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THE HOLY QUR-ÁN

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مُحَمَّدٌ وَآلِهِ عَلَى سُبُلِ الْكَيْمِ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

SHAWWÁL-ZU'L-QA'DA 1345 A.H.

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NOTES

Eid-Ul-Fitr.

Marking the close of Ramadán, the month of fasting, the Muslim festival of "Eid-ul-Fitr" was celebrated at the Mosque, Woking, on Monday, April 4th, 1927, in wonderfully dry but cloudy weather. The spectacle of Muslim worshippers from all parts of the world, of every nation and rank in life, to the number of three hundred or more, assembled on the close-cropped pine-fringed lawn in front of the Memorial House, facing towards Mecca—the house dedicated to the worship of God, the Almighty, by the Patriarch Abraham, the father of Jews, Christians, and Muslims—symbolized the all-embracing spirit of Islam, in which race, creed and colour find a home.

There were Indians, Afghans, Persians, Kurds, Turks, Syrians, Arabs, Egyptians and Javanese, together with Indian and Iraq cadet officers from Sandhurst and British Muslims who covered long distances to participate in the happy occasion. A small Mecca, so to say, was represented in a beautiful country resort of Surrey.

Prayers were performed at 11.30 a.m., and were followed

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by an address from the Imam, Maulvi Abdul Majid, M.A., after which the solemn congregation moved to wish one another "Eid Mubarak."

Luncheon was served at 1.30 p.m. in spacious marquees, which have hitherto provided a moderately cosy shelter in the bleak English weather. It was a hospitable scene, this throng of the true and devout sons of Islam, binding the hearts of different races in a common creed, in mutual trust and in love.

In addition to representatives from the Afghan, Persian and Egyptian Legations, there were also present Al-Haj Lord Headley (El-Farooq), President of the British Muslim Society; His Excellency Oskar Kallas, the Esthonian Minister; Priscilla Countess of Annesley; Princess Galitzine; Prince Varnvaidya, of the Siamese Legation; the Dowager Lady Boyle; the sons of His Highness the Nawab of Jaora State (India); Muhammad Aslam, Khan of Amb State (India); and young Durrani chiefs from Lahore; Atta Amín, Acting Diplomatic Agent for Iraq; Dr. Ernest Griffin, Secretary of the British Red Crescent Society; Dr. and Madame-Léon; Mr. J. W. Habeeb-ullah Lovegrove, Secretary of the British Muslim Society; Dr. Khalid Sheldrake, Editor of the *Minaret*; Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Champion, and Miss Wells-Thorpe.

Monopoly and Christian Civilization.

If we were to look for the fruits of the Christian religion, as practised, we think no better and no more palpable example could be found than in the present worm-eaten, top-heavy, superstructures of the European civilization, whose magnificence and grandeur rests on its being nurtured continuously on the blood of the weaker nations of the world. "Roughly speaking," says Professor Gilbert Murray, in the *Hibbert Journal*, "wars arise from one of three causes. Either a nation feels existing circumstances to be intolerable, or it is ambitious to conquer its neighbours, or else it is too much afraid of another." ¹ The Professor mentions yet another cause, the greed of gain. This greed of gain has adopted

¹ *Baptist Times* for January 13, 1927.

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such disproportionate and huge dimensions that it is causing great anxiety in thoughtful circles everywhere. We see an open and insatiable desire for land monopoly in Christian nations. We see, for instance, that a white Australia and a white America are being regarded essential for the safety of Western civilization. Small wonder it would be if a persistence in this policy led to a coalescing of the interests, say, of China and Japan. Land monopoly, which is but an evolved form of greed of gain, is as dangerous to the peace of the world as is monopoly in trade.

It is quite pertinent to wonder how it is that, in view of the presence for over a thousand years of the boasted leaven of Christian teachings, the present mentality allowed itself to adopt its present abnormal shape. It does not surely speak very creditably for a religious system of such long standing that it should not have succeeded in effecting any approach to a true balance between what a man is and what he ought to be. The truth is that Christianity never troubled itself with the social aspects of human nature. The present conditions were allowed to adopt their present abnormal shape because Christianity, its wet-nurse, had nothing to say against them. Islam condemns every kind of monopoly ; for monopoly is the negation of the very elementary principles of equality, on which the sacred foundation of rights is based. Islam recognized that monopoly was another way of helping in the making of the few magnates at the sacrifice of the interests of the rest of society.¹

We shall See what we shall See.

All round us strange things are happening and the phenomenon which we record, as being symptomatic of the present-day Christian religious world, is not the least strange. The decrepit Church which finds itself in every sort of dilemma has been driven up such a blind alley of camouflaged paganism that in order to wriggle itself out it does not scruple to have recourse to the most questionable methods. Its one object is to keep its hold on the people even at the cost of ethical

¹ Muhammad said : " Whosoever monopolizes is a sinner."

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principles, and in its anxiety to maintain its authority, it overlooks the degenerating effects which such questionable methods must always entail. The *Two Worlds* for December 24, 1926, states that a certain Reverend H. L. Jones, while addressing an Evangelical meeting at Wallasey, Cheshire, told how he "arrived rather early on a recent occasion at a place of worship and found people there playing cards for money." The minister of the church told him, he said, that he "had to wink at such practices in order to keep the young people in the Church." The *Two Worlds* evidently holds up this tacit acquiescence of the minister in such ignoble practices as lacking in moral courage. It may be so. But what answer could the minister, in the opinion of our contemporary, have made if one of the defilers of the sanctity of the holy precincts had taken his courage in both hands and asked point-blank where and on what grounds the New Testament has anathematized gambling? The minister, to our way of thinking, given the imperfectly collected teachings of the Bible, did the right thing. He succeeded in killing three birds with one stone. He kept the young men within the Church; he could decoy others with the presence of those playing cards, and lastly, he did not give occasion for the searchings of heart which would have been caused by the painful insufficiency and meagreness of the Biblical teaching on many an aspect of life. By a clever stroke of common sense the awkward situation was saved. What a degenerating effect the proverbial empty pews are having on the clergy, and how their poison is gnawing the vitals of the Church!

The Sad Fate of the Bible—To what is it due?

An interesting short notice entitled "Bible becoming an Unknown Book" appeared in the *Daily Express*, dated December 13, 1926, in which Dr. Garbett, the Bishop of Southwark, alluded in very sad terms to the decline in Bible reading, and pointed out that if this attitude of indifference is continued it will lead the nation and the Church into disaster. His words are these: "The decline in Bible reading, unless checked, will be nothing less than a spiritual disaster to our

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Church and nation. National life and character will lose one of their greatest formative factors; a potent influence for righteousness will be only partially used; one of the deepest channels of spiritual life will be blocked through indifference and neglect. There are large numbers to-day in our own land who know next to nothing about the Bible. Booksellers tell us that the sale of Bibles, large as it still is, has decreased of late years. To many it is, to all intents and purposes, an unknown and unopened Book."

We, too, lament this sad and neglectful attitude of the younger generation towards the Bible. Neither the Master nor the people are to blame for it if the latter evince indifference towards the Bible. For it is the result of another factor whose importance in such crises as these cannot be over-emphasized. That factor is that the Bible has been subjected to a scientific hard test of analytical research which began during the latter half of the last century. Here it was that the foundations for the present ever-growing apathy were dug. For, much to the bewilderment of pious believers, they have brought to light a very disconcerting fact which has only served to intensify the truth of the Qur-ánic verses that state that the text of the Bible consists of human alloy.¹

The warning of the Bishop is too belated to deserve any popular gratitude. The completion of the process of the alienation of human interest from the Bible is now, as things are, a matter of time, and ought to be taken as a natural and logical sequence of twofold causes: its impracticability and the loss of its original text.

The first doctrine, foisted on the teachings of the Prophet of Nazareth long after his death, was that of Divinity.²

¹ Holy Qur-án, ii. 75.

² The Messiah, son of Mary, is but an apostle; apostles before him have indeed passed away; and his mother was a truthful woman; they both used to eat food. See how We make the communications clear to them, then behold, how they are turned away (Holy Qur-án, v. 75).

And when Allah will say: O Jesus, son of Mary! did you say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah, he will say: Glory be to Thee, it did not befit me that I should say what I had no right to (say); if I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed have known

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And this is the most destructive step which the followers of a messenger of God could possibly take. The early Christians made the mistake and the Christian Church of to-day is paying for it by the loss of its grip on the people. The Muslims were warned against adopting such a course as tending ultimately to hold up one's own religion to ridicule. The modern advanced Christians mock at the spurious portion of Christianity adulterated with teachings of the Master who is gone and cannot defend himself. Biblical scholars may pay a bow of homage and gratitude to the Qur-ánic verses¹ which not only never overlook the deference due to the Master and consistently vindicate his position, but also go so far as to warn men against the spurious additions to the Bible so that they might not be led astray.

Church Attendance.

The Church of England stands self-condemned even in the eyes of its followers. Under the above heading the *English Churchman* for January 13, 1927, summarizes an article from the *Hampshire Telegraph*, on "The Average Man and the Church of England," thus :

"In it the writer alludes to the very great changes that have taken place in the habit of churchgoing and in the services. 'The people of to-day,' he says, 'have not the same reverence for spiritual affairs that they had thirty years ago.' Then parents and children attended church together, and 'the parson was a friend of the family and the services were plain and rendered as set down in the Prayer Book.' Now all this has been altered, and men have lost interest in public worship altogether. 'It is my belief,' says the writer, 'and I think my forty years of work in the shipbuilding industry qualifies me to speak of what the "average man" thinks, that the great majority would not care a "rap" if the Church

it; Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I do not know what is in Thy mind; surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen things.

I did not say to them aught save what Thou didst enjoin me with: That serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord, . . . Thou art witness of all things (Holy Qur-án, v. 116, 117).

¹ Holy Qur-án, ii. 116.

