

Islamic Review

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

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THE HOLY QUR-ÁN

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

SAFAR, 1345 A.H.
VOL. XIV. AUGUST, 1926 No. 8

NOTES

Eid-ul-Azha, 1344 A.H.

The festival of Eid-ul-Azha was commemorated at the Mosque, Woking, on Sunday, July 5th. The day, happily, proved fine, and in spite of the mining dispute (which has resulted in a particularly sketchy and inconvenient Sunday train service) Muslim and non-Muslim friends from all over the country attended to the number of well over three hundred, and among the many visitors were: Lord Headley (of the British Muslim Society), Captain Nur Khan (Sirdar Bahadur), of the Guides Cavalry, and the following orderly officers of the King-Emperor from the North-West Frontier: Hon. Lieut. Fauj Dar Khan (Sahib Bahadur), of the 1st Skinner's Horse; Hon. Lieut. Tikka Khan Sahib (Sirdar Bahadur), I.O.M. of the 2nd Punjab Regt.; Lieut. Ahmad Din Khan (Bahadur), M.B.E., I.O.M., I.D.S.M., of the 1/4th Bombay Grenadiers; and Lieut. R. E. Hadidi, from Cairo, of the Egyptian Army. There were also present a number of Indian Cadets from Sandhurst Military College.

Prayers were at 11.30, which were followed by the sermon of the Imam, M. Abdul Majid, M.A., who addressed the

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assembly who were gathered together on carpets in the open air in front of the Memorial House. The text of the sermon will be printed in a later issue.

Lunch was served at 1.30 on the lawn in the spacious marquees erected for the purpose, and during the afternoon the company occupied themselves with conversation—and so concluded, as the afternoon wore on and the guests departed, one of the most completely successful Eid-days that Woking has ever known. For it is at the Eid Festivals that is made patent to the Western world that glorious, sublime, and unique spirit of Brotherhood in which Islam sets mankind its own great essential example.

Plain Speaking.

We have many times before in these pages asked the British public, in the interest of the British Empire, to refrain from rousing the religious susceptibilities of the Muslim world, a world ever sensitive to insults to the personalities of the Prophets of God, whether Moses, Jesus or Muhammad, the absence of which might have brought Jews, Christians and Muslims to a true fellow-feeling.

But the followers of the "Prince of Peace," when unable to give vent to their overflowing energy in destructive wars with deadly weapons, console themselves by pouring forth rancorous literature for the purpose of offending the religious sentiments of their fellow-men, whom, later on, they calmly invite to co-operate through better mutual understanding in the Leagues, Pacts and other Associations which have nowadays become a kind of eyewash. For this, of course, there can be no excuse. To handle the question on moral or spiritual grounds seems waste of time. Ears have they, but hear not; therefore we think the time has come to seek to arouse the better instincts of our Western friends. For those who have any ambition of gaining commercial openings or seeing their trade flourish in Muslim countries must in their own interests cease from insulting the religious feelings of their customers, in whose eyes their prestige is dwindling and the price of their goods also depreciated.

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Many factors contribute towards the lowering of the prestige of a nation or the lessening of its commercial standing amongst the races of an empire, but, in our opinion, the most potent factor of all is what we may call, to put it very mildly, Religious Indiscretion. Examples are only too abundant. Take one. There appeared on the advertising page of *The Western Mail*, Christmas number, 1924, a cartoon of Muhammad with an insulting and offensive phrase regarding "The Mountain and Mohammed." Again, later on, to the great annoyance of the Muslim public, there was published another irritating phrase in the news-column of *The Western Mail*, Perth, April 29, 1926, viz.: "Islam's paradise lies in the shadow of the sword," which should have run: "Islam's paradise lies at the feet of the mother."

This last saying of the chivalrous Prophet shows the greatest respect towards the mother, who used to be a mere chattel in the Roman or Persian household, of whom was said in the Judaistic theory: "Of the woman came the beginning of sin, and through her we all die." Woman, who was regarded by Solomon as unclean, and by Buddhists as a snare for temptation, was to be respected in Islam and given the highest and noblest position that could be conceived.

Through Coloured Glasses.

In the *Manchester Guardian* of the 19th June, 1926, appeared an article under the title of "The New Turkey and Islam," stating, greedily as it were and with a smacking of lips, that "The Government of the New Turkey appears to be anxious to dissipate the impression in the Moslem world that the Turkish people, once the leader of Islam, have lost the faith, and become infected by Western scepticism."

Now, leaving at present the question of the truth of the above statement, we find first of all a striking example of the ignorance of the average European about Islam. He has a sort of blurred image of our Religion in his mind, being of opinion, apparently, that greatest evil has accrued from it. He seems unacquainted with the age before the Renaissance, when Mediæval Europe was a hotbed of religious fanaticism,

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and when true freedom of thought or speech or action were unknown. The free exercise of conscience, the free choice of will, and the evolution of mental faculties were so cruelly crushed under the intolerable persecutions by autocrat Popes and their myrmidons in the time of the Inquisition that to the Westerner Religion and Freedom of Conscience seem poles asunder never to be bridged by any system whatsoever. But a little study of the Religion of Islam must eradicate that erroneous idea cherished by the majority of mankind, that Religion and Life are two different things ; that Religion and Politics are two separate systems, and that they could never merge one into the other.

It is not difficult to make it quite clear to an unprejudiced reader in the West that Islam is elastic as well as ameliorating. Islam advances with the advanced thought of each age ; it is in perfect harmony with each new invention, with each scientific discovery ; it does not clash with evolutionary reformations in the fields of art and culture, and, moreover, it is a fact that Islam is not lethargic and Al-Qur-án not a collection of cut-and-dry rules of ritualism or formalism. Its belief is linked to life, its thought is translatable into action ; it is free from fanaticism, it turns its back on intriguing and idle monks, and on celibacy (which is a curse, because unnatural) ; on foolish popular superstitions and on all forms of worship in which the mind does not correspond with the lips, i.e. when devoid of spirit, for Al-Qur-án says : “ So woe to the praying ones, who are unmindful of their prayers, who do good to be seen and withhold alms ” (cvii. 4-7).

When Islam, like Amianthus, could be split into flexible fibres and yet retain its quality in the face of such a fact, it is not at all seeming for the missionary, diplomat or dramatic authors of the musical comedy stamp, to depict Islam as if, in fact, it represented their own past history at its very worst.

The modernizing spirit which the Turk exhibits in introducing new reforms in his new Republic does not clash with the simple democratic spirit of Islam, that preaches the principle of Divine Unity and human equality, allowing the widest latitude to the human conscience. Islam gave to the people

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a code which, however archaic in its simplicity, was capable of the greatest potential expansion, keeping pace with the progress of material civilization. It conferred on the State a flexible constitution, based on a just appreciation of human rights and human duty.

Those occasions are unfortunate on which a Christian writer either ignorantly or wilfully distorts facts or misrepresents thought about Islam, and tries to show that whatever step Turkey adopts for its reformation is the outcome of atheism or agnosticism ; for, bigoted as he is, he can never think of anything beyond his religious dogma and superstition, much of which is exposed to-day, and washed away before the strong currents of reformation.

To him Islam is a set of dogmas and superstitious belief, like his own, and he holds that the present reforms in Turkey are borrowed plumage, not realizing that the evil that had crept into Turkey is going to be hurled back in the face of the Christian creditor. No ! The Turk is now inspired with the old spirit of Islam which is ever ready to breathe the ennobling spirit into those of its followers who conquer themselves and adapt themselves to their environment as the Turk, Afghan or the Persian is doing.

Watch and Wait.

Muslims as well as Christians—both interested in the Khalifat question, but from two utterly divergent angles of vision—with eager eyes watched the proceedings of the Congress at Cairo, where the fate of the future Khalifa was to be decided. It seemed something of a problem (and it was difficult to solve it) to set up a Khalifa who could undertake the defence of Islam and its laws without being corrupted by outside influence, moral or otherwise. Now we find the scene of discussion changed ; the tents are pitched at Mecca for the final decision on the old parade-ground of Islam whence its worthy sons acquired their first moral discipline for upholding a cause that was true and just. H.M. Ibn Saud, as it seems, in the interests of the administration of the Holy Places of Islam, has just inaugurated a conference at Mecca

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where Muslim delegates will try to prove that their homogeneity is greater than the things acquired by Pacts at Locarno, where disintegration has already set in, and where underhand dealing has at last been revealed as the controlling factor.

