen, and it has not succeeded in its attempt.

## 2.—GENERAL RETRIBUTION.

And We have appointed in the law of Moses, A life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, injury for injury, and if the aggrieved one is compromised, then that will atone him of his sin (*Almaida*, vi).

This law given to Moses has been re-adopted by the Qur-án without any amendment; and it simply means that all mischiefs are to be punished in proportion to the injury done.

## 3.—CULPABLE HOMICIDE (not amounting to murder).

And it is not lawful for a Muslim to kill another Muslim, unless it be by mistake, and whoever kills a Muslim by mistake, he shall free a slave, and pay blood-money to his heirs, unless they excuse him from this payment. And if the murdered man be an alien, and the murderer a Muslim, then he shall free a slave, but if the murdered man be from those aliens, with whom you are at peace, then a slave shall be freed and blood money shall be paid to the relations of the murdered. If the man possess no slave, he shall fast continuously for two months. This has been appointed as a way of repentance, and God is all knowing (*Alnisaa*, xiii).

Comment on this is not necessary.

## 4.—MURDER.

O believers, you are enjoined Qisas (capital punishment) for murder; free or slave, male or female (shall suffer equally), but if the family of the murdered forgiveth the murderer, then the blood money shall be paid according to rules, and if any one transgress afterwards, for him shall be grievous chastisement. And, wise men, for you there is life in Qisas (*Albaqar*, xxii).

Life for life is of course the law of humanity, but the Qur-án allows the murderer opportunity to save his neck by compensating and reconciling the family of the murdered. The latest craze of civilization seeks to abolish capital punishment altogether. Has it taken its cue from the Qur-án's allowing recompense by the murderer to the aggrieved, thus putting

## THE LAW OF CRIME IN THE QUR-ÂN

him entirely at the latter's mercy? Without this provision, punishment for murder would be merely vindictive, and vindictive punishment is not advocated now.

### 5.—REBELLION.

Those who cause disruption in the country, and thus make war against God and His Prophet, the punishment for such is that they should be killed outright, or (as an exemplary punishment) crucified, or their hands and feet cut opposite ways, or to be exiled from the country (*Almaida*, v).

Even the most civilized Governments of Europe have dealt with insurgents, chiefly coloured people, more barbarously than ever the Qur-ân has conceived.

### 6.—ADULTERY.

And (to) adulterer and adulteress, scourge each of them with hundred stripes, and show no favour to them in the ordinance of God, if you believe in God and the last day. And let a party of Muslims be present at the time of their punishment (so that they may be put to shame) . . . (*Alnoor*, i).

Adultery in Islam is punished not, as in Judaism, by stoning to death, but by stripes. The numbers are fixed, but it is left to the discretion of man to employ the punishment to such an extent of severity as may not cause the death of the victim, or incapacitate him for ever; or, in other words, a cruel lashing, which the writer of these lines has seen dealt out to the natives of Mesopotamia and South Kurdistan, by the new rulers of that country, and which would reduce any body (Kurd and Arab excepted) to pulp in fifty strokes; so, as the number fixed in the Qur-ân will never be reached, the allotment will be quite superfluous. The fact that a number has been fixed, and that on the general principle that a man cannot be punished beyond his capacity of endurance, makes it necessary that the flogging should not be unduly severe. The "Cat-of-nine-tails" was never invented in Islam, where the "Durra" employed is a thick, flat leather, or else a thick cane that does not cut the skin. Of