STRIKING THOUGHTS IN THE QUR-AN

were disestablished to-morrow. It would not affect them in the least.' After enlarging a little on this point, he adds : ' Dean Inge is right when he says that Ritualism and the use of incense in our churches are repellent to the manhood of the nation. This is to a very great extent one of the causes of the great falling off in the attendance at our churches. The vast majority do not approve of such practices, but instead of protesting against them, they simply stop attending the church, saying in effect, " Let them get on with it " ; and as far as they are concerned that is an end to it, and their church-going finishes.' He expresses a belief that there will come a time when ' the pendulum will swing back again as regards churchgoing, but not before there is a great alteration in the conducting of the services of the Church of England.' "

This is too eloquent to need any comment except that the writer has, it is to be regretted, not been able to go down to the root-cause of the disease. It is not so much in the " incense and ritualism " as the writer thinks that the germ is to be detected, but in the fact that people have lost faith in the Bible, as well as in those who teach it, and in the way in which their ignorance has been exploited. The clergy, for instance, never tell the congregation about the origin of the Bible, about its compilation, or selection. They are never told that the various books were never written by those whose names they bear, and that its chronology is false. And when people learn the truth about them by their perusal of the writings of modern scholars, they simply keep away from places where they never learn the truth about it.

SOME STRIKING THOUGHTS IN THE QUR-ÁN

By AMHERST D. TYSSEN, D.C.L., M.A.

A GREAT many passages in the Qur-án deal with matters special to the time at which they were written ; but there are some principles enunciated which are as applicable to us in England in the present day as they were to the Arabs thirteen hundred years ago.

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One thought, which is repeated several times, is found in the following places :—

Rodwell's Qur-án. ¹	Sale's Qur-án (Davenport's Edition). ¹
Chapter liii. 38, 39.	p. 403. Sura xliv. 38, 39.
lix. 26.	373. xxxviii. 26.
lxiv. 117.	286. xxiii. 117.
lxv. 16, 17.	265. xxi. 16, 17.

The first of these passages is rendered by Sale : “ We have not created the heavens and the earth, and whatever is between them by way of sport : we have created them no otherwise than in truth.” A note adds that Savary has translated it : “ The heavens, the earth, and the whole Universe, are not the effect of chance. Out of nothing have we created them.”

Rodwell agrees very closely with Sale, but he renders the last sentence as “ We have not created them, but for a serious end ” ; and a note adds : “ Literally, *in truth*.”

The second of the four passages mentioned above is translated by Sale : “ We have not created the heavens, and the earth, and whatever is between them, in vain.” A note adds : “ So as to permit injustice to go unpunished, and righteousness unrewarded.” And in the text the words follow : “ This is the opinion of the unbelievers.” And another note gives Savary's translation : “ The creation of the heavens, the earth, and the whole universe, is our work. It is not the sport of chance, as the unbelievers imagine.”

Rodwell is to the same effect : “ We have not created the heaven and the earth, and what is between them, for nought. That is the thought of the infidels.”

The third of the passages cited above is rendered by Sale : “ Did ye think that we had created you in sport, and that ye should not be brought again before us ? ”

Rodwell agrees with this, with a slight verbal alteration : “ What, did ye then think that we had created you for pastime, and that ye should not be brought back again to us ? ”

¹ For parallel references to these in Muhammad Ali's Qur-án see xliv. 38, 39 ; xxxviii. 27 ; xxiii. 115 ; xxi. 16, 17.—Ed. *I.R.*

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The fourth passage is given by Sale as: "We created not the heavens and the earth, and that which is between them, by way of sport. If we had pleased to take diversion, verily we had taken it with that which beseemeth us." He adds a note to the first of these sentences, saying: "But for the manifestation of our power and wisdom to people of understanding, that they may seriously consider the wonders of the creation, and direct their actions to the attainment of future happiness, neglecting the vain pomp and fleeting pleasures of this world."

He also gives Savary's translation of the second sentence: "If we had formed the Universe for a sport, we should have been the first objects of mockery."

Rodwell's translation of the passage is substantially the same: "We created not the heaven and the earth, and what is between them, in sport: Had it been our wish to find a pastime, we had surely found it in ourselves; if to do so had been our will."

I believe that Muhammad was the first to utter the thought, expressed in these passages, and to point out that, if death is the end of all things with human beings, it might be said that God had created the Universe in sport, and that He looked on at the struggles of mankind like a Roman emperor callously gloating over a gladiator's show. We instinctively reject such a thought of God, and accept the conclusion that God has created the Universe for a good purpose, and that after death we shall receive His judgment for our past lives, and be set to live again under circumstances which we shall have merited by our conduct in this life.

I should like to set out here a hymn, which I composed and published a few years ago, based on these texts in the Qur-án, and headed with the title

THE PURPOSE OF CREATION.

Oh! God has not created
The heaven and the earth,
And all that lies between them,
In cruel sport or mirth.

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He gloats not o'er the struggles
Of mortals here below,
As ruthlessly regarding
A gladiators' show.

We men are not His creatures
That live our little day
To please Him with our antics,
And then be cast away.

The winds and waves and thunder
Give not unmeaning noise ;
The sun and moon and planets
Are more than giants' toys.

The stars, whose softened lustre
Bedecks our midnight sky,
Are not like sparks from corn-stalks,
That give one gleam and die.

Oh, no. In all Creation
We see a grand design
To train immortal spirits
To live a life divine.

I will take the next six passages embodying a somewhat analogous thought and arrange them in order as before. They are as follows :—

Rodwell's Qur-án. ¹	Sale's Qur-án (Davenport's Edition). ¹
Chapter xlv. 57-62.	p. 436. Sura lvi. 57-62.
liv. 14.	420. l. 14.
lx. 78-82.	365. xxxvi. 78-82.
lxvii. 52, 53.	231. xvii. 52, 53.
lxxxvii. 28.	118. vii. 28.
xc. 26.	4. ii. 26.

I will mention here that Sale prints many words in italics. I suppose that indicates that they are added by him. I will place all such in parentheses in citing his translations. We find, then, the first of these passages, rendered in his book as follows : " We have created you : will ye not therefore believe (that we can raise you from the dead ?) What think ye ? The

¹ For parallel references to these in Muhammad Ali's Qur-án see lvi. 57, 62 ; l. 15 ; xxxvi. 78-82 ; xvii. 48, 49 ; vii. 28 ; ii. 28.—Ed. *I.R.*

STRIKING THOUGHTS IN THE OUR-AN

(seed) which ye emit, do ye create the same, or (are) we the creators (thereof)? We have decreed death unto you (all): and we shall not be prevented. (We are able) to substitute (others) like unto you (in your stead), and to produce you (again) in the (condition or form) which ye know not. Ye know the original production (by creation); will ye not therefore consider (that we are able to produce you by resuscitation)? ”

Rodwell's translation is similar. He adds some notes, which I will place in parentheses. It then reads:—

“ We created you ; will ye not credit us (as to the resurrection)? What think ye? The germs of life (literally, the sperm, which ye emit)—is it ye who create them, or are we their creator? It is we who have decreed that death should be among you ; yet are we not thereby hindered (literally, forestalled, anticipated) from replacing you with others, your likes, or from producing you again in a form which ye know not. Ye have known the first creation: will ye not then reflect? ”

The second of the above-mentioned passages is rendered by Sale: “ Is our power exhausted by the first creation? Yea ; they are in a perplexity, because of a new creation (which is foretold them, namely, the raising of the dead).”

And Rodwell agrees with this. He says: “ Are we wearied out with the first creation? Yet are they in doubt with regard to a new creation (the Resurrection).”

The third of the same passages is translated alike by both Sale and Rodwell. Their words are almost identical. In Sale we read: “ Doth not man know that we have created him of seed? Yet, behold he is an open disputer (against the resurrection). And he propoundeth unto us a comparison, and forgetteth his creation: he saith, Who shall restore bones to life, when they are rotten? Answer, He shall restore them to life, who produced them the first time: for He is skilled in every kind of creation: who giveth you fire out of the green tree, and behold ye kindle (your fuel) from thence. Is not He who hath created the heavens and the earth able to create (new creatures) like unto them? Yea, certainly, for

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He is a wise Creator. His command, when He willeth a thing, (is) only that He saith unto it, Be ; and it is."

The fourth of these passages is also translated alike by both authors : " They also say, After we shall have become bones and dust, shall we in sooth be raised a new creation ? Say, Yes, though ye were stones or iron, or any other creature, to your seeming yet harder (to be raised). But they will say, Who shall bring us back ? Say, He who created you at first."

The fifth passage is a short clause, namely, " As He created you, to Him shall ye return."

And the sixth passage is similar : " How (is it that) ye believe not in God ? Since ye were dead, and He gave you life, He will hereafter cause you to die, and will again restore you to life. Then shall ye return unto Him."

We see the same thought in all these passages : that it is more extraordinary that non-existent spirits should be brought into being than that spirits, which have once existed, should live again.

It is probable that this thought came intuitively to Muhammad. But he was not the only man, or the first man, who entertained it.

Justin, in his first *Apology*, written about A.D. 152, in the tenth chapter, speaking of God, says : " We have been taught that He in the beginning did of His goodness, for man's sake, create all things out of unformed matter ; and if men by their works show themselves worthy of His design, they are deemed worthy, and so we have received, of reigning in company with Him, being delivered from corruption and suffering. For, as in the beginning He created us when we were not, so do we consider that in like manner those who choose what is pleasing to Him are on account of their choice deemed worthy of incorruption and of fellowship with Him. For the coming into being at first was not in our own power ; and in order that we may follow those things which please Him, choosing them by means of the rational faculties He has Himself endowed us with, He both persuades and leads us to faith."

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Tatian also, in his address to the Greeks, written a few years after Justin's *Apology*, in the fifth and sixth chapters, after mentioning that matter was created by God, and that Christians believe that there will be a resurrection, adds: "For just as, not existing before I was born, I knew not who I was, and only existed in the potentiality of fleshly matter, but being born, after a former state of nothingness, I have obtained, through my birth a certainty of my existence; in the same way, having been born and through death existing no longer, and seen no longer, I shall exist again, just as formerly I was not, but was afterwards born."