The League of Nations is exposed as a species of super-conscientious fraud. It is generally and quite reasonably admitted that for small territorial rights and little commercial gain the stronger States will always use the weaker ones as tools for the purpose of promoting their own patriotic motives. Commercialism and militarism go hand in hand, and if the former be regarded as ward, the latter serves as an operation room, and the two could never be severed without great sacrifice. A European may boast of a higher civilization than his predecessors, yet he could look back for moral help to the Teacher of Galilee. If Europe could teach Jesus Christ the use of complicated destructive weapons of war, yet in return that Messenger of God could surely tell materialistic Europe the means of escaping from the present economic and diplomatic tangle simply by loving one another.

The League of Nations has taken more than half a century to be shaped and still lacks hold, and no good, so far, has accrued from it, but the Muslim League of Nations is strongly cemented by mutual love and the bond of religious sentiment, which holds fast. Muhammad, the illiterate Prophet of Arabia, first laid Pilgrimage's foundation-stone thirteen centuries ago, and ever since Europe has tried to break it asunder, as history bears witness; but could Europe, in spite of the power of the Papacy and the Crusades, shake it? No, never! Why, then? is the question that arises in the mind. Because moral force is the greatest force, and is the gear of the world machinery.

As long as the Muslim believes in the Unity of God, unity of brotherhood necessarily follows, and when he believes in Al-Qur-án (unchanged by time), his attention is diverted to the verse: "The believers are but brethren; therefore make peace between your brethren and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, that mercy be had on you" (xlix. 10).

This verse is the seed of union amongst Muslims. It

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fosters the principle of the brotherhood of man laid down in its broadest sense, and brushes aside anything that may disturb the peace of society, and if Muslims act up to it their progress will be rapid and union complete.

Let the world watch and wait for the result of the two greatest leagues ever formed: the one, i.e. the League of Nations, has matter as its foundation, and the other, i.e. the Haj, spirit.

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And who forsakes the religion of Abraham but he who makes himself a fool, and most certainly We *made him pure* in this world, and in the hereafter he is most surely among the righteous.

When his Lord said to him, Submit, he said: I submit myself to the Lord of the worlds.

And the same did Abraham enjoin on his sons and (so did) Jacob: O my sons! surely Allah has chosen for you (this) faith, therefore die not unless you are Muslims.

Nay! were you witnesses when death visited Jacob, when he said to his sons: What will you serve after me? They said: We will serve your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, one God only, and to Him do we submit.

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.

And they say: Be Jews or Christians, you will be on the right course. Say: Nay! (we follow) the religion of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not one of the polytheists.

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

If then they believe as you believe in Him, they are indeed on the right course, and if they turn back, then they are only in great opposition, so Allah will suffice you against them, and He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

(Receive) the baptism of Allah, and who is better than Allah in baptizing? and Him do we serve.

Say: Do you dispute with us about Allah, and He is our Lord and your Lord, and we shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds, and we are sincere to Him?

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

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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. (Holy Qur-án, ii. 130-141.)

DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHERS,—The verses whose translation I have read to you are taken from the 16th section of chapter ii., called *Al-Baqarah*, i.e. The Cow. We are assembled here to celebrate the Eid-ul-Fitr, and our common tie is the religion of Islam, which, as the verses I have read say, was the name of the religion of Abraham, revered as much by the Muslims as by the Jews and Christians, and the name of the religion which was bequeathed by him to his sons. Muhammad's message was not new ; for truth is eternal. It has been delivered before ; but man has lost it. The blessed month of Ramazan in which the Qur-án was revealed, in which Allah's blessings descend upon us, is past. To-day we meet together to offer prayers in thanksgiving for His enabling us to fulfil our duties to Him. To-day is the day when once again the lawful things which were made unlawful for us during the month of Ramazan have been made lawful ; we again enjoy them. In order to mark our thanksgiving, practically all of us, all those who can afford to pay, have paid a certain sum of money towards the charity fund which is known in Islamic terminology as *Sadaqat-ul-Fitr*. This day all of us try to help those who are needy and stranded. Charity, as the Qur-án says, purifies our property, purges our moneys of the materialistic dross.

CHANGE IN VALUES.—The downfall of many a nation, the extinction of many a noble and renowned family, and the rise of others, have been the swift phenomena which, perhaps, the world has never experienced before, within so short a span as the last thirteen years. The cultural and mental crisis through which the Continent of Europe and the rest of the world is passing forebodes a mighty upheaval, stronger than the political and economic changes which sometimes arrest our attention ; for the economic and political changes are nothing more than the attendant symptoms of an internal mental change. Now if we were to analyse the present crisis,

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we should find that we have to encounter stern realities of life, which sometimes seem quite new to us. For example, we find that certain ideas do not, nowadays, carry the value which we formerly attached to them. All these changes, with the coming into existence of new values, point to a revision in our system of life.

WORLD-BROTHERHOOD IN ISLAM AND ITS DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS.—If so, what provision has been made by the elastic laws of Islam and how far can Islam be helpful in furthering the progress of mankind? is the question of an inquiring mind. The Muslims, as is known to all of you, have two such occasions as this, on which they come together. The second is the festival of the commemoration of the Great Sacrifice of Ishmael, when he was ready to lay down his life in pursuance of a dream that had come to the Great Patriarch Abraham. These two congregational services of the Muslims are connected with the daily prayers which are offered five times a day and the Friday prayers. The Prophet Muhammad, although he allowed the offering of daily prayers at home, laid great stress on their being offered in congregation. He went a step farther. Daily prayers were developed into weekly prayers held on Fridays, and these again into the prayers offered at the time of festival, twice a year. He was not content with this. He reached the highest possible point. He introduced the institution of the Pilgrimage, and why? Because he aimed at a world-society—a society composed of different nationalities and different races, speaking different languages, but all believing in the One God, in one Prophet, and in all the Prophets to whatever race, time or place they might have belonged. This phenomenon is seen to-day *here* on a minor scale. This Eid-ul-Fitr of ours is one of those means which the Holy Prophet Muhammad employed to achieve the grand object of a world-brotherhood which is the unique feature of Islam.

The West is roused at the coming Khalifat Congress in Cairo. Articles and notices have appeared in the Press to the effect that the coming Congress will almost prove a rival to Geneva. That the hopes of the Muslims may become material-

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ized and that the Congress may awaken them to a sense of responsibility and political consciousness is possible enough. That it may be able to put its aims into practice is possible, because Muslims, basing everything on the grand reality of world-brotherhood, can achieve that which the Western nations in presence of their diverse views, diverse aims, natural to mankind, have failed to accomplish owing to the absence of any common basis whereon they can build the superstructure of peace, amity and common intelligence. Again, Islam is a far more close-knit and consistent medium than is Christendom, because it is not only a creed, but a political system as well. Even as a religion it is so simple in its essentials and so liveable, if I may be permitted the word, that there is no room for the wide and bitter divergencies which afflict Christendom. Present-day Christianity would seem to be utterly lacking in that spiritual bond which binds together Muslims of all nations, Muslims of all races and Muslims of all countries. Leagues founded on a materialistic basis will snap like a thread even at a slight strain. We need nowadays a combination of materialistic and ethical values. Materialistic civilization can be destroyed by a stronger materialism. Therefore we Muslims do not lay our world-society on the foundations of materialism, for such can be annihilated, while the spiritual and the idealistic cannot. Muslims, although not in the ascendant, feel for one another, not because they are bound with one another politically, but because they have a common centre ; and their connections are based on spirituality. You may torture the physical body of man, but the spirit and the ideals of a nation or of an individual cannot be uprooted. Commenting on the Islamic League of Nations, the *Daily News* of March 29th says : " If this plan of an Islamic League of Nations were carried out, its consequences would be incalculable, ' for it would establish a Muslim League of Nations far more coherent and effective than its prototype at Geneva,' whose impotency has been more than once displayed to the world through want of an unifying element."