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

course, nobody can be punished unless he is in a fit state of health, and in the story of Job, given in the Qur-án, in order that he might strictly conform with the ordinance of God, he was permitted a device that seems to set a precedent for the punishment of a very weak man. Job, it is said in the Qur-án, was allowed to bind a hundred sticks together, and give one single blow with it. On the question of the punishment of adultery, the stoning of an elderly man or woman, or rather married people, was, in the opinion of Khalif Omar, permitted in the Qur-án, and he is reported to have quoted the following verse: "Alshaikh wal shaikahto, eza zaina, farju-moohama albutta" (Elderly men or women, when they commit adultery, stone them to death certainly). As this verse is not found in the Qur-án, it has divided jurists in Islam into two schools. One, the Mutazzilite and Kharjittes, including Hanafis like Razi, Dr. Sir Syed Ahmed, and Maulvi Muhammad Ali (the translator of the Holy Qur-án) consider this report, in spite of its mention in such reliable tradition as Muslim and Almatutta, to be absolutely spurious, and to have been interpolated by some busybody of a jurist, who thought Islam would otherwise only look tolerant towards adultery, as compared with Judaism. They base their argument on the fact that for Khalif Omar to say that this verse was in the Qur-án, would be absurd, seeing that the Qur-án in its present form was edited in the time of Khalif Osman, so there could have been no occasion for Omar to complain of the omission of this verse. Nor does it seem quite probable that Khalif Osman, with all the care he bestowed in collecting the verses of the Qur-án, would have overlooked the inclusion of so important an ordinance, when special mention had been made of it by his immediate predecessor. The other school, of course, accepts this tradition as true. To them it is enough that this report is found mentioned in a reliable book, and it is, with them, no

## THE LAW OF CRIME IN THE QUR-ÁN

matter that the Qur-án should be reduced to the same level as the Bible, by this damaging report. Their logic (which I confess I am not able to follow perfectly) would seem to contend that this verse is "*mansukhuttaláwa*" or "not readable," though it remains in effect as Qur-ánic law. My own suggestion is that the report, as it is given, need not be contradicted, for the very words of the verse settle the matter, seeing that anybody who has studied the language of the Qur-án, would find this verse to be absolutely prosaic and un-Qur-ánic Arabic; and that the misunderstanding was unfortunately due to the fact that the word "Kitab Allah," as given in the report, has been needlessly considered as referring to the Qur-án. Kitab Allah (revealed book or the book of God) is a term which extends to the Old Testament also, and the Jews are referred to in Islam as Ahlul Kitab. Before any law was revealed about adultery in the Qur-án, the Prophet was tested by the Jews at Medina, who brought an adulteress to him for punishment, according to the law of God. The Prophet called the Jews to bring their law, and asked them to read out the verse about adultery, whereupon, he who read, concealed it by placing his hand over that passage; and it is reported that a Jewish Rabbi, Abdulla ibne Salam, who had become the follower of the Prophet, exposed their villany. Nevertheless, the Jews persisted in denying that there was any verse about stoning in the Torah. The Prophet was, however, convinced by his supernatural power that there was indeed such a verse in the Bible, and he ordered the woman to be stoned according to that law. Then the Jews began to murmur, saying that the Prophet had acted against the law of God, and it was perhaps on this occasion that Omar had to emphasize the fact that the verse, in spite of its concealment by the Jews, was in the Kitab Allah, and the Prophet had not acted against the law in ordering the woman to be

stoned. In any case, we need not be troubled about it, for the narrators of traditions have caused so remarkable a confusion in many very reliable sayings recorded in Bukhari, that we can only opine that the unfortunate Malik and Muslim have gone astray in understanding the real purport of the Khalif.

In my translation of *Al Mautta* of Immam Malik into English (which is now ready for the press), I have dealt with this report the more thoroughly, because I advocate *Al Mautta* as the most reliable collection of tradition. I have taken pains accordingly in explaining it. Had it been a report only in Muslim and from Ibne Abbas, I should be disposed to follow Maulana Muhammad Ali and Dr. Syed Ahmed, for Nuwavi, himself the commentator of *Al Muslim*, who is seldom anything but liberal in his views, was forced to the conclusion that the verse, being abrogated in the *Qur-án*, is not binding for us. The great absurdity involved in this, which apparently Nuwavi has forgotten, is that the punishment for adultery in the *Qur-án* for persons of very low status, like slaves, is half for an ordinary man; and for the most noble of us all, that is the Prophet's own women-folk, it is double; so if stoning to death be the order of the day, putting persons to death by halves or twice over would be ridiculous.

## 7.—SLANDERING CHASTE WOMEN.

And those who slander chaste women, and are unable to substantiate their charge by bringing four witnesses, scourge such persons (accusers) with eighty stripes, and never accept their evidence in future, for they are evil doers. Unless they recant from their accusation, for God is forgiving and merciful. And those who charge their own wives for adultery, and are unable to produce any evidence but of themselves, they may take oath four times that they are true, and a fifth time (add) that God's curse may be upon them if they speak lies. The woman will also take oath four times saying that her accuser lies, and a fifth time, add that God's curse may be on her if her accuser is true (if she wants to rebut the charge) . . . (*Alnoor*, i).