Tertullian, in section 48 of his *Apology*, written about A.D. 200, is still more explicit. After mentioning theories that men's souls after death might be re-embodied in animals, he adds: "This we would do chiefly in our own defence, as setting forth what is greatly worthier of belief, that a man will come back from a man, any given person from any given person still retaining his humanity; so that the soul, with its qualities unchanged, may be restored to the same condition, though not to the same outward framework. Assuredly, as the reason why restoration takes place at all is the appointed judgment, every man must needs come forth the very same who had once existed, that he may receive at God's hands a judgment, whether of good desert or the opposite. . . . But how, you say, can a substance which has been dissolved be made to reappear again? Consider thyself, O man, and thou wilt believe in it. Reflect on what you were before you came into existence. Nothing. For if you had been anything, you would have remembered it. You then, who were nothing before you existed, reduced to nothing also when you cease to be, why may you not come into being again out of nothing, at the will of the same Creator, whose will created you out of nothing at the first? Will it be anything new in your case? You, who were not, were made. When you cease to be again, you shall be made. Explain, if you can, your original creation, and then demand to know how you shall be re-created. Indeed, it will be still easier surely to make you what you were once, when the very same creative

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power made you without difficulty what you never were before."

It is clear, therefore, that this thought, which we have been considering, may arise in the mind of any religious person, but the Qur-án seems to put it in the most pointed manner.

I will take next two texts on the subject of almsgiving. One of these occurs in chapter lxvii.,¹ verse 30, of Rodwell's Qur-án, and Sura xvii.¹ p. 229 of Davenport's Edition of Sale's Qur-án.

I will give it as it appears in the last-mentioned work. We there read :—

" And give unto him who is of kin (to you) his due, and (also) unto the poor and the traveller. And waste not thy substance profusely. . . . But if thou turn from them, in expectation of the mercy which thou hopest from thy Lord, (at least) speak kindly unto them." And a note adds : " That is, if thy present circumstances will not permit thee to assist others, defer thy charity till God grant thee better ability."

The other text is chapter xci., verses 269, 270, of Rodwell's Qur-án, and Sura ii.² p. 33 of Sale's. It runs as follows:—

" O true believers, bestow (alms) of the good things which ye have gained, and of that which we have produced for you out of the earth, and choose not the bad thereof, to give it (in alms), such as ye would not accept yourselves otherwise than by connivance." And a note explains " by connivance " to mean " without compensation."

There are very pretty thoughts in these texts. When parties in trouble appeal to us for help, if we cannot give them substantial assistance, we may at least give them kind words. And *a fortiori*, if we can give them some help, we ought not to spoil our benevolence by saying anything unkind. Then again, in giving help we ought to make our present worth receiving. It is a poor gift to offer some dilapidated garment, which cannot be worn, unless the recipient first makes an outlay upon it. The principle thus enunciated by

¹ For parallel reference to this in Muhammad Ali's Qur-án see xvii. 26.—ED. I.R.

² For parallel reference to this in Muhammad Ali's Qur-án see ii. 267.—ED. I.R.

STRIKING THOUGHTS IN THE QUR-AN

Muhammad has influenced my conduct on many occasions. Poor people cannot be expected to have the skill required for repairing boots and shoes and cloth clothes. In giving away such articles I have always taken care to have them mended first and made fit for wear. The mothers of families may, indeed, be able to wash and mend underclothing ; but when ladies are collecting clothes for general objects, such as supplying them to a large body of refugees, even underclothes should be washed and repaired before being sent in. I can remember acting on this principle when clothes were collected for Belgian refugees at the outbreak of the Great War. I sent in a coat and waistcoat and a pair of shoes, and mentioned that I had had them repaired in accordance with the Prophet Muhammad's exhortation ; and on each occasion I received special thanks for their good condition.

I will add another hymn, which I composed on this subject, paying regard to the words of the Qur-án :—

ON ALMSGIVING.

How blest is he whose honest toil
Provides for all his needs,
His infant children duly trains,
His aged parents feeds.

Whose outlay, balanced ne'er beyond
His income's bounds to spread,
A surplus saves for those who lack
The power to earn their bread.

The orphans of his kindred first
Demand his earnest care,
And next the blind, or deaf and dumb,
Or maimed his bounty share.

In rendering alms of fruit or corn
He chooseth portions good :
Small merit theirs, who meanly give
Their own rejected food.

And when with dole-fund spent he hears
The needy's piteous call ;
Though void his purse, his heart is full ;
He speaks kind words to all.

Oh, surely they who thus through life
Sweet mercy's path have trod
A recompense hereafter reap
Of blessings from our God.

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WÁQIDÍ AGAIN

[It will be recalled that an article entitled "European Biographies of Muhammad and Muhammad Bin Omar al-Wáqidí appeared in the *Islamic Review* for March-April and May, 1926. We print below a letter from Professor Alfred Guillaume, Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Languages in the University of Durham, and a reply to it from the pen of Maulana Sayyid Sulaimán Nadwí, Editor *Ma'árif*, Azamgarh, for further elucidation of the points raised by the learned Professor.—ED. *I.R.*]

27, NORTH BAILEY, DURHAM,
10th May, 1926.

THE EDITOR, *The Islamic Review*, Woking.

THE VALUE ATTACHED TO WÁQIDÍ'S *AL-MAGHÁZÍ*.

DEAR SIR,

A constant reader of the *Islamic Review*, I have been much interested in the article of the learned Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwí¹ under this heading. May I ask you to be good enough to print this letter with the further information it asks for?

First, what is the principle on which the veracity of Wáqidí is impugned? Please let me say at once that I do not dispute the right of religious communities to refuse recognition to writings which appear to them to be questionable: but I should like to know the principle governing the rejection and acceptance of certain writers. I am, of course, aware of the huge literature on *jarh* and *ta'díl*, and questions of *mundwala* and so on. But al-Wáqidí was an historian, not a theologian. And it must be remembered that he died fifty years before the pious and saintly al-Bukhárí was laid to rest.

It will not have escaped your notice that the authorities who formed a high opinion of al-Wáqidí are on the whole a generation earlier than those who condemned him.

Again, your learned contributor writes: "In order to establish the reliability of Wáqidí we do not need the evidence of a belles-lettres artist, a geographer, or an historian; for

¹ Vide *Islamic Review* for March, April and May, 1926.

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their testimony cannot lead us far." But why not? Why can we dispense so readily with the verdicts of the distinguished writers, geographers and historians of early Islam? Is not Wáqidí's work precisely one which calls for the opinion of such men? Why must it be decided by theologians?

Please do not suppose that I write these questions in order to be contentious. Rather I seek information on a subject which I attempted to deal with in chapter iv. of my book on *The Traditions of Islam*. For my own part, I cannot see that Abú Hátim's condemnation of Wáqidí really deals with the point at all.

Again: Ibráhím Harbí defends Wáqidí's method of writing without citing all the authorities (a method which, it must be remembered, was not *de rigueur* until a generation after his death) on the ground that al-Zuhrí and Ibn Ishák did the same. Your learned contributor replies that Zuhrí and Ibn Ishák stand on a far higher level than Wáqidí. May I ask why? I know that in the view of *theologians* they are of greater importance; but why are they superior authorities on Magházi? Has it been forgotten that Zuhrí himself admitted that he had forged hadith under compulsion? (*akrahaná 'alaihi há' ulá' i l-umará*).

When one remembers that many writers have impugned traditions in the *Sahihán*, and that one of al-Bukhári's props is Abú Huraira, who tells of the splitting of the moon, one cannot help feeling that there is no cogent reason for rejecting Wáqidí on Bukhári's judgment.

As a serious student of Islam I should be grateful if the Sayyid, or any other scholar, would tell me the *principle* on which an early Muslim's testimony is accepted or rejected.

You will agree that when a man's own contemporaries accept him as a high authority it is hardly fair to brand him a liar in deference to the unreasoned opinions of theologians of the next generation.

Yours truly,

ALFRED GUILLAUME.

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REPLY TO THE ABOVE.

By MAULÁNÁ SAYYID SULAIMÁN NADWÍ.

It is, indeed, with a sense of gratification that we learn, from the nature of questions raised by the learned Professor, that the circle of scholarly research of the Western Orientalists is day by day growing wider. All too long has Abú 'l-Fidá alone been the stock source for the compiling of the life of the Prophet for European consumption. Later, Wáqidí, Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Isháq were also drawn upon, until Professor Margoliouth went a step farther by making Hadíth, and especially the bulky volumes of Ibn Hanbal, one of the principal fountain-heads of information on the biography of the Prophet. It is to be deplored that he did not make use of the *Usúl Riwáyat*—principles for scrutinizing an event or a narrative—but, apart from this, do not the questions of the learned Professor really betoken a welcome sign of the times? Do they not mean that the European Orientalists have after all and at last come to understand and appreciate those principles of ours on which the true and real foundation of the criticism of the early traditions of Islam is based?

From among the nations of the world it was the Muslims alone who first laid down principles and laws for the proper scrutiny and criticism of narratives and events. And it was for this purpose that they founded various branches of study—*Usúl Hadíth*, *Asmá'ur-Rijál*, *'Ilm 'ul-Jarh wa 'at-Ta'díl*, *Ikhtiláf 'ul-Hadíth*, *Asnád*, and the like. And in their connection they framed principles for history and laws for criticism. On these subjects they wrote hundreds of books which form an essential part of the curriculum of the Eastern schools of study; for it should not be forgotten that a bare knowledge of the Arabic cannot go very far in unravelling these entanglements.

Amongst the Muslims, in applying any one of these branches of study, an event is subjected to the searchlight of scrutiny and criticism from two different aspects, one *Usúl Riwáyat* and the other *Usúl Diráyat*.

Usúl Riwáyat can be briefly summarized thus: that both

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the narrator and relator of an event from end to end be trustworthy and reliable ; that the first narrator must have been present when the event occurred, or that he must have been an eye-witness to it or that he must have heard it himself from one who participated in it, or from an eye-witness ; or that the mass of testimony and experience about him must have placed it beyond dispute that he always narrated like narratives from the testimony of eye-witnesses. Moreover, each narrator individually must aver that he heard his tale from another narrator, i.e. from the narrator previous to himself, or that it must have been placed beyond doubt that that narrator had met the previous narrator at least once in his lifetime ; or that both of them had been contemporaries of each other, thus bringing their meeting and their interchange of reminiscences within the range of possibility. And, above and beyond this, the last and most important factor is that the chain of guarantors, so to say, be one complete whole—one continuous and unbroken chain with no link missing—no intervening narrator of unproven antecedents.