BELIEF IN ALL THE PROPHETS A PECULIARITY OF ISLAM ;
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SUCH A BELIEF FOR WORLD-BROTHER-

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HOOD.—Islam stands for nothing else but unity of God and unity of mankind. In order to achieve this end, it has enjoined upon its followers the belief in all the prophets of the world to whatever age or nation they have belonged—a peculiarity which makes the religion of Islam quite universal in its application. What was, after all, the aim of the Holy Prophet Muhammad in preaching this belief in all the prophets of the world, and enjoining it upon his followers as one of the essentials of faith? A Muslim is a Jew first, for he accepts Moses; then a Christian, for he accepts Jesus; then a Muslim, for he accepts Muhammad. Islam has aimed at one great world-society based on the foundations of peace and tolerance, and no world society can be created if different nations have their own separate prophets, thus hating and despising, and sometimes even abusing, the prophets of others. The setting-up of a world-society requires the absence of national deities. This is the real secret of accepting Muhammad as the last of the Prophets by a Muslim, after whom no Prophet can come. Islam is a religion which claims to have its origin in the Lord of the Worlds, and recognizes that all religions and prophets have had their origin in and inspiration from the Lord of the Worlds. The very idea in the words "Lord of the Worlds" repudiates the claim of any national deity or national prophet in Islam. There can be no community of aim, no peace in the world, unless all believe in one God exercising the same attributes everywhere; unless all believe and practise the doctrine, that all are equal; unless all have respect for the feelings, sentiments and claims of others; unless all revere the great personages with a reverence equal to that which they cherish towards their own.

ISLAM'S CONCEPTION OF SOCIAL LIFE.—Islam does not admit invidious claims to race, society or country. "It brings everyone to one level. Christianity has much to learn from Islam in this respect. The fact that there is no colour bar in Islam is the feature which distinguishes it from Christianity." But the league of nations founded on the basis of Muhammad's religion took the principle of equality of all races so seriously as to put other communities to shame.

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The ideal of a league of human races has indeed been approached by the Muslim community more nearly than by any other.¹ But I ask, Is there anything else which this world of ours requires? And yet Christian missionaries have the audacity to take the message of the Bible to Eastern lands and especially to Muslims—those Muslims who are accustomed to a far higher ethical conception of life than the missionaries have as yet even dreamt of. I refer to the recent report issued by the Missionary Council of the Church under the presidency of the Bishop of Salisbury. In this connection it would not be out of place if I were to draw your attention to the “Open Letters to the Bishop of Salisbury,” by the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, which are appearing in the pages of the *Islamic Review*. Religion is another name for a system of life; it is immaterial whether or not we reach God, but it is of paramount importance that we know the way wherewith we may learn to live in the world. A German writer says: “It is religion which distinguishes man from animals. It is animals who live without social systems. It is men who live with social laws.” In India a coloured man, in spite of his being a Christian, cannot enter those churches which are exclusively reserved for the white people. A Muslim who is a citizen of the world says in the words of the famous philosopher-poet Iqbal:—

“Ours is not a bond limited to Turkey or Arabia.

“Our bond is not confined to family connections.

“Our nation is above ties of blood and colour.

“I direct your attention to a point, O my dear wise friend,

“Go and look at the comb in the beehive,

“There in it, is a drop of honey from the red poppy flower,

“There in it, is a drop of honey from the narcissus.

“This one does not say, ‘I am from narcissus’;

“That does not say, ‘I am from a lotus.’

“Our religion is an Abrahamic beehive.

“The honey of ours is the faith of Abraham.

“If you make blood a part and parcel of religion,

¹ Professor Snouck Horgronje, of Leiden, in an essay in the book *The Moslem World of To-day*.

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“ You have placed an obstacle in the way of the Brotherhood of Islam.

“ In the soil of Islam this idea does not take root, and if you bring the idea of blood ties in Islam, then, dear friend, your ideas are still non-Muslim (they require a conversion).”¹

What the poet seeks to depict is one large, all-comprehensive community, based on foundations utterly different from those cherished in Western countries; for the family bond, the bond of country and the like, are the chief chains which hinder us from progress towards the formation of a world-society. And it is quite clear that the extreme nationalist spirit is but an outgrowth of attachment to one's own country and family. Islam does not condemn nationalistic self-realization and self-determination; what it does is this—it affords means by which this spirit may be controlled. The fundamental conception of Islam is supra-national and supra-territorial. “ Islam,” says Louis Massignon, “ is, *a priori*, international.”

Snouck Horgronje has pointed out that the initial task of Islam was indeed to wipe out tribal differences in Arabia, and to weld its warring groups into a Muslim kingdom, and to become a unifying force for the wiping out of more than tribal differences on a world-wide scale; and that such an ideal obviously contravenes extreme national aspirations and aims at establishing a world-wide religious empire is quite clear. There can be no peace unless all nations, all countries, are closely knit together by means of a common religion supplying a common spiritual basis. Christianity also has the message of peace, but what distinguishes Islam from Christianity is, that the Religion of Islam becomes a real thing by showing us the way, by giving us principles which can aid us in achieving a real World-Brotherhood—a real League of Nations.

THE CAUSE OF THE PRESENT DECAY OF THE MUSLIMS.—There is no privileged class in Islam. Everybody is equal in the eyes of Islam. The democracy of Islam is proverbial. Mr. Lothrop Stoddard, in his book, *The New World of Islam*, says: “ In fine, no subsequent distortions could entirely

¹ Iqbal, in his *Rumúz-i Bekhudí*.

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obliterate the fact that primitive Islam was the supreme expression of a freedom-loving folk, whose religion must necessarily contain many liberal tendencies." Even the Shariat or Canon Law is, as Professor Lybyer states in the *Proceedings of the American Political Science Association*, "fundamentally democratic and opposed in essence to Absolutism." Vambéry, the well-known Orientalist, writes in his *Western Culture in Eastern Lands*: "It is not Islam and its doctrines which have devastated the Western portion of Asia and brought about the present sad state of things; but it is the tyranny of the Muslim princes who have wilfully perverted the doctrines of the Prophet and sought to find authority in the Qur-án as a basis for their despotic rule. They have not allowed the faintest suspicion of doubt in matters of religion, and efficaciously distorting and crushing all liberal principles, they have prevented the dawn of a Muslim Renaissance." Such is the opinion of European Orientalists on the spirit of Religion of Islam. Ameer Ali says in his *Spirit of Islam*: "The blight which has fallen on Mussalman nations is not due to the teachings of their Master, i.e. Muhammad. No religion contained greater promise of development, no faith was purer or more in conformity with the progressive demands of humanity."

ISLAM AND ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHER CREEDS AND DENOMINATIONS.—By the laws of Islam, liberty of conscience and freedom of worship were allowed and guaranteed to the followers of every creed under Muslim dominion. The passage in the Qur-án, "Let there be no compulsion in religion," testifies to the principle of toleration and charity inculcated by Islam. This is, be it remembered, a precept which emanated from the lips of a personage who had power to enforce his religion at the point of his reputed sword. In spite of the Prophet's treatment of the unbelievers, in spite of the tolerance shown by his followers to the adherents of other creeds—a toleration that is evidenced, among other things, by a charter of protection granted to the Nestorian Christians by the Caliph of Baghdad recently edited and published by Professor Mingana of Manchester—we are astonished to read in Christian papers

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the view that the new Constitution of Turkey and other Muslim countries makes provision for "each citizen without distinction of race or religion to have right to equality and complete liberty." And again, that "Freedom to practise the religions prevalent in the Empire of Turkey, the enjoyment of religious privileges accorded to different nationalities, will be maintained." But I ask, Is there anything new in this, anything unfamiliar to Islam? Another proof of the tolerant spirit of the Muslims is to be found buried deep under the burden of the Capitulations—privileges which were granted to non-Muslims in harmony with the tolerant spirit of Islam. They permitted them to be governed by their own laws, and not the law of the land in which they elected to live. Such was the beginnings of the so-called Capitulations! The Muslims, in time, had to pay a heavy price for this spirit of tolerance!