What a blessing would this verse be to those

## THE LAW OF CRIME IN THE QUR-ÂN

unfortunate women who, in the most civilized societies, are often subject to the tender attention of scandal-mongers, if the latter were called upon to produce four witnesses, or receive eighty stripes, by the law of society ! And yet Islam is said to be not charitable towards the fair sex !

Other offences for which no scale of punishment is laid down, but a deterrent admonition is given, are as follows, the punishment for these offenders being apparently left to the discretion of the Khalifs.

### 1.—DEFAMATION.

O believers, let not a party of you scorn another party, may be that party is better than yourself, nor females to other females, nor taunt ye each other, nor call each other bad names. It is not befitting to good faith to indulge in such misbehaviour, and those who will not repent, they shall be transgressors. O believers, keep yourself free from suspicions, for some suspicions are sins, and do not be inquisitive, nor blame each other behind the back. Would you devour the corpse of your dead brother ? Wherefore save yourself from such evil, and God is forgiving and merciful. O people, we have created you from male and female, and made you in tribes and clans for recognition only (and not that one is superior from the other), verily the respectful among you before God is one who is pious (*Alhujrat*, i).

### 2.—CHEATING OR CRIMINAL MISAPPROPRIATION.

O believers, do not misappropriate the property of each other, unless you gain it in fair trade . . . and if anybody misappropriates by force or dishonesty, it shall be easy for Me to send such men to hell (*Al Nisa*, v).

### 3.—BRIBERY.

And do not misappropriate each other's property, nor use the property to gain favour of judges, so that he may help you in your misappropriation (*Albaqar*, xxiii).

### 4.—BREACH OF TRUST IN THE PROPERTY OF ORPHANS AND IDIOTS.

And give the property of orphans to them, and do not mix their property with yours and eat it up, for it is a grievous sin, and if you are afraid that you cannot adequately discharge your trust to orphan girls, marry them in two, three or four, and if you cannot keep them on an equal footing then marry one

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

alone, and give them their dowry without any grudge, unless they leave it out of their own free will to you. Do not let the property of idiots be wasted by them, spend it on their behalf in their food and dress and treat them kindly. . . . Those who devour the property of orphans entrusted to them, by force, they swallow hell fire in their stomach, and they shall go to hell. . . . (*Alnisa*, i).

### 5.—GAMBLING, WAGERING AND DRUNKENNESS.

O believers, drink, gambling, wagering are Satan's work, meanly, so avoid them that you may be saved. Verily Satan desires to create enmity among yourselves by this means, and keep you from prayer and from the remembrance of God. So would you desist (or not).

### 6.—UNNATURAL OFFENCES.

The story of the tribe of Lot in the Qur-án gives a stern admonition to this crime.

Some empty-headed persons have said that the Qur-án stands in the way of modern enlightened government, and that unless Islamic countries adapt themselves to "civilized" legislation, as for instance the codes of Justinian and of Napoleon, they will remain groping in the dark. The credulous Turk has listened to them, but with what result? It is the habit of these gentlemen from time immemorial to talk at random, when the bugbear of the "Qur-án of Mahomet" comes under their notice. For such men I have taken pains to give the above brief extract, as I know that they will be taking a great risk of losing faith in their own Church if they but once open the Qur-án and read it. Carlyle, I think it was, said that there is no such danger as far as the Englishman is concerned, as he knew full well that the English are a conservative people who do not take to any change, however good it may be, in an abrupt fashion. Has the present generation belied Carlyle? I wonder.

## MORALITY—RELIGION

### MORALITY—RELIGION

- I. As Connected.
- II. As Unconnected.
- III. As Connected or otherwise, according to age or circumstance.

By A. KHALIQ KHAN, B.A.

THE study of Anthropology would seem to disclose a strong connection between Morality and Religion, making them appear, as it were, to be strands in the same rope, or links of the same chain.