Usûl Dirâyat in brief words consist in finding out whether or not an event which is narrated does not clash with the main body of authentic and historic evidence ; whether or not there exists such a testimony, emanating from a more correct and weightier source, as might belie it ; whether or not the narrator has lapsed into an inadvertent misunderstanding of the right meanings of the narratives or the events ; whether or not the narrator has reported incomplete and mutilated details of an account ; whether or not his narrative runs counter to the well-known, firmly established and indisputable principles of Islam.

Such are, briefly stated, the fundamentals on which are based the early history of Islam and foundations of the criticism of narrating of traditions and reporting of injunctions. The early writers of Islam, the savants of the Hadîth, the adepts in Maghâzî, the scholars of History, one and all have, as far as in them lay, adhered closely to these principles. In proportion as they keep near to or drift away from these principles, their books fall or rise in the scale

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of estimation and authority. It is on this very score that the *Jámi' Sahih* of Imám Bukhárí and the book of Imám Muslim Nishápurí, who ranks next to Bukhárí, have been graded. The same principle was applied in determining the worth and reliability of the books of Hadíth. Imám Bukhárí has not included in his Collection (called *Jámi' Sahih*) even one tradition in which each individual narrator has not explicitly averred his having met and heard his previous narrator, whereas Imám Muslim has accepted the narrations of those persons also whose personal contact with each other or acquaintance with each other has not been proved; and has contented himself with the knowledge of their being contemporaries. After this every impartial student will fall in with the view that for this reason, of all works on Traditions and historical events *Sahih* of Imám Bukhárí especially ought to rank highest. This will also explain the fact of *Sahih* of Imám Muslim being ranked next to Bukhárí. The authors and the compilers of the rest of the collections of Traditions set before themselves the principle of collecting every tradition and event which bore any sort of guarantee of the learned to the effect that they were neither fabricated nor untrue. And further, they accept the testimony of every such narrator as has not been labelled as a liar or a forger of narratives. The authors of minor importance have not even maintained this principle, and have consequently padded their books with every kind of narrative, true or untrue. Thus it is that the learned have graded these books in order of importance.

In the compilation of the books on *Magházi* and *Sírat* these principles have been still very loosely observed, yet even so, their observance, coupled with the personal status and estimation of the individual authors, had undoubtedly, to a certain extent, a hand in determining the award of a premier position amongst all the books on *Magházi* to the *Magházi* of Imám Zuhrí. Next in importance and estimation comes the *Magházi* of Músá bin 'Aqaba, one of Imám Zuhrí's pupils; then the *Magházi* of Muhammad bin Isháq, a class-fellow of Músá bin 'Aqaba; and Wáqidí, in this coterie, holds the same place as would be allotted to a compiler of a collec-

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tion of traditions amongst the traditionists ranking equal with Wáqidí.

I am afraid I am inclined to believe, from Professor Guillaume's letter, that he is not well acquainted with the lines on which a class or subject classification of the learned of Islam is made. Obviously it is difficult enough for even the learned of one nation to comprehend and to grasp the religion, sciences and arts and the nomenclature employed by the learned of other nations. For they are from their very childhood born and bred outside that particular atmosphere ; and from books alone do they derive their information. Moreover, a mere literary acquaintance with the *belles-lettres* of an alien nation does not prove an altogether adequate help in understanding all its sciences, arts and nomenclature. Therefore they are constrained to interpret the ideas and thoughts of the alien nation in the terms of their own national language, thought and environment.

The Professor speaks of two kinds of learned men—theologians and *Asháb'ul-Magház* (and with them historians). But in Islam no such division exists, and theologians do not form a distinct and a separate class of the learned. In Islam division is made, not on the score of theology, but on the basis of *Riwáyat*. For this reason, all those persons who narrate anything are grouped together under one category, and as such are called the savants of *Naql*, while the others are termed savants of '*Aql*. And with the latter we are not concerned here at all.

The savants of *Naql*, i.e. such persons as narrate an event or injunction, are given different names on the basis of the nature of the injunctions or events they relate. For example, those who narrate the events in the life, or the injunctions of, the Holy Prophet, and the events of the period immediately after him are styled *Muhadiththín*, and those who relate the biographical events of the life of Muhammad, his manners and way of living, are called *Asháb 'us-Sírat*, while those who have confined themselves only to the manners and habits of the Prophet are given the appellation of *Asháb 'us-Shamáíl*, and those who tell of battles and their details are known as

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Asháb 'ul-Magházi. In a word, although *Muhadiththín*, *Asháb 'us-Shamáil*, *Asháb 'us-Sírat*, *Asháb 'ul-Magházi* have all been given different names, owing to each of them having specialized in one particular line, yet as far as *Riwáyat*—narration—is concerned *Asháb 'un-Naql* are identical with *Asháb 'ur-Riwáyat*, and this is why both the *Asháb 'un-Naql* and *Asháb 'ur-Riwáyat* are weighed in one and the same scale.

Whoever relates what he has heard from any person, whether it pertains to religious matters and religious duties, whether it concerns the life of the Prophet, or the Ghazawát—battles—of the Prophet, it becomes essential to produce evidence and give proof that it is in fact as it is described to be. *Riwáyat* quite understandably is the only source of information, as to when a certain injunction was given and when a certain event occurred, for persons not present at the time and for the generations to come. And this is the only safe vehicle for transmitting an event from one person to another—it is indeed History—the sole fabric of our knowledge of the events and episodes of the world.

The outstanding difference between Islamic and non-Islamic narratives, when viewed from this special branch of knowledge, is that the non-Muslim nations have not formulated definite laws and rules for verifying and scrutinizing the traditions and events, words and deeds, of their respective great prophets and religious leaders; while, on the other hand, the Muslims have laid down many rules and laws for this purpose and with them as their criteria, they sift the true from the false. By way of example I refer to the religious lore of the Christians which contains other Gospels—thirty-four in number—besides the four recognized ones. But they have accepted the four and rejected the rest as apocryphal. We must confess our ignorance as to the principles on which they proceeded to differentiate between the false and true; but the Muslims possess the branch of the bough of knowledge which is known as *Usúl* and is further subdivided.

In our present age historical criticism has made gigantic strides in Europe. Ibn Khaldun's philosophy of history has

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yielded an abundant harvest from the soil of Europe. Nowadays great stress is laid on whether or not a particular event is consistent with nature and the circumstances of the time in which it occurred ; and, in short, not a single aspect, from the view-point of *Diráyat*, escapes the scrutinizing eye of the modern European critic-historian. But the point of view of who witnessed the event, by whom it was reported, through what channel it reached us, never seems to enter into the purview of their discussion. The value which the European lawyers and the law-courts attach to evidence in ascertaining the truth of events and incidents is a matter of common knowledge. We know that immeasurable efforts are made to ascertain the position, character and the social status of the witnesses and eye-witnesses, and so to come to the truth. But is it not a strange irony to find that, while in connection with the investigation of present-day events extreme care is lavished in the matter of witnesses for and against it, in the case of events of the past all the principles relating to evidence are thrown overboard and no discrimination is made between a liar and a truthful person?

Hadith and *Riwáyat* is one out of the innumerable branches of study. It is common knowledge that all those who are connected with a particular branch of science and art, or those who claim to be well versed in one special branch, can never be graded equally. Many of them are such as know only the rudiments of that science or art and have only succeeded in touching its outskirts. There are others who occupy a very high pedestal, and amongst these there are always the selected few who are critics of that branch of knowledge, or art, who enrich it with the wealth of their knowledge and who are adepts in its ins and outs and conversant with its truths, intricacies and secrets. And to find out what positions in point of proficiency they hold in their chosen branch of knowledge we must refer to their achievements in it, to the opinions and pronouncements of their contemporaries and learned men of that branch of knowledge, and the general estimation and respect earned by them in the eyes of the people of their own days. And in due course

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they are awarded the status of an authority, according to their deserts, in their special domain. It is this particular criterion which controls the considerations which have guided present as well as past generations in their choice of citing an authority, of placing confidence in its judgment and in its faithfulness as a narration. In every age and clime there are to be found verifications of this statement ; in every branch of knowledge as good as they are to be met with in this present age of ours.

(To be continued.)

ISLAM AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE

By R. GORDON CANNING

(Continued from No. 3, p. 106)

II

ISLAM: WHAT IT WAS

THE ISLAMIC STATES ABOUT 950.

La grandeur des monuments laissée par une dynastie est en rapport direct avec la puissance dont cette dynastie avait disposé lors de son établissement (Ibn Khaldun, *Prolegomena to History of the Berbers*, translated by de Slane).

(TRANSLATION: The splendour of the monuments left by a dynasty is in direct relation to the power which that dynasty disposed of from the hour of its rise.)

This quotation from the *Prolegomena* of Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the potent forces of various Islamic dynasties from the Oxus to the Sebou, when one considers the mosques and the *madrasas*, the palaces, observatories and gardens scattered over the immense territory from Samarkand to Toledo.

In *Muhammadian Architecture in Egypt and Syria*, Briggs sums up the Saracenic Art in the following words :—

The Romans only really impressed their personality upon the Barbarian nations that they subdued, while on countries already civilized—Greece, Italy, Egypt, Asia Minor—they left no mark ;

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whereas the wild Arabs, in every case, moulded and adapted an artistic tradition far superior to their own.

After ransacking the brains of Romans, Persians, Copts, Syrians, Byzantines, Armenians, and Crusaders, Saracenic architects continued to produce buildings which could never be attributed to any one of their heterogeneous sources of inspiration, but always retained the unmistakable stamp of Islam.

Saracenic art is fundamentally and finally the expression of a great religious faith. It has made for itself a place in the history of art, and where it stands unharmed amid the splendid sunshine of its natural surroundings it has charmed the world with a fascination that will never die.

(a) THE EASTERN PORTION.

About this date the strength and prestige of Islamic races had reached one of the highest points of its existence, although the Abbaside Caliphate itself had commenced to decline from the golden era of its reign.

Though this Caliphate had been shorn of most of its temporal powers, it was everywhere in the East looked upon as the head and centre of spiritual direction. In the West two kings, on the decay and weakness of the Oriental Caliph, took over the title of Amir-al-Muminin.