CHRISTIAN CARPERS AT MODERN IMPROVEMENTS IN MUSLIM COUNTRIES.—And yet one finds article upon article in journals and magazines of standing, on Turkey and the improvements which are being introduced into that country. I have read these articles with interest, and am constrained to point out, with regret, that they merely betray the utter ignorance of their writers concerning the Religion of Islam. These writers are often men of fame and learning. Phrases like "setting the clock forward in Turkey" while describing the conditions in that country are very common. If Turkish doctors are being sent out by the Turkish Government into the interior of the country to substitute modern medical science for the superstitious practices of magic, then the European carpers take occasion to point out that Islam is a religion which never cultivated medicine, that Islam is a religion which never encouraged medicine, and by these means they want to bring home to us that there is a sign of a real shifting from the religious basis. I wish such had read the history of Islam. The most painful thing that I have noticed is that Europeans do not read the history of Islam. The European statesman is as ignorant of the early history of Islam as the average man, and to crown all, European publicists never take the

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trouble to study all the phases of Muslim life, but pass their opinion on isolated facts. If Turkey has adopted the modern constitutional government, then, from their point of view, Turkey has done something which was quite alien to Islam. If women go unveiled in Turkey, then again Turkey has been guilty of something which Islam condemns. These men who take up their pens to write on Islam ought to have better qualifications.

CUSTOM OF VEIL.—What Islam condemns is free intercourse between men and women. Among the Arabs, the women of the tribes are perfectly free to move about as they wish. The ladies of the Prophet's family conversed with the disciples, received visits from them and often shared in the repasts of the men. The custom of the seclusion of the women does not depend upon any religious ordinance; it is merely a matter of convenience. The ancient kings of Persia observed it as a sign of grandeur, and the Muslim sovereigns and chiefs imitated their example and adopted the custom.¹

A CHAPTER FROM THE PAST HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENCE OF MEDICINE.—To return to the point of the so-called modernizing movements in Islamic countries. In all good faith I would remind these carpers of a chapter from their own past history. The Christian missionary of to-day wishes to take to himself all the credit of the European materialistic progress. I wish these Christian missionaries made a distinction between a European and a Christian, Christendom and Christianity. Even men of learning are guilty of the confusion of terms. The present-day advancement is due to the European, not to the Christian; to Christendom, not to Christianity. If we were to compare the state of things as regards medicine—I pick up this at random out of many instances of the kind, in Europe, in the day when Muslims were ruling in Spain—we should find that up to the eleventh century there was nothing noteworthy to record. The princes, the Popes and the rich had their physicians-in-ordinary, and all of them were Jews. The people, in general, were cured by looking at the pictures of the holy saints and

¹ Cf. Ameer Ali, *Spirit of Islam*.

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relics. How ridiculous! The illiterate monks were, to a great extent, doctors who cured the sick with the help of faith. These conditions continued so long as the Moorish medical studies remained confined to the provinces of Moorish Spain and later naturalized themselves in the universities which sprang up in the twelfth century; and in these universities it was the students and pupils of the Arabs who directed the studies of medicine. Before this time there was only one medical school in the whole of Christendom, and this was the school of Salerno, which was founded by the Muslims. They taught in this school according to the Arabian way of teaching and with the aid of Arabian educational appliances. It was in the school of Salerno that we notice the first signs of medical activities in the Roman world.

The science of pharmacy, which was scientifically cultivated and developed by the Arabs, was based, according to Humboldt, on the Dioscorides of the Iranian physicians. He says on page 214 of his book, *Cosmos*: "The science of materia medica, the foundation of which was laid in the Alexandrian school of Dioscorides, is, in its scientific form, a creation of the (Muslim) Arabs. The apothecary's art was indeed founded by the Arabians, and the first official authoritative rules for the preparation of medicine were taken from them and were diffused through Southern Europe by the school of Salerno in Italy. Pharmaceutical chemists in the Orient were strictly watched and controlled, and so too were the doctors and physicians, lest uneducated quacks should get any chance of practising as qualified physicians!"

Wherever the Muslims went, there they founded medical schools. When the Arabs went to Persia—I would quote one example illustrative of the Christian mental attitude of the day—the Syriac Christians had a college of their own at Edessa, but were compelled to move their college from Edessa to Nisibis in Persia, to which country they fled, because they were persecuted by the Church as Separatists. They set up there, in Jaundispur, and in Ahwaz, schools for medicine. There they found peace and calmness which was accorded to them by the Muslim States.

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It is passing strange to read the opinions of the Press concerning the present movements in Islam. Those who write should remember that improvements are being introduced because Islam is not against them. If a certain Muslim country is sending doctors into the interior of the country, then it is doing nothing new, but only what was done by the Muslims many centuries ago. If they gave up a certain thing and revive that self-same thing again, it does not mean that they are doing anything which is against Islam. There is nothing to gloat over, and they are not setting the clock forward in Turkey or in other Muslim countries. They are doing something which they ought to have been doing all along, something which was bequeathed to them by their forefathers. For argument's sake, let us take it for granted that Muslims are introducing changes not in harmony with Islam. But the question arises, How do you account for their attitude during the Middle Ages towards learning and knowledge?

POLYGAMY.—European publicists and jurists do not, as I have said, study all the phases of Muslim life, but pass their opinion on isolated facts. Polygamy, marriage and divorce are not so bad things in themselves, but are made to appear bad by the manner in which they are described to the people here. That is what does most of the harm. European publicists take up generally such interdependent questions as marriage, polygamy and divorce, singly, and pass their unfavourable criticism upon the social side of Islam. Polygamy is picked out as a defect in the Islamic religious system. Particular instances form the basis for the generalizations of Christian missionaries. If a Pasha in Turkey or a Reis in India marries more than one wife, then would it be justifiable to say that Islamic countries are polygamous? It is truth, and nothing but truth, when I say that Islam does not enjoin polygamy. If Henry VIII took six wives, does it mean that England is polygamous? One generalization is as ridiculous as the other. Islam neither enjoined nor encouraged polygamy. "Among the Indian Mussalmans," says Ameer Ali, "95 per cent. are at the present moment . . . monogamists. Among the educated classes, versed in the history

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of their ancestors, and able to compare with the records of other nations, the custom is regarded with disapprobation. In Persia only a small portion of the population enjoys the questionable luxury of plurality of wives." Professor Vambéry, who resided for many years in Muslim countries, says: "Polygamy, although a very sad institution of Muslim society, is in no way so common and spread as it is believed to be in Europe. In the Muslim countries which are known to me—I am not afraid of the statement I make—one does not find even one family amongst thousands where the legal permission of polygamy is made use of. With the Turks, Persians, Afghans and Tatars, it is practically unknown—nay, unthinkable, because many wives involve a greater housekeeping, great riches and expense. In the same way, seldom, very seldom, do we find it in the middle-class people. . . . What I have said in connection with polygamy applies equally to divorce, which according to the Islamic Law can be resorted to with proportionate ease, but in spite of this fact, it is of a rarer occurrence in the Orient than in Protestant England or America." ¹ Can Europe claim that it is more monogamous than Muslim countries, in view of the figures quoted by me? The passage in the Qur-án on which the much-talked-of moot point of polygamy is based, permits polygamy under certain circumstances, it does not enjoin it, nor even permit it unconditionally. There are a variety of circumstances which require polygamy to be adopted under exceptional circumstances. It is to meet exceptional circumstances that Islam has made this provision, as a remedial measure. Muslim countries are as much monogamous and as much polygamous as the European countries. Before the war, a drama in the French language dealing with this supposed Muslim polygamy was staged. The Turkish Minister at Brussels challenged the writer to name five cases out of 10,000 who were polygamous. In consequence of this protest the drama was withdrawn.