The customs prevalent in old-time society were directly controlled by imaginary gods, so that Morality and Religion were regarded as, in effect, synonymous. The laws of Piety, Morality and Religion were interlaced, as, for example, in the Ten Commandments, where the religious, the civil, and moral precepts are so beautifully linked together that, while we can trace each quite distinctly and separately, they nevertheless form one harmonious whole. Their partial transgression involved the gravest crimes, being regarded as equivalent to total transgression, and was severely punished; for such punishment was universally regarded as a religious duty incumbent upon all men. The God-fearing man was good, pious and moral, while the immoral, the irreligious and the damned, so to say, was one who was godless, and consequently in a state of excommunication. The basis of all social pursuits, work and custom and law in State and Society which go to determine the individual life, was Religion. The criterion of civilization and culture was the degree of connection between the moral, religious and individual life. The States, institutions and laws of the Greeks and the Romans were originally closely knit together with religion. The oldest books on law comprehend, in the same way as did the Mosaic Law, worship, customs and rights.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

The Roman Law was the prerogative of the priests—a sacerdotal law—whereof the ceremonies and teachings (if any) were the object and aim of life. A religious rite or observance was the essence of all piety, the slightest deviation from which was deemed sufficient to mar the efficacy of the whole ceremony. The rites of sacrifice and modes of worship were performed with the greatest exactitude. The high-priest alone, amongst the Jews and Hindus, could conduct such observances. So the priest was looked upon as a being of superior talent and a saviour of the people; and hence he could mould the destiny of ignorant men. It was from this same idea that the corruption of the Middle Ages sprang, when laymen placed property, life and honour at the disposal of the priest, whom they blindly followed. It was in those days of blind faith that the simple truth of Islam shed its glorious light, and encouraged the free use of the intellect and understanding which made the early followers of Islam beacons of knowledge and culture, when Mediæval Europe was sunk in ignorance, darkness and prejudice, blended with superstition of the most virulent sort.

Such blindness of faith Islam has always condemned, while, on the contrary, upholding perfect freedom of thought and action. With Islam, the sources of certain knowledge are in Reason. With reference to those whose abode shall be hell, the Holy Qur-án says: "And they shall say: Had we but listened to the discourses of the wise, or ourselves been wise enough and tested religion and belief by reason, we should not have been among the dwellers of hell." The Holy Qur-án is not a book which derives its force merely from the fact of its being an ancient document which has been handed down to us through a safe course of transmission; but its real power and authority lie in the sound arguments which it produces, and the clear light which it sheds.

An original inner connection between the religious

## MORALITY—RELIGION

and the moral duties gives a clue to the fact that, so far, Morality and Religion were united. All religious laws have everywhere the same character. All require abstinence, cleanliness, sacrifice, and the control of passions and desires. Cleanliness of mind and body, and control of the passions through moral discipline, had for their object self-purification and self-edification. Hatred of our fellow-men and pride were regarded as transgressions of the Divine law, bringing in their train Divine wrath and destruction; while humility and submissiveness found favour in the eyes of all deities. It is noteworthy that the weak, the orphan, the decrepit, were all represented as enjoying the special protection of Heaven—and any injury done to them entailed inexorable retribution.

But we can explain the connection between Religion and Morality in another way. Religion was tantamount to a belief in the transcendent power of goodness, and in the transitoriness and insufficiency of this life. This menace of the insufficiency of the present life is noticeable everywhere in every religion. Schamanism and Fetishism are attempts to accomplish by magical influence, exerted on transcendental powers and beings, that which the natural capacities of man could not otherwise achieve. Inanimate objects were worshipped for their supposed magical and mysterious attributes, that struck awe to the heart of the votary. But gradually the people came to the realization of wonders, by will-power developed through an ever-increasing intensity of concentration. If the will, on the one hand, can go to the lowest rung of the ladder of human life, when it satisfies its animal instinct, it has, at the same time, the capacity of aspiring to a beautiful and good life, realizing the loftiest ideal of humanity. It is this power now that leads life and directs thought. Thus, will once developed, the being finds itself in another atmosphere, and life is radically changed. This success can never be achieved unless one breaks definitely with the



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

material world and its deteriorating influence on the spirit. Noble ideas begin to flash on the mind, and noble aims of life, beautiful in colour and compelling in their force, appear on the scene to guide us. This phase of will-power and its development is very scientifically dealt with in Islam, in the form of humble supplication offered to that Great Will—the Cherisher and Evolver, the Creator of the Universe, aided by the moral discipline of fast, that encourages the capacities of the mind, which would otherwise remain dormant, to work wonders. So we find that change in the direction of our will brings about a change in our conception of the transcendental world.