The vast Oriental Empire of Bagdad had broken up into a number of petty States; the Suffarides ruled in Persia, the Samarides in Trans-Oxania, the Tulinides in Egypt and Syria, but still attached to Bagdad, under the tutelage of the Buyides, were Irak, Arabia, Armenia, and the States bordering the Indian Ocean. Wars were frequent between the Byzantines and the Caliph, but neither side, with the exception of raids into the nearest portion of their enemies' territories, achieved any great success.

These small dynasties naturally weakened the Oriental Islamic States in the military sense, but on the other hand, with the rivalry between the numerous Courts, both arts and sciences were revered and protected, and many a learned man was assisted in his labours, for as Sédillot, in his *Histoire des Arabes*, says :—

On vit les princes Bouides imiter l'exemple de Al-Mamun et donner un nouvel essor à l'astronomie et aux mathématiques.

(TRANSLATION: One sees the Buyides princes follow the example of Al-Mámún and give a new impetus to the development of astronomy and mathematics.)

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(b) EGYPT, TUNIS AND THE MEDITERRANEAN.

Here, Europe can appreciate still more the power of Muslim dynasties. About 950 the fourth Fatimide Caliph Al Mu'iz was in power at Mahdia in Tunis; Al Jouhar, his general, conquered Ifrikia, portions of the Maghreb and Egypt; finally in 963 Al Mu'iz changed his capital to Cairo and founded the New City, the present Cairo.

Under Al Mu'iz, the Empire of North Africa attained the highest point of civilization, the people were happy and prosperous, the army and fleet well organized, the districts administered with justice, and order maintained.

The Byzantines conquered Crete, and committed atrocities, memories of which we see to-day still lingering in the minds of Muslims. But Sicily, Corsica, Sardinia, together with portions of lower Italy, were incorporated in the kingdom of Al Mu'iz, while his fleet was all-powerful in the eastern portion of the Mediterranean for the greater portion of his reign, and before he died the Hedjaz and Syria also acknowledged him as Caliph.

The Fatimide Caliphate lasted until it was destroyed by Saladin (Salâh-ud-Dîn) in 1171.

In Sicily they introduced cotton, sugar-cane, orange- and lemon-trees; revised the system of irrigation, initiated the cultivation of silk, and in Palermo, which the Arabs made their capital,

un certain nombre de petits châteaux qui donnent une très-haute idée du mérite de leurs architectes. Tels étaient ces barbares dont nos chroniqueurs tracent un si affreux portrait; tandis qu'on les accusait de se nourrir de chair humaine, ils apportaient avec eux la richesse et la civilisation (Sédillot).

(TRANSLATION: A number of small chateaux shows the high standard of their architecture. Such were the barbarians of whom the Christian writers in those days gave such a terrible portrait; whilst they were accused of devouring human flesh, they brought with them the rich gifts of civilization.)

(This propaganda of *chair humaine* was revived by the late Lord Northcliffe, when he spread the fable during the European war that Germany made use of dead men's bones !)

In the magnificent cathedral of Monreale one can see to-day

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relics of the elegance and purity of Saracenic architecture, by the side of which the cathedral and Catholic churches are unattractive and repulsive.

(c) MAGHREB AND SPAIN.

Between 912 and 990 the Ommeyade dynasty at Cordova attained its greatest splendour, and territorially its boundaries reached their widest limits; Leon, Castille, Galicia, and Navarre were to all intents dependencies, the Maghreb acknowledged the suzerainty of Abdul Rahman III, and in the realms of arts and sciences the University of Cordova achieved a world-wide fame, students flocking from every part of Europe, even from Asia and Africa. It was here later, that Pope Sylvester received his training, and perhaps from Muslim Spain came the origin of Dante's *Inferno*.¹

The Ommeyade navy ruled the Western Mediterranean, and the Balearic Islands were a part of their dominions. The Sovereigns of Europe sought their alliance, and ambassadors from the Emperors of Constantinople, Germany, France and Italy were to be seen at their Court.

On the coasts of France and Italy, Arabic adventurers founded colonies which can be traced to this day in Piedmont, Liguria, Marseilles and Grenoble.

In these days chivalry was the ideal of every Muslim Knight, and in the tourneys, ladies were undisguised spectators, and at festivals lent a charm and fascination to every scene.

From Bagdad to Cordova the power of Islam was predominant in commerce, morality, arts. The Mediterranean was a Muslim sea where their navies sailed and protected their traders.

Though divided into three great parties, the power of any one of them was equal to or greater than that of the Byzantine Empire; and their armies and their navies, with a few exceptions, were everywhere victorious.

At Fez, Damascus, Kairouan, Nishapur, Bagdad, Cordova,

¹ Since this was written, M. Asin's *Islam and Divine Comedy* has been translated into English and published.

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mosques and universities arose and became the homes of knowledge, learning, toleration, virtues which had long been wandering unattended and unsought for through the barren regions of Europe.

The civilizations of Greece and Rome were saved from the barbarous slough wherein Europe wallowed for centuries ; their science was improved and corrected, fresh knowledge in the realms of mathematics, music, rhyme, geography, astronomy, medicine, industry was compiled, and this, in its turn, was handed on to Europe when the hour of their glory faded. Many words of Arabic origin have passed into European literature, such as alcohol, alkali, alembic.¹

But Bagdad and Cordova, like the capitals of former and later Empires, attained a certain point of civilization described by Ibn Khaldun when he says :—

la vie sédentaire marque le plus haut degré du progrès auquel un peuple peut atteindre ; c'est le point culminant de l'existence de ce peuple, et le signe qui en annonce la décadence (*Prolegomena*).

(TRANSLATION : The arrival of a settled existence marks the highest degree to which a people can attain ; it is the culminating point in the life of this people, and is the sign which heralds their decadence.)

These Kingdoms were broken up first of all by the mercenary troops, Berbers, Slavs, Mongols, who were employed as hired defenders of the Suzerain. Then, when weakened and divided, the territories were ravaged and destroyed by the hordes of Ghengiz Khan in Irak, the Moors and Moriscos persecuted and exiled by the Inquisition in Spain.

The flower of Islamic culture was trampled and burnt never to wake and bloom again until — ?

Thus, in 950 along the southern shores of the Mediterranean, and sometimes even on the northern, Muslim art and culture were supreme. These historical facts are known by the educated Muslim of to-day, while the story-tellers in the South of Africa and South of Asia delight the ears and minds of the illiterate by tales of past grandeur and dominion.

Besides the fallibility of Empires, the imperfections of humanity, i.e. creeds and colour rivalries, the jealousies of

¹ Ameer Ali's *History of Saracens*.

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rulers, the corruption of officials, what were the chief causes to bring about the immense difference between Islamic dominion of 950 and the present day?

(1) Theologians have twisted the original teachings and traditions of the Prophet to satisfy some cruel and bigoted tyrant, whose regulations have since become recognized law, thus bringing stagnation to Muslim communities and preventing the development of science and culture.

Under the later Abbasides the government came out frankly for religious absolutism. . . . All creative activity ceased (Ameer Ali, *History of Saracens*).

Islam first felt the blight of despotism when Muawiyah, in 661, established the Ommeyade dynasty at Damascus, and immediately prostituted his spiritual power to gain temporal glory. His family had been to the last hostile to Muhammad and his teaching, and had been the latest and most half-hearted of converts.

A similar curse fell on Christianity when Constantine, in 324, adopted this creed as the official faith of the Roman Empire.

It is owing to these centuries of despotism that the original ideal of the Caliphate has been lost sight of until recently. Turkey did not abolish the office in driving into exile the last members of the Ottoman dynasty; they abolished an autocratic ruler who applied his spiritual office to gain more despotic power in temporal affairs.

(2) The bitter hatred engendered by the Crusades between 1100 and 1200 has through nine centuries pervaded the relations between Europe and Asia, placing for ever, it seems, a barrier of Fanaticism between the two great religions of Islam and Christianity.

In the year 1000 Christian and Muslim relations were fairly good; between them as a whole intercourse was becoming steadily more friendly and more frequent. This friendly intercourse, if continued, might ultimately have produced momentous results for human progress (Ameer Ali, *History of Saracens*).

(3) The third cause is the domination of the Turk, whose essential characteristic is that of a military caste, and with few exceptions untouched by the softer and more cultured

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attributes of Arabs and Persians. The hostility between Arab and Turk seldom permitted the two races to join in active defence against the aggression of European States.

During the late war much use was made by the Foreign Office of this inherent dislike, and the promise of an Arab kingdom was an irresistible lure when supported by gold ; the combination made the Arabs rise and fight against Turkey.

Syria, at any rate, bitterly regrets her late masters, who, if not progressive, were not unduly harsh.

(4) The fourth is the devastation of Bagdad in 1256 by Hulaku, when the treasures of art and science collected by the Abbaside Caliphs through five centuries were destroyed in the space of a few weeks. Ibn Khaldun relates that out of two million inhabitants, one million six hundred thousand were massacred.

The destruction of Bagdad was a fatal blow at Saracenic civilization (Ameer Ali, *History of Saracens*).

(5) Fifthly, we have the persecution, by the Roman Catholic Church, of Muslims in Spain, after the fall of Cordova in 1248, and the final exile of three millions in 1610 to the shores of Africa by the bigoted Philip III.

Fair Andalusia, for centuries the home of culture, learning and arts, has relapsed into the sterility and baseness of the Gothic period and become a synonym for intellectual and moral desolation (Ameer Ali, *History of Saracens*).

The Empire of Islam has been carried on in a disjointed fashion by various dynasties of East and West ; a period of renewed glory in the military sense during the sixteenth century, when Turkey was acknowledged head of Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, Egypt, Syria, Wallachia, Moldavia, Servia, Persia and Arabia. But, as a whole, one sees a gradual disintegration, a gradual drifting apart, a steady decline into apathetic ways, withdrawing from the active world, living on the past, on contemplation, in resignation to the will of Allah !

The spirit of Fatalism, in opposition to the teaching of the Prophet, for verse after verse in the Qur-án refutes it—

And whoever gets himself a sin, gets it solely on his own responsibility (see also Ameer Ali, *Spirit of Islam*, pp. 406-410)—

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gradually became all-predominant, and has cast its decaying spell over the world of Islam.

Until this deadening drug is lifted from the minds of Muslims, and the principles of striving, of searching for knowledge, of each creating his own good deeds whereby he shall be judged on the day of Resurrection, there can be no hope for the restoration of Islamic civilization.