Another mistake which Europe makes is that it judges others by the same standard as that which prevails in Europe; e.g., promiscuity in morality, or prostitution, is considered to

¹ *Sittenbilder aus dem Morgenlande*, 1876, p. 21.

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be a lesser evil than polygamy, and Europe forbids the latter by law. Europe is fanatically conscious of its own superiority ; even responsible men here use derogatory and even contemptuous language of Muslims, and I wonder if this attitude, which not infrequently evinces itself in writings, in newspaper attacks, in private conversation and in public speeches, is not a sad remnant of the old ecclesiastical hatred of Islam. But now Muslims are becoming more sensitive to such remarks, and, sooner or later, Europe will have to pay for its conceit, as Asia has had to pay many times for its religious fanaticism.

AN UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ASIA AND EUROPE.—Europe has overpowered the Muslim nations for the time being. But let it be said once for all that Islam is unconquerable and so are the Muslims who have the spirit of Islam in them. Muslim dominions are being trampled down ; but this subjection, however, in the history of the world, is but a passing phase. Muslims have been reduced to this degraded condition on account of their own negligence. They have weakened in their close attachment to the spirit of Islam and deviated from the path marked by Islam.

Nowadays material tendencies are developed and developing in the minds of the people those passions which are antagonistic to the idea of creating a world-society ; of respecting each other's sentiments, and of treating each other as equals. European nations have willed that Asia remain under their thumb for ever. Why ? For what reason ? Simply for materialistic ends. Europe, with its self-seeking, its luxuries, its godless bent of mind, can never propagate peace in the world. A thousand Locarnos may come, but they will never disturb what is beneath the surface-water of the deep lake of Europe. Those waters can be agitated by something based on spirituality, but not on materialism. An understanding on mutual intelligence between the East and the West is only possible on ethical, moral grounds. Almost all the golden pages of this world's history are chronicles of the moral victory of Asia. If Europe has invented novel and ingenious instruments for the destruction of man, then Asia has given birth to those immortal souls who have brought

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salvation to the whole human race. Europe's conquest, which, as remarked above, is but a transient phase in the history of the world, has been at the point of the bayonet. Asia's domination over Europe was through these great minds who raised human ideals to perfection. Mutual understanding cannot be secured by bayonets. It can only be secured by principles based on spirituality. It can only be possible if we believe and show by our actions that all men are equal, that there is no difference between man and man, or in brief words—be true believers in the unity of the Godhead. Islam practised this equality and practises it to-day. The day when Islam once more shall regain its ascendancy, and links that ascendancy and material strength with its ethical principles—that day will be, especial to it, the world's happiest day.

ZAKAT.—Now I pass on to another Muslim institution called "poor-rate," which is founded on an express command in the Qur-án. This institution deserves the careful attention of my new Muslim brethren in particular and of my Muslim brethren and other friends in general. If my Muslim brethren were to give a practical shape to what the Holy Prophet and the Qur-án say in connection with this institution, they will be solving their own problems and helping to solve the problems of the world as well. The command reads as follows: "It is not righteousness that you turn your face towards the East and the West, but righteousness is that one should believe in Allah and the last day, and the angels and the books and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans, and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars, and for the emancipation of captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate." I wish to draw your attention to this social measure which was introduced by the illiterate Prophet of the Sahara of Arabia, thirteen centuries ago. A study of this institution will show how Islam succeeded in introducing, thirteen hundred years ago, an ordinance, which would go far towards solving some of the most pressing social problems of the present-day world. I would have gone into its details, but pressure upon time does not allow me to dwell upon it.

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I close my discourse with the words of both of the Great Patriarchs, Abraham and Jacob (may blessings of Allah be upon them). They said: "O my sons, surely Allah has chosen for you the faith of Islam, therefore die not unless you are Muslims." The old Patriarch acted the natural way. We would do likewise if we were to find a certain thing has been conducive to our moral, spiritual and worldly amelioration and uplifting, we would try to impress its necessity and efficacy on our children. That is exactly what Abraham did. He had found satisfaction and rest in the religion of Islam and he bade his sons do likewise, and so did Jacob. No one of us knows when we are going to die, so we should be watchful and look to it that, before death overtakes us, we are Muslims, and we die while we are Muslims. May God be with you !

MY READING OF THE QUR-ÁN

By OMAR WILKINS

IN the Court of Justice at Athens, Socrates, in one section of his *Apology* (*Apologia*, edited by B. Jowett, Oxford University Press), said that through inquiring and asking questions of the people who were supposed to know, he found that what they did know was more than outweighed by what they thought they knew and did not know. After going to all sorts of men with different ideas, he came to the conclusion that when we knew how ignorant we were, we knew something. It is from that standpoint we should investigate all new ideas, and to help us in our inquiries we have books handed down to us from remote antiquity to the present day, so that we may read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. This idea has been well put by Hazlitt, in *The Spirit of the Age* ("The World's Classics," Oxford University Press), and again by Emerson in his *Essay on Books*. Each lays his own special stress on the fact that we need the companionship of the great minds of all ages, to help us in our everyday experience, so that we may know ourselves better to-morrow than we do to-day. Neither of the books referred to really satisfies man's deeper needs ; they do not enable man to climb to the highest

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pinnacle of all, so that he may get a clear view of mankind and the world in general. He is compelled to turn to the religious books of the world ; he finds here and there hints of a possible future development of mankind, but as he proceeds he finds them a mass of contradictions ; and tracing them back through time, he often finds that they have lost their original meanings, having been infelicitously handled by various schools of thought. Different councils have from time to time added to and taken away, and inasmuch as a great deal has been lost through translation from one language to another, the records have become so disjointed and out of harmony with nature and mankind, that he cannot believe that the God of Nature, Who is so true and exact in every detail, is one and the same.

But he thinks he realizes this—that one of the rules wherewith to measure the progress of the nations of the earth and the religions of the world is, What are the Attributes of God ? And we find that these differ in every religious system at every period in history. The divergent opinions persist and remain, but from the moral pressure from outside and scientific research, advanced minds since the time of Galileo and Bruno have been compelled to doubt the Divine Origin of the Christian Bible. But when we turn to the Qur-ân we find it is written in the same language in which it was dictated. There are a multitude of Arabic teachers who can interpret to us the same meaning to-day, the same meaning as was meant at the time of Muhammad. It has not lost any of its pristine purity through the ages, and our thanks are due to Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the Imam of the Mosque, Woking, who is working so hard and sincerely and writing books which have helped inquiring minds, both of men and women, in the West towards seeing the beauties of the Qur-ân—especially his book, *The Threshold of Truth*, and his last book, *The Ideal Prophet*, which has opened to our view a Prophet from his early childhood to the death-bed of a matured man, setting an example to us, in all the phases of human life, which is always better than precept, from an orphan to one in command of riches ; from the peaceful propagandist to the warrior, not

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for possession or power, but in defence of principles, knowing that principles are worth more than all the pomp and power of this material world. Surely no other religious book in the world can give guidance as complete as we find in the Qur-án, for it tells us that from the first this world was and is good and points out its usefulness for the development of mankind both materially and spiritually, and opens out a yet wider vista for future evolution in thought and action : just the opposite to the Christian teaching, which is so quick to inform us at an early age that we are born in sin, and that the world is bad and sinful, and the sooner we get away from it the better we shall be.

Let us review some of the main points of the Qur-án which play so important a rôle in moulding human character. "Does not man see that We have created him from the small life-germ ? then lo ! he is an open disputant " (Qur-án xxxvi. 77). What a span of life ! We expect to find in poetry such a span. In fact, we value it just for its compass, its height and depth. In no other book can we find such a moral truth in so concise a statement. Certainly not in the Christian Bible !

What æons and æons it covers ! Can we number the volumes of books that have been written, trying to express the same statement, since mankind in the West dared to think for itself ?

Science to-day agrees that our growing consciousness has been developed through various forms up to moral man, and is so well illustrated by Nietzsche in his "Three Metamorphoses of the Spirit," in *Thus Spake Zara Thustra*.