The complex world of the gods in Polytheism is a creation of the higher Will. In the place of the vague, transitory, magical powers of Fetishism appear permanent, personal and historical beings. In these Polytheistic gods man found his ideal realized before his eyes, and in the forms with which his imagination had conceived of the Supreme Being. In other words, magic and Fetishism made room for human ideals, such as are represented by the Greek and Roman deities, with different powers attributed to them. The wrath and the favour of these gods brought down destruction or blessing as the case might be, and the fact that a trifling carelessness or inattention on man's part was sure to bring its consequences, was attributed to the displeasure of the deity offended.

We have, so far, traced the development of human will and consciousness. Now we come to the last and most completely developed stage of Religion, the belief in One God, with no mystery or magic about Him at all. In Monotheism the idealistic institution of the will is even stronger than it was in Polytheism. In Monotheism God is the Supreme Being with all attributes that are noble and good—Whose love pervades the universe, as inculcated by the two last religions of mankind—Christianity and Islam.

## MORALITY—RELIGION

Fetishism, Schamanism and necromancy gave place to the words of Moses (Peace be upon him!), "May your will prevail," repeatedly emphasized in the verses of the Holy Qur-án.

It is the submission of man's will to that Great Will as the goal of life that is taught in the words of the Holy Qur-án: "O! thou soul! that art at rest and retest fully contented with thy Lord, return unto Him, He being pleased with thee and thou pleased with Him—so enter among My servants and enter into My paradise (lxxxix. 28, 30).

But for what reason! For He is mighty, is holy, and has grace, so His will, by absorption, would transform a being of enfeebled will into a higher being with a will-power more developed and more majestic, that should bring contentment of mind and serenity of life. It is here that the will of man is one with God's will. "My prayers and my sacrifice, my life and my death are all for the sake of God" (vi. 163). Man sees God in his own actions. When man's love for God surpasses everything, when his life and death have no interest for himself, but are solely for the sake of God and God's creatures—mankind—then that is a phase of the life eternal that has begun on earth—when he walks in the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and good tidings await him in the hereafter.

In short, the God of Islam is a living God, and has vouchsafed a perfect knowledge of His own self suitable to the capacity of every recipient, and according to the intensity of the love of the seeker after truth. Therefore a Muslim seeker after light concerning Him—that is to say, the favours and blessings of the Kingdom of God—repeats five times in his daily prayer, "O, Lord! Guide us in the path of perseverance, and the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours, for Thou art Beneficent and Merciful." This gives us a still stronger impetus to soar higher and higher into the spiritual realms

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

of the life that is to come after death. So we can safely assert that the religion of a people is the reflection of its own will in a transcendental world in which it believes the reality to be existing, this life being but transitory. Belief holds the transcendental world to be the real and true world, in contrast with which the present one is worthless and unreal.

Reverting to Religion and Morality—both have the same root and aim in the aspiration of the will of man towards the Complete—the Infinite. But that which is only a demand of Morality, finds solution and fulfilment in Religion. The Complete, or the Infinite, is described in abstract terms in Morality, while in Religion it is looked upon as godly, holy, blessed, and concrete. Subjectively, Morality and Religion are two aspects of the same thing. An individual is moral when his will and his actions strive after the Complete; and religious when his feelings, his beliefs, his aspirations, and his hopes are filled with the image of the Highest—the Supreme.

(To be continued.)

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## APOSTASY IN ISLAM

ISLAM is the only religion that vouchsafes, expressly, full freedom of judgment and conscience in matters of faith, and condemns every kind of compulsion. It is therefore inconceivable that it should countenance, let alone encourage, the punishment of those who have strayed from its fold. The whole question, which has been quite definitely decided by the Qur-án, has, nevertheless, it would seem, involved some three years of patient toil and investigation for a writer notorious for his intentional misrepresentation of Islam. A pretentious volume of about three hundred pages under the above title, from the pen of Dr. Zwemer, seeks to refute the position taken up by the *Islamic Review* in an article bearing the same title in the issue of October, 1922.