Before discussing the possibilities of this, the renewed Spring which certain breezes seem to herald, let us glance at what has befallen the Islamic dominions bordering the Mediterranean and appreciate the difference between 950 and the present day.

(To be continued.)

MUHAMMAD—THE MAN AND THE PROPHET

By C. A. SOORMA

FOURTEEN centuries ago there was born in Mecca one who was called Muhammad—the Praised One. His father had predeceased him, and his mother, Ameenah, followed him shortly after. He was adopted by his uncle, Abu Talib, a leader of the Quraish—one of the most powerful and noble tribes of Arabia. Like many other boys of his time, he was never sent to any school or tutor, illiteracy being at that time prevalent. Even from his boyhood it was abundantly clear that he was no ordinary mortal. There was a seriousness in his manner which one hardly associates with one so young. His youth showed promise of a life full of purpose, and he very soon earned for himself the coveted appellation of *Sadiq* and *Ameen*, meaning the truthful. Being of a contemplative turn of mind, he found solace and comfort in communion with Nature. He would betake himself to the cave of Hera and there become absorbed in trying to fathom the mysteries of creation, in prayers and fasting. The gross licentiousness, idolatry, superstition and barbarity of his countrymen produced in one so sensitive a natural abhorrence. But as yet the world was ignorant of the message which he was to give.

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When he reached manhood, he married Khadeeja, a widow, in whose service he then was. Khadeeja was some fifteen years his senior, but she chose him as her husband out of the many eligible men of her tribe, principally because of his chastity and truthfulness.

Even after marriage, he would often visit the cave of Hera, and there spend weeks in prayer and contemplation. Khadeeja, as a woman, instinctively knew that her husband was somehow *different* from the generality of men, and that the best thing to do would be to leave him undisturbed in his solitude and communion. How far she was right was soon to be made clear.

The life of Muhammad is full of interesting glimpses of a noble and virtuous soul. One of these is his behaviour when he was appointed God's Messenger at the age of forty. When the message of Prophethood was revealed to him in the cave of Hera, he was completely overcome by its potency and immense significance. He was overwhelmed, both physically and mentally. He knew not what to do—whither to turn. But in a flash he remembered his aged wife, Khadeeja. He hastened home and there laid bare before her the divine message of his Prophethood. Mind you, he could have gone to his venerable old uncle, Abu Talib, who had nourished and cherished him since his orphanhood. He could have seen Ali, his beloved cousin. But he did not. Straight to the wife of his bosom—straight to the arms of a *Woman*!—went he, and there found solace and comfort. Khadeeja then realized the true character of her husband. Without any hesitation, she swore by the Almighty that what he had said was true, and that in reality he was indeed the Paraclete whose coming had been prophesied by the Carpenter of Galilee!

When I read of this episode in the life of the Prophet, when I pause to consider, and ponder on its true significance, I am at once struck by the amazing fact of the unparalleled glory which has been bestowed upon woman by the Prophet. Nowhere in the history of the human race will you find an instance to equal it. Never has woman been given a greater claim to our respect and sympathy. At the most crucial

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moment of his life, the greatest man that ever lived needed and received sympathy and peace of mind at the hands of a woman !

The great Gautama, a prince by birth, fled from his wife and family because he could not attain *nirvana* while with them. He could not find in woman a helpmate and a comrade.

The short ministry of Jesus did not permit him to elevate the status of woman, although he, on all occasions, helped and protected the hunted. After him, the savants of the Church degraded woman to an extent which would have amazed and angered Christ, had he lived to see it.

Manu, the Rishi, father of Brahminism, condemned woman as an enslaver of men and a tempter. He said that woman was frail, irresolute and never straight.

Judaism, or rather Rabbinitism, teaches that to be born a woman is a great degradation. Poor woman ! There was none to champion her cause. But it rested with an illiterate Arab shepherd to proclaim to the world that socially, morally and spiritually woman was man's equal in all respects ! And yet he is condemned as one who advocated the slavery of woman ! Such is the reward he earns—from the ignorant and the prejudiced.

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Standing on a small hill, under the burning desert sun, a man began to appeal to his fellow-men. He called them to the path of virtue, the path of God ! He implored them to give up idolatry. He reminded them that the *Kaaba*, the House of God, built by Abraham and dedicated to the One True God, was desecrated and polluted by the presence of numerous idols, notably those of *Laat* and *Uzza*. He claimed to be a Divine Messenger, a humble servant of his Master. Did they listen ? Did they obey him ? No. They went up to him and abused him. Some, whose passions had been aroused, threw dirt and refuse at him, while others spat in his face. A Jewess laid brambles and thorns in his path. He quietly took them away. They poisoned his food and drink. They isolated him, boycotted him, hooted him and persecuted him in a manner which only the cruelty of the Arab can

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invent. He bore it all patiently, meekly, humbly. Was he not a servant? He must endure everything in the service of his Master. He was thankful, grateful. He submitted quietly, for he was a Muslim, and *Islam* means submission!

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Unable to stop his teachings, his enemies plotted his murder. Ali, his cousin, prepared himself to sacrifice his life for him. But they did not harm Ali. They thirsted only for Muhammad's blood.

On his way to the Kaaba he was set upon by a band of Arabs, who pelted him with stones. He was wounded, and bled profusely from the nose and mouth. He fell down, and lay senseless. Did he grumble? No; only words of forgiveness issued from his bleeding and swollen lips!

Tales of the torture of his handful of followers were daily brought to him: of how these poor men—and women—were starved to death, of how they were tied hand and foot and deposited on the burning sands of the desert, with huge slabs of stone placed on their chests, until they either gave up Islam or perished for their faith. Not one swerved from his devotion to him. Gladly they died—with a smile on their lips. One heard but two words—"Muhammad" and "Allah."

There was one in Mecca who was called Omar, the powerful! Of noble descent, herculean strength and fiery disposition, he was one of the Prophet's severest critics. Imagine his horror and anger when one day he heard his young sister recite some verses which the Prophet had that day issued as part of the Qur-ānic message! He went up to her and demanded, in a voice of thunder, if she too had been beguiled by this arch-impostor. Steadily and calmly came the answer that she had become a Muslim. There and then he vowed that ere the sun went down he would rid the world of this pest. How dare he interfere with his family, his women-folk!

So he sped on his journey of revenge, armed and determined. He arrives at Muhammad's house, unchallenged. He stops before a curtain. He hears a soft, sweet voice raised in gentle prayer. He hesitates and unconsciously listens.

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Gradually a change comes over him ; he begins to question his sanity. Perplexed and confused, he stands there as one who is fascinated. The voice ceases ; a step is heard. Now he is face to face with the person whom he had come to slay. But the Prophet simply opens his arms and draws into them the trembling, sobbing Omar—Omar, the powerful. In broken, faltering words, Omar relates the purpose of his visit. But what does it matter ? Omar is conquered. Omar is a Muslim !

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When torture and tyranny failed to dissuade him from his task, the Quraish, led by one Abu Jahl, or the Ignorant One, with the cunning of their race, approached Muhammad with offers of bribery. What was it that he desired ? they asked. Did he want to become the King of Arabia ? If so, they would all bear allegiance to him and take the oath of fealty. Did he wish to marry the most beautiful maiden in the land ? If so, he had but to name her, and she would be his before the moon paled in the sky. Did he want wealth and riches ? If so, they would lay at his feet wealth which even Cræsus might have envied.

No ? Was he sure he did not want these ? Then what indeed was it that he wanted ?

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“ Know ye, All Men ! There is no God, but God, and I am His Messenger ! I have come to show you the right path, the path from which you have all strayed. I have come to teach you, *not* a *new* faith, but to repeat what my predecessors have said. I have come to complete and consolidate God’s mission on earth—to teach you what Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus had taught and you had forgotten. Hark ye, unto me ! The mercy of God awaits the righteous, as surely as His wrath awaits the wicked and the stubborn. Follow me, and ye shall attain peace. I have come to teach you all *Islam* ; I carry with me a message of peace, of submission to the will of God ! ”

This was the clarion call which he sounded ; this was what

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he wanted. Hostile and bitter was the reception. The thought of giving up their ancient tribal and family gods, of ridding themselves of their licentious habits, of ceasing to pride themselves on infanticide, was too much for them. The attacks were renewed with greater vigour than ever !

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Two weary travellers, starving, bleeding from the feet, and yet as courageous and resolute as ever, enter the gates of Medina. One is known as Muhammad, whom the Quraish had driven away from Mecca. The other is his companion and friend, his comrade and servant, Abu Bakr. The people are attracted by the words of this dishevelled, pinched and weary man, Muhammad. They listen to him patiently, sympathetically. They are hospitable. They see the light of eternal truth shining in his eyes, the glow of spiritual knowledge on his brow, the stoop of an aged and patient savant in his steps. Surely what this man said was true ! Surely he was the long-awaited Paraclete whose advent had been prophesied by one very much like him, a Carpenter of Galilee !

And so it came to pass that Yathrib, or Medina, was soon to become the stronghold of Islam, the distributing centre from which it was to spread to the four corners of the earth with a rapidity which is at once an enigma and a blessing for which the historian cannot adequately account.

Thus we see him in old age, the virtual ruler of Arabia, living in a hut built of mud, dressed in tattered garments, sometimes starving, always hungry, always poor. There never was born a king of so high a lineage, of so noble a character, of so charitable a disposition. He never pretended to be a divinity ; he never claimed to be one whit different from his fellow-men. He never even *wished* to be better off materially than the Arabs of his day. Poverty and suffering were his lot, and yet he revelled and gloried in them. He was merely a servant of his Master—and servants must suffer in silence !