"He then became an open disputant." What an untold number of years has mankind passed through physical, mental, and spiritual subjection, driven along the road of life by the cat-o'-nine-tails of consequences that forced him through the hard mould of circumstances, till he began to question and inquire for himself and then challenge the so-called authority !

The pages of history the world over show how the questioner and inquirer have been dealt with, and still mankind has cried for Light and more Light, and the Band of Hero Spirits pass the Torch from hand to hand in every generation. The

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Qur-ân comes to us in our generation giving us a brilliant Light, saying: "Believe in Islam, which means obedience to Divine commandment and the laws of Nature, and you shall have Rest."

What was the condition of the people of Mecca and the Arabian peninsula before the advent of the Prophet? Sir William Muir says: "The people were sunk in superstition, brutality and all sorts of vice, and were little above the animal state." The Qur-ân refers to that age and reminds Muslims of the bounty of Allah.

"And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited, and remember the favour of Allah on you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favour you became brethren; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it; thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way" (Al-Qur-ân, iii. 102).

It is certain that human consciousness had not risen above the animal stage, and in its mental outlook could not distinguish between "mine" and "thine." The animal is always expressed in "mine" and the human is able to copy the difference between "mine" and "thine."

And all this is manifested amply in the people who first heard Muhammad. Can we wonder, then, at the strong opposition that great reformer met with at the hands of those pagan Arabs when he set out to tell the people that he heard the voice of Allah commanding him to call away his people from their grovelling, and He had shown to him that though they were in so low and debased a condition, yet there was good in them that could be appealed to? How true is this to-day when we say there is enough evil in us to damn us, and yet enough good to redeem us.

(To be continued.)

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

Service, Sermon, and Lectures every Sunday at the Mosque, Woking,
3.15 p.m. Every Friday at 1 p.m.

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HAREM OR ZENANA LIFE IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

By LADY ABBAS ALI BAIG

(An Address delivered at the Venture Club, Bristol)

(Continued from p. 253, No. 7, Vol. XIV.)

THE custom of secluding Muslim women originated with men, evidently to keep their female relatives safe from harm and outside influence; but then crept in the weaknesses of jealousy and mistrust, as no man likes to lose his love, or his hold and influence over what he, rightly or wrongly, considers to be his own.

As regards the question as to whether the Purdah is a great deterrent to women's emancipation, I admit that in some instances it has that effect. Women are not so numerous in the East, compared with men, as they are in the West. There is "strength in numbers." So you are much more advanced. We have not a surplus of women who can get restive and kick over the traces, throw bombs and shout for votes. We are more or less absorbed in our domestic concerns. Whether happy or unhappy, we plod along; but those who have had a Western education are now striving to get back the freedom which they lost a couple of centuries after the death of our Prophet. I quote here a few lines from a lecture delivered by a Hindu friend of mine, who is well known in India, and also in other countries. I allude to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the famous Indian poetess and politician, whose eloquence captivates both Eastern and Western audiences. She spoke about Muslim women one night, after a dinner given by the journalist section of the Lyceum Club in London. In her brilliant speech she referred to Muslim women in the following words: "The women who follow the laws given by the Prophet of Arabia—laws which are so profoundly misjudged by the West—so far from being down-trodden, are going to be a great dynamic force in human advancement and freedom. Islam gives women an independent economic status, an inalienable right of inheritance. I know of no principle

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which gives greater dignity to women than economic independence. The laws of civilization, now fulfilling themselves in Europe, were long ago anticipated by that great Teacher. It is falsely alleged that Mohammed declared that women have no souls ; but these women veiled to-day, leading a restricted life, compared with you and your interests, have ingrained in them the true traditions of Islam, and will be a sword of victory to every world-wide woman's movement. The women of the Pan-Islamic world will be a great asset to the women of the West. They have achieved much recently. Hindu women are still provincial and somewhat divided by caste, but the Muslim woman has the solidity of her faith."

Speaking of her life in a great Muslim State—Hyderabad—(both her and my birthplace), Mrs. Naidu mentioned how the women who are still veiled, whose voice even must not be heard by men outside their own family, have enthusiasm, large ideals, power to overcome obstacles, to organize, and to inspire men to do great things. She recalled how the women stood by the men in the great disaster by flood a few years ago, saying to them: "Why are you paralysed? We are here to help and serve, even while keeping our veils." She added: "The East has taught you to reverence womanhood. This alone makes for greatness, and no race is great that does not revere women. It is the mother who gives the world its ideals and the possibility of their realization. For, as the Prophet puts it, 'Paradise lies under the feet of the mother.'"

I shall now make a fuller reference to the rights of women in Islam. Nineteen centuries of progressive development, with the legacy of a prior civilization, had given birth to a code of social ethics which gave a higher social status to women as compared with men, but her legal position remained depressed, even in the advanced communities of the West. Until comparatively recently a married woman in England possessed no right independently of her husband. In Islam, woman can possess her property with the fullest rights of enjoyment and alienation. In matters of inheritance the Muslim law is a great improvement upon all other laws, as

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admitted by Western jurists. Woman inherited from her father, brother, husband and son. She was an independent co-sharer with man ; she could enter into any contract she liked, creating rights and obligations in her own name without any interference by her husband. As to marriage, a woman could under no circumstances be married without her own expressed consent, and after marriage she did not lose her individuality. Marriage in Islam is a civil contract sanctified by religion but subject to conditions, the breach of which would make it void, and her husband would be bound to pay damages previously agreed upon. Monogamy might be one of the conditions.

The ideals set up by Islam were love, affection and tenderness, not subordination and subservience. The Prophet said :—

(1) That is the most perfect Muslim, whose disposition is best, and the best of you are they who behave best to their wives.

(2) Woman is sovereign in the house of her husband.

(3) Women are the twin-halves of men.

(4) Fear God in regard to the treatment of your wives, for they are your helpers. You have taken them on the security of God, and made them lawful by the words of God.

Now compare these sayings with the Christian dictum : “ Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee,” though the Qur-án does say in one passage, “ Men are superior to women because of their qualities.” There may be differences of opinion in the Western mind on this particular point, but there is no doubt that we Muslim women do recognize this in most cases. It depends on men themselves individually what impression they produce of their superior qualities, by using them well, or misusing them, in their homes, or in the service of their country. The Qur-án speaks in one breath of man and woman, and gives them absolutely equal chances of salvation. The mother of Christ and the daughter of the Prophet are described in our sacred books as “ Ladies of Paradise.” The Qur-án lays down that prayer, fasting, faith in God, resignation to His will, devotion, truthfulness,

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patience, charity and chastity, are all equally essential for the spiritual elevation of the souls of both men and women.

As regards the question of inter-marriages, a Muslim can lawfully marry a woman who is a Christian or a Jew, but not an idolater.

Before I conclude I should like to say a few words in defence of the East, to which I am proud to belong. Since my coming to England about fifteen years ago, living among the people, and reading their literature, I have often come across disparaging remarks and expressions regarding the Eastern character. With the exception of a few instances, I do not think I have read a book on the East, or seen a play on the stage or a film on the screen, in which all that is vile and contemptible has not been attributed to the Eastern character in a grossly exaggerated form. It may be asked whether the Western communities are free from similar faults and vices. If the civilization of the West has cured its people of all human weaknesses, then indeed yours is a great and wonderful civilization; but I have my doubts. Heart-rending cases of human misery, revolting dens of vice, and horrible instances of crime, are to be found in the West as well as in the East.

Such an insulting attitude on the part of the West towards the East has naturally aroused a feeling of bitter resentment. Where there was confidence, there is now mistrust; where there was love, there is dislike; where there was friendship, there is enmity; where there was co-operation, there is non-co-operation.

But the saner elements on both sides are doing their best to counteract the mischief wrought by the extremists who often quote such lines as :—

East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.

Forgetting to add :—

But there is neither East nor West, border nor breed nor birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the
ends of the earth.