## APOSTASY IN ISLAM

Islam is not without its apocryphal writings as to the traditions of the Prophets. But the Muslim divines have produced a system of criticism, unique in its quality, for the purpose of testing the genuineness of all that has been imputed to him. Not a single page of the whole record of Jesus in the Bible would stand such tests as these. Under their searchlight some four thousand traditions have been sifted as correct, from among the mass of more than one hundred thousand ; but these, again, have to stand the test of the Qur-ánic teachings. Anything contrary to the latter, and the holy name of the Prophet, is at once dismissed as a forgery. It is this rejected stuff that supplies Dr. Zwemer material for his three years' investigation—a deplorable waste of time and energy ; but that, perhaps, is of no consequence to him. It is his trade, and it benefits him. He must blacken Islam, even though his very honesty as a writer may become blackened in the attempt.

The strength, logic and cogent reasoning that have characterized our pages have unnerved the Padre. He has lost his mental equi-pose, as his latest volume shows. In his own judgment he now seems to stand condemned for all the misrepresentations which he and his friends have made concerning Islam in their writings before our publications began to appear in the West. He finds himself in the plight of a person who will clutch at any straw in a vain endeavour to save an impossible situation. To write a book of some three hundred pages in reply to a pamphlet of three pages only, and to take three years to do it, relying on material unworthy of Muslim notice, speaks volumes for the admitted hopelessness of his task in his campaign of abuse against Islam. He cannot refer to a single verse of the Qur-án to support his conclusions. The black deeds of the mediæval days in Christendom, of religious persecution, should have warned him against references in his book to any political adventures in Islam.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

The subject has, however, now become sifted. The sad death of Maulvi Niamatullah Khan in Cabool—whether for apostasy or high treason matters not—has, however, cleared the air. It called forth a very learned controversy in the Indian Press on the punishment of apostasy in Islam, in which most of those well-versed in Islamic lore took part, among them, Al-Haj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and His Holiness Maulvi Muhammad Ali, the famous translator of the Qur-án. Mahatma Gandhi also took a conspicuous part in the discussion, which lasted for many months, and has but recently come to an end. The Khwaja now sums up the whole controversy in the pages of *Young India*—the organ of the Mahatma, who inserts this last word of the Khwaja in *Young India* “in order,” as the Mahatma says, “that the readers of *Young India* may authoritatively know that the Qur-án does not countenance stoning to death in any case whatsoever, and does not punish apostasy during man’s life on earth.” This comes from a Hindu sage, but we wonder if it will silence Dr. Zwemer and his circle. The article was copied in almost all the leading Muslim papers in India, and for the benefit of those interested in the subject we reproduce it here :—

### ON “STONING TO DEATH.”

The Mahatma has done a piece of service to Islam by entering into the controversy regarding the penalty of apostasy in Islam. Through his instrumentality the real issue has come to the surface in a most clarified form. It has now been admitted on all hands :—

- (1) That the Qur-án prescribes no punishment for apostasy.
- (2) That “stoning to death” is not among the penal provisions of the Qur-án.
- (3) That though many cases of apostasy did occur in the days of the Holy Prophet, no one was punished solely for it.

Those in favour of punishing apostasy in Islam, however, have now taken their stand on a different ground. They allege that the Qur-án is silent on the question of the said punishment, and in such a case they would go to other sources for their authority; they would go to the *Hadith*—the words and actions

## APOSTASY IN ISLAM

of the Prophet—and, failing that, to the collective judgment of the Muslim jurists of renowned piety. In the latter, they say, they find an authority for awarding capital punishment to an apostate.

The position, however, is not tenable. To begin with, the Qur-án is not silent on the issue. I read the following in the Book :—

“Surely (as for) those who believe, then disbelieve, again believe and again disbelieve, then increase in disbelief, Allah will not forgive them and guide them in the (right) path ” (Holy Qur-án, iv. 187).

“Whoever from among you turns back from his religion, then Allah will bring a people instead. He shall love them and they shall love Him ” (v. 54).