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As I stood before the shrine of this mighty and yet poor

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King, my feelings—and the feelings of all those who were there—got the better of me. I wept as I have never wept before. In his presence we all felt so small, so insignificant, so utterly contemptible. Right before me in his eternal sleep lay one who had endured much, and suffered and sacrificed much in the cause of truth, one who gave to the world a noble conception of nature, of man's relationship to the Almighty, of the duty of tolerance and brotherhood. A memory of things beautiful, of a world of infinite peace and contentment, rose before me. It was hard to tear myself away from his august presence. He is a link that binds three hundred millions of humanity into one single, living and enduring brotherhood. They sang his praises in all the known languages of the world. It was the sweetest music that I had ever heard !—

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Some two months ago I dreamt a strange dream. I dreamt that the world had come to an end ! There was ruin, chaos and confusion everywhere. Terror-stricken men and women ran to and fro, falling on their knees and calling upon God to spare them. Out of this confusion I dimly perceived the approach of a venerable-looking person who said he was Jesus Christ. He called upon men to come to him as he would save them. He asked us all if we were *Muslims* ! and all the time, he was reciting the great *salam* (salutation) to the Prophet :

Allāhumma salle 'alā Muhammdin wa 'alā āli . . . ,

I went down on my knees before him and cried that I was a *Muslim*. He then lifted me, and soothed me, and asked me to follow him, reciting the *salam*. As suddenly as the dream had come, it vanished, and I awoke with the words of the salutation still upon my lips, my eyes wet with tears, and my whole body in a quiver. Dawn was just breaking, but for some moments I could not compose myself.

I shall always cherish this dream as one of the greatest moments of my life. It has forged one more link in the chain

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that binds me to Islam. It has revealed to me in the most striking manner the divine message of Muhammad.

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Last of all the Prophets—God's own beloved, one of His great and good men—I salute thee ! May thy name be ever hallowed, ever inspiring !

Balagh 'al-'ulá bi-Kamálihi,
Kashaf 'ad-Dujá bi-Jamálihi,
Hasonat Jami'o Khisálihi,
Sallú 'alaihi wa álihi.

PENITENCE—SOUL—ETERNAL BLISS

By A. KHALIQUE KHAN, B.A., M.R.A.S. (Lond.)

(Continued from Vol. XV, p. 61)

IF conscience—the power to discriminate between right and wrong—is the Divine guide inside man which makes him walk in the midst of darkness, penitence, then, seems a necessary sequel to wash away the mental stigma which comes from moral trespass.

But as human perception is apt to be puzzled at the endless variety of sensations derived from its environment, so it, naturally, stands in need of a guide—a directing code—from without, in the form of Revelation, i.e. the Word of God, Who will not ignore His own creation, for His compassion and beneficence are the two most prominent attributes from which the world devolves.

Eyes we may have, but without external light (the sun) we cannot perceive objects in Nature ; similarly, we may possess a clear conscience, but may still grope in darkness and ignorance, if not guided by the Book of God, the merciful and forgiving.

Maturity of perception blended with a keen understanding of Revelation can really guide man to the true significance of life, can engender a true fellow-feeling, and foster the love of God through the proper use of the physical and mental

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faculties in him. The exposition of human faculties must be the only true aim of religion.

To think of human progress without Divine light is like thinking of a child's knowledge without proper upbringing at home and strict discipline at school. If ever man be left bereft of that light, he is mentally perplexed, and his evolution in life retarded.

Penitence is the outcome of a strong conviction in God's reckoning of our actions in this life, leading further to true realization of duty, the emollient effect of religious thought. The knowledge of God's glory and beauty lies in the realization of that duty. If a man would but remember the list of small slips in his life, he would naturally try to remove the baneful effect cast thereby on his mind by constant remembrance of God (in any posture as stated in the *Qur-án* ¹) which sets every tissue of the body and brain-cell in vibration to drink deep of His mercy and love. As soon as that transformation sets in, that individual begins to detest his lower nature; struggles hard to curb his passions: henceforth his life is guided by reason, actions by wisdom, and the heart throbs with tender emotions for the welfare of the human race.

In the realization of this duty lies the beauty of man's character, and moreover it serves as a means whereby to attain to eternal bliss. One who loves God, and serves himself and mankind, attains to that state of eternal bliss of which the *Qur-án* speaks emphatically in these verses:—

“O thou soul! that art at rest and retest fully contented with thy Lord, return unto Him, He being pleased with thee and thou with Him; so enter among My servants and enter into My Paradise” (*lxxxix.* 28, 30).

The words conveyed a novel idea of paradise at that time,² when incessant wars for supremacy and perpetual internecine strife, combined with the ceaseless wrangling of creeds and sects, had caused national progress to deteriorate and individual consciousness to become degenerate. To those who are interested in the study of the development of the various creeds, the embarrassing question of heaven and hell

¹ *Al-Qur-án*, iii. 188.

² Just after the advent of Islam.

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will be particularly interesting. The follower of every creed according to his own selfish motive condemns those outside the pale of his own to everlasting perdition, while reserving the heavenly abode for his own religious comrades.

Those who find in God a universal benefactor extending His bounties of the physical world, without distinction of creed or colour, will consider such a selfish point of view absurd. Faith without action was the nucleus of religious thought, and intolerance a sign of piety and purity. Muhammad—the Comforter—proclaimed in trumpet tones that paradise was neither a national monopoly nor yet the reward of religious intolerance and persecution, but that it belonged to every true lover of God and servant of humanity. Here is a thought to ponder over, for those carpers at Islam who maliciously attribute intolerance as a necessary sequel to the belief in Islam.

A person whose actions are pure and life honest, placed under any moral or legal restraint, and bound down to innumerable religious obligations—do-this, and do-this-not—shall come through clean, and without mental anxiety because he is too good to be aware of those moral shackles. A true Muslim's life is such—full of contentment and resignation, not because that Muslim is a fatalist—saturated with lethargy and dependence—but because he knows well how to feel optimistic through loving his Lord, and that in obeying the immutable laws of Nature, and serving mankind, is to be found the only practical solution of life and its tangled problems.

It is in obedience to the laws of Nature and belief in Revelation that the true significance of the Islamic Paradise lies. When a Muslim is washed clean of every physical impurity (in conformity with the hygienic regulations in the Qur-án), and perfectly cleansed of immoral thought—the seed of immoral action—through regulating his life, a state of mental contentment overtakes him, which state is nothing but a phase in life of that same Paradise of which the Qur-án speaks in plain terms in the above verses. His actions become constructive and progressive, no longer destructive and retrogressive. He begins to soar into a higher mental outlook,

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and to rise through various evolutionary stages to a still higher consciousness. A fall, failure, trial, tribulation, then, seem to convey to him much deeper significance than their seeming harshness could otherwise denote. The above conditions of mind carry for him a special meaning, and never anything vicious, from the Creator whose laws are very rigid but instructive and evolutionary.

In habit that true Muslim undergoes a complete transformation : his soul no longer stumbles on its path of progress, but, instead, is strengthened with the spirit of God. His whole being is then laid before the altar of sacrifice for God, through an untiring service for mankind. His body and mind co operate in producing actions that savour of Divine love. Truth, in him, becomes the victor and falsehood the vanquished. The struggle for supremacy between right and wrong within the human frame ends in the triumph of the former, and consequently in actions that then accrue from Divine source of purity and serenity. We come to the conclusion, then, that where reason alone could not pave the way for an onward march in life, a strong conviction in the reckoning of our actions by God does so. God's physical and moral laws are working with that rigour of discipline which crushes our egotism, and keeps us ever reforming through various invisible stages of evolution.

AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN AND SECTARIANISM¹

A MASS meeting of between ten and twelve thousand Muslims was held last evening (February 22nd) outside Mochi Gate. Khan Bahadur Sheikh Abdul Qadir, M.L.C., recently representative of India on the League of Nations, was voted to the chair. In introducing Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the principal speaker of the evening, the President paid a glowing tribute to that pioneer of Islamic Missionary Campaign in England (Woking) and to his great achievements in that field.

¹ Reprinted from *The Light*, Lahore, March 1, 1927.

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Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din began with pointing out how the message of Islam came as a binding force, welding the discordant, warring and jarring elements of the Arab Society into one compact nation. If it were to be assumed this message was not from God, certainly the man whose soul was capable of such noble sentiments, such high ideals, was himself worthy of adoration. Islam introduced the high conception that humanity was one big family and paved the way for such a coming together of various people by enjoining faith in all the world-Prophets. Differences there must be, he went on, but Islam had turned these to good account. They must not give rise to bad blood. If we differ, we must do so with one, and only one, object—viz. to outdo others in the path of virtue. The Qur-án intended the Muslims to be a model of unity to others. To-day the Muslims were a model to humanity too, but in a different sense. Their disunion was an object-lesson to other nations.

Referring to the present communal disturbances in India, the speaker said they were prompted by no motives of nationalism. The real driving-force was the dream of Hindu *raj*. The Hindus might be justified in what they were doing, for their religion demands that those who disbelieve in the Vedas must be thrown before lions, their bones broken, and otherwise tortured. He wondered how on earth the Hindus invited people to such a conception of religion. He could not understand whether people so converted would become *Shudh* (pure) or *Ashudh* (impure). The Qur-án on the other hand proclaimed: "Verily, humanity is but one nation."

The speaker impressed upon the audience at great length that the Qur-án never conceived of Muslims as individuals but as a social whole. Wherever Muslims have been addressed, they are addressed as a body. The plural number is used, even in our daily prayers. This meant that individually we count as nothing in the eye of God. It is only when we approach Him in a body that He takes any notice of our voice. The same was true of this earthly Government. Unless you press a demand with a united national will, it goes into the waste-paper basket.

Difference in opinion was essential for all progress, the

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speaker argued. The common phenomenon of the growth and development of any organism in Nature pointed to that moral. A tree, for instance, has one common trunk, but as it goes up, it ramifies into branches, from which, again, shoot off leaves, and out of leaves come flowers and finally fruits. Every step on the path of progress means difference ; but difference with only one end in view. Every individual branch of leaf or flower or fruit that takes up a line of departure does so in order to bring nutrition to the whole tree. Division is there, but division which ministers to the welfare of the whole organism. On the other hand, the life of the individual branch or leaf or flower or fruit was bound up with the tree. So long as each stuck to the organism, it was alive.

The moment it severed its connection with the roots and the trunk, it withered. Whereas division was a source of increased life and vitality, disintegration spelt self-extinction. It was in this sense the Prophet said : " Division of my people is a blessing."

It was in this sense, continued the speaker, that he had identified himself with the Ahmadiya movement.