In conclusion I may observe that India is determined to secure her birthright to freedom, and to take her rightful place in the current of world-movements. A policy of sup-

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pression to secure race ascendancy is foredoomed to failure, as the history of the world shows.

As you know, we are now in an increasing degree becoming the masters of our own destiny. Sooner or later we shall have the same freedom of speech and action as you have. Like you, we shall advance towards our national ideals, and take what we want from the West, and leave what we do not. It will depend upon the West whether we reach this goal by peaceful means or by violence. A nation of three hundred and twenty millions cannot for long remain subject to a foreign rule which does not identify itself whole-heartedly with the national interests of the people. It is for Britons to decide whether in their own interest it is wiser to incur India's hostility, or to win her co-operation and friendship by ceasing to obstruct her onward march towards complete liberty.

EASTERN MIND AND THE FOREIGN MISSION

By KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

"OF course an Eastern mind cannot very well appreciate Christian truth." With these words a certain reverend gentleman consoles himself for failing to impress his audiences in the East. He forgets, however, one thing; that is, he owes his own religion to an Eastern mind. The Master and the disciples were all Eastern; and he who changed the faith to suit it to the then Western mind was an Easterner too. Paul, rejected by his own people on account of his heathen innovations and consequently denied an audience, turned his face in hopeless moments to the Gentiles, and began to incorporate heathenism into Christianity. The work thus commenced by a mind whose picture can best be painted in his own words—"To them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, that I might gain them that are without the law" (1 Cor. ix. 20, 21)—could not fail to paganize or Westernize—say what you choose, for there was

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not much difference between them in those days—the Eastern faith. I wish the Nazarene faith had remained and grown strong within the East, for then Christianity would have contributed a very different chapter to history. The West disfigured her, and it will be long ere she regain her original beauty.

Another peculiar trait of the Western mind is a reluctance, in matters religious, to probe beneath the surface. They accept what they are told by others. Religion is to them a patrimony which they must respect because it has been inherited. They should not, they think, subject the legacy to the searchlight of logic and reason. Are not Foreign Missions, then, an anomaly? Have not others as well been told something of religion? Then why force the Western legacy on others who have the like preference for their own, unless the Evangelist has something superior to offer, some virtue, other than a heritage?

The thinker of the East is cast in a different mould altogether. He uses every faculty with which his mind is equipped, and, when sifting truth, he will not allow the glamour or pressure of his parental faith to atrophy his reason-cells. Tenaciously as we all are attached to our inherited faith, the Easterns are trained to receive religious truth in the light of reason and logic. Even our own faith must satisfy our intelligence. Very few of the Foreign Missions care to study the Eastern mind from this angle; and lacking this necessary equipment, they fail. But they blame us for their fault; they say our mind is impenetrable; some idle talkers go so far as to libel us as being "double-minded," while as a fact an Eastern mind is honest and open—it is as clear as crystal, save only to those who persist in looking on it through coloured glasses. Courtesy, of course, would not allow us to confute this missionary logic, or to expose its hollowness at the outset. Therefore the missionary feels elated at his first achievement—that is, when his argument goes uncontradicted; but a further acquaintance and knowledge exposes the falsity of the hasty judgment. He is nonplussed. But, self-opinionated as he is, he would rather feign to see a taint of duplicity in the Eastern

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mind than admit his own foolishness. Why should he measure us by his own scale? He is welcome to keep his mind as innocent of reason as that of a child, in accepting religious truths, but he must excuse us if we cannot see eye to eye with him in this matter. We have been reared on reasoning. Religion, we are told, was revealed to help and rear up our innate faculties. Anything that kills a human faculty is not Divine, and should not burden our soul, seeing that "Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty, but to the extent of its ability" (Qu-rân, ii. 286). Religion should not, therefore, be a burden to us if we have to accept at the expense of our intelligence. It is a gift of God, and must, as such, be utilized to the full. Under its ægis, we thrive in every department of human activity. Why then should its use be disallowed when we enter into the avenues of religion? Are not religion and reason both, equally, gifts of God? If so, they should be complementary to each other like everything else in Nature. If reason rightly predominates in all human affairs, why does dogma get the better of it in the field of religion? Here is a riddle beyond Eastern comprehension.

Moreover, religious instinct in a Muslim is fostered under Qur-ânic influence. The Qur-ân is the source of all our inspirations. And to our satisfaction the book invites us to exercise, in the scrutiny of religious truths, our understanding and reason under the light of experience and observation. Nay, the Qur-ân goes so far as to bring its own claims and tenets to the same anvil of truth. The Qur-ân is teeming with words like the following, that make the concluding part of such verses as refer the reader to the various manifestations of Nature¹ in proof of the various Qur-ânic truths. There are signs in this for a people who understand (xxx. 24), who reflect (xi. 24), who believe (xvi. 64), who listen (xvi. 65), who ponder (xvi. 65), who mind (vi. 12), who know (vii. 32), who are righteous (x. 6), who are patient and grateful (xiv. 5). The Qur-ân appeals to reason, understanding, patience, reflecting and pondering, knowledge and mindfulness and righteousness. Let the tree of knowledge and our partaking of it earn

¹ Cf. my book, *The Ideal Prophet*, p. 158.

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us "perdition," yet we will rather have it than go after an apple from the tree of ignorance. The Qur-án makes no dogmatic assertions nor does it lay stress on modern miracles. Miracles, no doubt, have acted as a cogent factor in aiding faith among the contemporaries of those who worked them, and we Muslims do not disbelieve them. Our Prophet worked miracles, but miracles soon become ancient history, lose their hold on posterity, and become discredited. For this reason the Qur-án discouraged miracles as a prop to faith, and appealed to reason in proof of its tenets.

Does there, then, exist under these circumstances a semblance of mental accessibility for "mission" work analogous to the political accessibility that has arisen, since the war, in lands almost entirely inhabited by those who receive their inspiration from the Qur-án?

I cannot forget the shock my intelligence received when I was an undergraduate in a local Christian Mission College. I was in my teens and was attracted thus early to the Christian faith under the influences of my environment. In the College we used to have the Bible period, which I should say was the most amusing period and entertaining too. We all went with whetted reason to meet our professor. There was an interesting tug-of-war almost every day between dogma and reason, between forced infliction of a foreign faith, an unwilling mind and their passive resistance to it—on one side a strong tinge of pedagogic authority, and on the other a toned-down outburst of metaphysics and independence of judgment. Things went on for two years in this way, during the whole of which time my breast remained a helpless prey to a strong struggle between reason and sentimentality—as faith in Christianity after all is an extreme sentimentalism. The final year for the university degree came, and we were very lucky to have our Bible class for that year with a teacher of exceptional mental calibre, a giant in physique as well as in intellect; a towering personality in all literary circles in our province, and to me an ideal for my future aspiration as a potential writer and speaker. But I cannot forget the moment of my greatest disappointment in all my religious experience when one day,

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in the class, we read the story of the legion of devils¹ cast out by Jesus and driven into swine that were drowned and perished in the sea.

When the lesson was over, questions were invited as usual. Now the type of demon that possessed people of the day of Jesus has not become extinct. We observe in them the same crying and foaming, the same tearing of clothes and frantic assaulting of others, and consequently the same chains and fetters to save others from being injured by them, seeing that they sometimes seem to possess the physical strength of three or four men. I have seen a lady, though otherwise feeble and shaky, more than a match for half a dozen strong men when under "the possession." These sufferers are cured according to the demands of their environment. If they chance to belong to the cultured classes, they receive ordinary treatment for hysteria, epilepsy or other nerve trouble. But if the patient is of an ignorant type, the services of some person well known for his powers of exorcizing evil spirits are requisitioned. The holy man comes, and the very sight of the patient enables him to locate the species of the spirit possessing the patient—a demon or an elf or some departed unclean soul. He rebukes the spirit for the trespass in his jurisdiction in the aerial world and orders him to quit it at once. The reply is an arrogant refusal sometimes. The holy man then begins to chant some words of charm, the spirit does the same in reply; volleys of spells, so to say, are exchanged against each other, and, to the great surprise of the onlookers, the possessed utters words in a language never learnt before—sometimes reciting verses of the Qur-án or some other sacred Eastern book, though he had no such knowledge hitherto. The demon is overpowered, and begins to shriek and cry as if in painful torment. He then prays to be released from the pain. But he must leave the possessed is the peremptory command, and to this the evil spirit must eventually submit. He quits the patient and enters into some domestic animal—a cow, a calf, a chicken, but never into a cat or dog—and the animals, they say, never survive. This

¹ Matthew viii. 32; Mark v. 13; Luke viii. 33.