“And whoever of you turns back from his religion and then he dies an unbeliever—these it is whose works shall go for nothing in this world and the hereafter, and they are inmates of the fire : therein they shall abide ” (ii. 217).

If there did exist any doubt as to the fate of an apostate in Islam, these verses—and there is no other verse in the Qur-án on the subject—would dispel it at once. They are very clear and definite ; they leave no room for discussion ; they require no comment. The first verse speaks of one rooted in apostasy ; twice he embraces Islam, twice he recants ; how could there arise an occasion for the repetition of the offence, if an apostate had to receive capital punishment on his forsaking Islam, how could he embrace it again and then forsake it ? The verse goes farther : “then increase in disbelief.” This occurs after the second apostasy. It means survival of the apostate even after committing the sin a second time. The verse becomes meaningless if apostasy had to meet death. The Qur-án still contains the verse, and it must have its binding force on Muslims. The punishment to be meted to such apostates, as mentioned in the Qur-án, lies exclusively in the hands of Allah and excludes human agency.

The Qur-án, therefore, is conclusive on the point. But take it, for the sake of argument, that it is not so. Are we, then, to accept every such practice, or opinion time-honoured though it may be, that insults our intelligence and perturbs our conscience ? Islam does not compel us to such a condition ; nay, it relieves us of it by giving us a doctrine established under the direction of the Holy Prophet, that guides all our juristic adjudications in matters not spoken of in the Holy Qur-án. No judgment—be it single or collective, and with a big name to back it—can bind us if it goes against the Qur-án and good conscience. No human authority can abrogate the tenets of the Book. The word of God is the only criterion for testing the genuineness of the *Hadith*. No word or action alleged as coming from the Prophet can be accepted as such if it controverts any thing in the Qur-án. It is not of

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

him, as he himself says, but something forged upon him. The so-called collective judgment allowing punishment of an apostate, will be acceptable only if, firstly, it does not violate any Qur-*án*ic tenets, and secondly, it is not contrary to reason, equity and good conscience. This, by way of implication, I say on no less authority than that of the Prophet himself.

The Qur-*án* admittedly allows freedom of conscience. It respects personal judgment in religion. "No compulsion in religion" is the golden rule promulgated exclusively by the Qur-*án*. Apostasy, after all, is a change of opinion in religion. If it is punished, it is compulsion in religion, and therefore contrary to the Qur-*án*. The verse, while prohibiting the said compulsion, speaks also of its *rationale*. It says: "There is no compulsion in religion; truly the right way has been made clear to reason from error" (ii. 256). "The right way" mentioned in the verse, is Islam. Its superiority over the other ways, as the Book says, has been shown on the strength of reason; but if someone is still unable to appreciate Islam's claim to his reason, he should be excused. You cannot punish any person for his defective power of reason. I agree with the Mahatma when he says that "everything has to submit to the test of reason." The Qur-*án* says the same thing when preaching its truth. *It gives full liberty to every man to accept or reject its message*. It is therefore ridiculous even to imagine that Islam would give countenance to the punishment of heresy or apostasy. Besides, if Islam claims to be a proselytizing institution, it must drive home its truths to others by bringing them to the anvil of reason. It would not do for us to say to Mahatma, or anyone else, that things concerning those within the pale of Islam are not of their concern; and they therefore are debarred from saying their say in the matter. It does not affect Mahatma's prestige to say what he thinks right upon the question. Islam will lose its prestige, if its adherents betray such weakness in their armoury. If Islam is the truth—and I intelligently believe it to be so—a Muslim must stand always prepared to show it so, and that exclusively on the strength of reason and logic, especially when the Qur-*án* itself is no authority to others, apart from any other human agency. The Book admits the situation. It therefore appeals to reason, even in teaching things that seemingly transcend reason; and if the Qur-*án* allows others to accept its truths only through reason and not through any coercion, a Muslim would be untrue to himself and to his God-given gift—reason—if he is called upon to accept anything in religion under compulsion, and does not spurn such a course. It is a matter of thanksgiving to the Almighty that we have been spared such a situation. There is nothing in Islam that I am called upon to accept at the mutilation of my reason and at the sacrifice of my personal judgment.

KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN,

# 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 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



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

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.