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I write from my personal knowledge. A very respected lady in our family became, as I was told, possessed by hundreds of evil spirits ; I was at that time nearing my twelfth birthday. She exhibited all the symptoms I have mentioned. In her fits she used to recite chapter after chapter of the Qur-án, though we knew she did not know much of it. She became too weak even to change sides on her bed, except under the influence of the legion or of genii, what you will ; but when in the throes of a fit her strength could match four or five men. She got her cure, however, through an exorcizer. Again the trouble visited us—sometime in 1909. This time the person possessed was my wife. I remember the moment—it was a midnight of December. I was busy with my briefs, as in those days I was at the local High Court Bar. A servant rushed into my study with terrified looks and hissed something into my ears. “ A genie is in our family—a big joke,” I said loudly when I received the strange message. I went to my chest-box and ferreted out a bottle of strong ammonia and put it into my pocket, and in a moment I was by the patient’s bedside. It was a horrible scene, but interesting at the same time as a good study. A recurrence of the old scene, but now looked on by me with another eye. Shrieking and foaming, cries, gnashing of teeth and grimacing ; but the terrible part was the cramp. “ What on earth does it mean ? ” I asked ; but my words only got me a contemptuous look from the possessed. The lady stared at me for some time and remained unmoved and silent. I was glad to find my words acting as suggestion to change her thoughts and consequently abate the hysterical fever. But a few moments after the strained stares began to throw out sparks of fire and flames of anger, and then in a majestic tone the lady said : “ We have come to assert our lost rights in a family that has closed its doors against us for so many years ; you idiots, with your new-fangled ideas, it is all due to you. Well, well, your wife will have to pay the penalty for your sins.”

I thought diversion was a better and more wholesome cure than the application of the drug, because of its after-affects ; and so, in order to change the channel of the talk, I said :

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"She to suffer for my sins—an atonement? Will a physician's chopping his head off cure your headache? No, we are not Christians." "Oh, Christians, blessed souls!"—catching the last word, she purred—"they believe in our possession, and yet they teach you not to believe in our visitations—they say it is illness." I thought I had made a mistake, as the very idea of demonology would repeat the hysteria scene. I therefore said: "The Qur-án does not teach any atonement; it says 'every soul has to bear its own burden.'" "Oh, what a beautiful book you named! The Qur-án. Yes, I learned it some hundred years ago from my master. Many of our race are Mussulman." "Which race do you come from?" I inquired. "I am a ginn but a Muslim," was the reply. "How interesting," I said; "you are a Muslim." "Yes, *Lá-iláha il' Alláh Mohammed 'ar-Rasúl' Alláh*. Am I not a Muslim?" "Indeed you are," I said. "But you don't believe in the existence of the ginn," she inquired. "Yes," I said, "the word 'ginn' in Arabic means anything unseen, of which we know nothing, anything in the dark. It may be some aerial being, I don't know, or the ginns in the 'air; they are all unseen and unperceived. An internal unascertained ailment is also a ginn like the one you are suffering from. These are all ginn in the true sense of the Arabic word *djinn*." My words proved an uncanny hint too distasteful to the patient and brought forth the fit—shrieks and foaming, twisting of hands and mouth with gnashing of teeth—a medley of angry words, sometimes Arabic, sometimes Persian and Hindustani. Cramp was next to begin, and that was the worst thing of all. I could not wait any longer—with one plunge I applied the medicine bottle to her nostrils. She would not inhale it, and closed her breath and violently struggled, but I asked the attendants to hold her tightly; cries and curses and swearing, a minute or more—the genie found the smell too strong for her, and had to quit the possessed.

I am afraid I have made rather a long digression from the Bible lesson in our college as to Jesus casting out a legion of demons from a person. But I think it was necessary. It will make the matter clearer to a Western reader. The lesson

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aroused heated criticism. Dozens of stories of exorcizing ginn were given. They exactly squared with those of the Bible in their details, and left no room to claim any superiority for Jesus over the holy men of the East on that score. I also referred to what I had seen in my family as to the legion of the demon taking possession of one of us and then being cast out by an exorcizer. The professor gave us a patient hearing and then his explanation came: "My boys, these cases are all nerve troubles; you don't know what pranks these nerves play." "Did not the nerves play the same pranks in the possessed in the time of Jesus?" was the unanimous reply. "No, the Apostles say that they were *genii*." "Perhaps they repeat their impressions," a student suggested. "Oh no, the revealed word of God; and don't you forget, the race of the demons was destroyed once for all by Jesus when the swine became drowned. They became extinct; how can they possess any human being?" was the authoritative verdict given with masterly flourish of hand to cow down further criticism. But the rejoinder came from the least expected quarter, that had, till then, encouraged evangelizing expectations: "But what about those demons who were exorcized afterwards by Jesus, as we read in subsequent chapters?" The professor fell back and was dumbfounded, when with some hesitation I continued: "Perhaps some of the legion managed to fly away." This added insult to injury, as I saw a searching glance from the chair made me its target. The College bell, however, rang at the moment to save the situation, and the Professor of Metaphysics made his entrance into the class. I, as well, was shocked and confounded, my head reeling and my eyes strained; the tower of my ideal—I mean the professor—began to crumble and smother the whole fabric of new beliefs crashing to splinters; the flame flickering, yet a new light arising. I was in a flood of reverie, tossed this or that way by waves, not heeded before, my breast surging and seething with emotions that had lost their hold on me; but this disappointment made me alive to them once more. The Eastern mind began to assert itself again and dispossess the Western usurpation, a new vista of thought, a new angle of vision. In my reverie I forgot that it was the

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period for metaphysics, and that I was supposed to use my pencil and paper taking notes of the lecture from the chair ; when all of a sudden a shrill voice came from the same side : “ Khwaja, what are you drowsing upon ? ” With a blank face, I looked towards the professor ; I felt abashed, and had not wits enough to articulate even a word. It made the case worse, and caused an uproar of laughter all round. I was about to lose my temper, but I was in the classroom. I, however, managed to excuse myself and left the room, grumbling more to myself than to any other. Oh ! what a tragedy of life ! Was it all a castle in the air ? And what an absurd curriculum, the metaphysics and the Bible periods one after the other—what a fine medley, the one designed to sharpen the intellect, the other desiring to see it absolutely blunt. . . .

I was facing a turning-point in my life—the Rubicon was perhaps passed, and I stood chastened and disillusioned. So is the Eastern mind. A Muslim must satisfy his reason before he gives countenance even to his own faith. God, Angels, Messengership, Revelation, Resurrection, Life after Death, Premeasurement of Evil and Good—so wrongly mistaken for Predestination or Fatalism in the West—in a word, all that constitutes Muslim faith, are explained in the Qur-án on a rational basis. We do not find the same in the Bible. Apart from the mystical aspect of Christianity, even those truths that are so ably discussed by some of the Church people, such as Existence of God, lack rational proof in the words of the Bible. What an anomalous position to hold ! God Himself unable to prove His own case and looking upon man for His advocacy. The Foreign Mission should seriously think upon this side of the problem that they have to face in the East. Dogma is the last thing wanted there. If Christian beliefs can be explained in the terms of reason and science, their work is worth while, otherwise it is a plunge in the dark. If dogmatized faith is unloosening its hold even on the Occidental mind, what of the Oriental that is trained from its very cradle to hold that dogma should not be ? Light comes from the East, and the West is the place of darkness as the Old Fathers said, at least in matters of religious learning.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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