The said organization came into existence on the sacred principle of " Division of Labour." While others were engaged in serving Islam in other ways, the Ahmadies had to defend Islam against its detractors and take efficacious measures to spread it in the four corners of the world. The speaker said that he was *not one of the Qadianies* (the so-called Ahmadies) who see the justification of their existence in infidelizing the whole Muslim world. Their fanaticism had gone beyond all imaginable limits. A person may believe in Allah, in the messengership of Muhammad ; he may accept the Qur-án as the final message of God ; he may believe in, or do, all that entitles him to call himself Muslim in the eye of God and Muhammad, but he is still not Muslim in the Qadianies' judgment because he does not accept Mirza Ghulam-i-Ahmad (who himself had no such claim) as prophet. These Qadianies denounced a claimant of the type as infidel.

Moreover, they do not say prayers with other Muslims if the prayers be led by a non-Qadiani, neither will they give

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the benefit of funeral prayer to others. In short, they will not treat others as Muslims. All this, the Khwaja said, was disintegration and not division (lopping off a branch from the main trunk). *He believed the Holy Prophet to be the last prophet and the Qur-ân the final Divine Message.* He also stated in the clearest possible terms that he did not accept the Divine Messengership of any person after Muhammad, be he Mirza Ghulam-i-Ahmad or any other person. A prophet, he said, was one who brought some guidance or code of life from God—and no one did that after Muhammad.

THE VALUE OF ISLAM FOR A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

By SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH

(Islamic Case Proved by Christian Quotations from Gibbon)

THE value of Islam for a League of Nations is the subject of this article. I do not say *the* League of Nations, because, as you are aware, there has come into being lately a new thing on earth, and the title for it is "The League of Nations." If we use the word "the," it might imply that this particular proposal was perfect and a model for all time coming. I think myself it may be open to modification in time to come, and we will think of an ideal League of Nations growing out of the present proposals. I find the present League of Nations explained by a great authority, Sir Frederick Pollock, in his little book *The League of Nations*, published in 1920. In the course of the book he reviews the older European arbitration in the Middle Ages, and the gradual growth of the idea of the formation of alliances with a view to avoiding war.

He tells us about previous methods of arbitration—the *Alabama* case, for example—and goes on to The Hague Tribunal, and deals with the arrangements there with a view to avoiding war and maintaining peace. Anyone reading these proposals would be inclined to agree with them. You had forty-four Powers represented at The Hague—nearly all the nations of the earth—in a deliberate desire to discover some means of

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fostering general good will: and the particular proposals arrived at, then, were these :—

If two nations—A and B—are threatening to go to war, they refer the dispute to a number of men nominated permanently long before the dispute arises, with a view to being possible arbitrators in case of need. A and B each appoint one of the approved arbitrators; the other nations choose other two; the four thus selected choose an impartial chairman. These five are to sit for a year, considering the facts and theories in dispute. No warlike action is taken until A and B have had a year to decide between the quarrel and the beginning of hostilities.

In the case of the Dogger Bank trouble with the Russian Fleet and the British Fishing Fleet, probably the mere existence of these proposals saved Britain from war. If popular feeling had had to decide, democracy would very likely have gone to war. A hasty decision might have been made. The mere existence of these proposals, according to Sir Frederick, helped by giving England time for conference and the matter was got over in that way.

Whether these proposals are the best decision or not, they are surely worthy of our most sympathetic consideration. As Dr. Ewing has said, all men of good will are bound to have a desire that some such proposal may help the future and divert the possibility of war.

If you transfer the Edinburgh and Leith proposals for amalgamation to the centre of Asia, these proposals might in that distant place, in the present time, have led to war. But I do not believe there will be war between Leith and Edinburgh, whatever decision is arrived at in the present controversy. And I hope that mankind will be able to arrange their quarrels in the same amicable way. I assume that all races and all men of good will wish success to this proposal, namely, The League of Nations. It has in itself elements for modifying and developing perhaps that international amity which it has for its high ideal.

Now what does Islam contribute to this League of Universal Peace? You can judge that particularly by considering

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the origin of the Muslim religion. Because the ideals which bring a religion into existence must continue to have a dominant influence in the direction in which it is to move. Now Islam is the latest version of Semitic Monotheism. It claims to be a republication of the religion of Abraham, and the character of Abraham is very deeply revered among Muslims. The virtues of Abraham have been often reproduced. Many such as Abu Bekr are to a large extent reproductions of the virtues we have ascribed to the Father of the Faithful himself. A high magnanimity—a scorn of selfishness—and the dignity and chivalry of that temper we see in the Old Testament, have often been reproduced in Muslim history. He has faith, deep reverence for the Supreme Being, scorns to stand on all his rights ; and when you think of the chiefs of Mecca, fighting for the privilege of giving food and drink to the pilgrims, that is the temper of Abraham coming out again. The pilgrims are the guests of Allah, and it is Mecca's duty to show hospitality to them. Take the case of the Prophet himself. When it came to his last days and he knew he was to die, he asked whether those five or six *dinars* were still in the house. " Yes, we have had no chance to give them away." " That must be done at once," said the Prophet ; " imagine me appearing in the presence of my Maker and being asked, ' Could you not have done some good with this money to some person before you came here ? ' " He wanted to go empty-handed into the presence of his Maker. I have inquired, and to this day I have not been able to find one Muslim multi-millionaire. We have the characteristics of the Father of the Faithful. We have no desire to accumulate wealth. That is one of the known features of Islam which is a benefit to the whole fraternity of that religion. Well, the nature of its origin is one thing of importance. Every generation of children reads the Qur-án, knows it by heart, and the example of Abraham is there and, in a wide sense, generates aspiration and is of great importance. It is the latest version of Semitic Monotheism. In its origin there is a strong element of the rational. The rational element is particularly strong. The Old Testament has no mythology ; the Greek Mythology

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tells many stories which charm the children of the East to this day. Near Mount Olympus I asked a little Greek boy about the Delphic Oracle. He wanted to know about the war and who was going to win, and I said : " Why don't you ask the Delphic Oracle ? " and he said : " She's dead," sadly. He knew all about these mythological stories and legends, and listened with the utmost delight. They are full of absurdity, but of charm as well. The Old Testament had banished these, and you have Semitic mythology expurgated entirely. Islam is more rational in that way. " A philosophic theist could quite comfortably accept the creed of the common Moslem," said Gibbon. If it were of a false kind, that would not be possible—that is a great asset. The theism of Islam is no barrier to world union.

If you consider the ethics, the moral code of Islam, Gibbon says, it consists of a simple and a rational piety. The three standard duties are—Prayer. There is no doubt that Islam has a definite conception of the duty of reverence, and of the certainty of divine judgment. It believes that all our actions will be submitted to a judge and the whole course is determined by a genuine assurance that the Judge of all the earth will estimate our acts during our life here. This belief has a very definite influence on human conduct, and I think that is an undoubted element of great strength in the Muslim system. A conception of Divine judgment and an intense reverence for the Supreme Being have created a highly spiritual non-material form of theism. We have not even a temple—a mosque is not an absolute necessity, not even a star—all we want is an angle. All the chaplains and prayer books we needed to know during the War was the direction of Mecca. We laid down our mat and said our prayers five times a day. It is a severe form of Puritan Theism which the Muslim cherishes, coupled with responsibility for human conduct.

Let us take next the duty of acquiring self-governance, our ascetic discipline known as Fasting. In this country the English have the same problem to consider. Some men drink too much wine, for example ; how are you to cure them of it ? The Muslim system has assumed that the management

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of a man's body is for himself. It is his business to discover his appetites and passions and bring them into thorough subjection. If *he* cannot do it, no outsider, no law, will be able to do it for him. That is the idea that lies behind the Muslim principle of self-government of the body. How do we attain to that? It is the cultivation of will-power that has done it, not the law of the State. In a Muslim country which I have recently visited any man could start a beershop: no licence is required or anything else. You may put a thousand public-houses up. The people are perfectly sober. They do not manage that by the sudden volition of one individual. It is from their practice of Ramadán, which has ended a little while ago, for this year. Through the length of their land, from sunrise to sunset they refrain from drinking water. When the Fast comes in summer, it is very severe discipline for the body to be without food and drink and, what is much more, cigarettes and tobacco, for all that daylight. If you tried it for yourself, you would find yourselves the subjects of sensations you could never have imagined. I have seen shiploads of Muslims waiting for the sign of sunset, and guns went off to inform them that the period of abstinence was finished. They had passed through an experience of the best, and thus acquired the mastery of their bodies. No man could afford to do other than reverence the spiritual discipline they were putting on themselves. It was an honour to belong to that flock.

Muhammad had an abhorrence of monks. He instituted the Fast as a means to an end—that you may be masters of your body and your blind appetites.

Gibbon describes a discipline which purifies the soul and subdues the body: “the patient martyr without assuaging his thirst with a drop of water must expect the close of a tedious and sultry day. These painful restraints are, doubtless, infringed by the libertine and eluded by the hypocritical, but the legislator by whom they are enacted cannot surely be accused of alluring his proselytes by the indulgence of their sensual appetites.” That is the one element in Islam which I think is of great consequence in forming character, and when

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you think that it has been accepted and is practised by so large a section of the human race, then this point is not a trifle in the aim we have in view. Unless we can master ourselves, we shall not be very much good to ourselves, to the State or to religion ; and Muslims manage this in a way which others have not yet succeeded in surpassing. It is more relevant than it may seem to the League of Nations. If you are to have 1,600 millions of men on earth in harmony together, it is only by converting individuals to the right sort of temperament. And all work must be one through individuals—the conversion of the individual soul—and unless individuals have succeeded in mastering themselves it does not seem likely that they will be able to suppress selfish desires to advance universal good.

The third virtue of Islam is Charity—prayer and self-government or temperance being the two primary duties. The Qur-án repeatedly inculcates charity, not as a merit but as a strict duty, the relief of the indigent and the unfortunate being represented as imperative.

I read an article on Bolshevism written by a Russian not very long ago, and he described the fate of Russia under the recent anarchy there. At the same time I happened to be reading the Qur-án, and studying it along with an illustrious representative of the Arab race. To his mind anarchy mingled with bloodshed was more abhorrent than to many of the Westerners. There is no jealousy of great men among Muslims ; there is more democratic feeling among us than is generally supposed. A common thing was to see a beggar-man wanting a light for his cigarette, and, seeing a pasha beside him, he would ask for a light, and the pasha would give him his cigarette, and the beggar would get his alight from it and hand back the pasha's to him. Anybody could get a light, and there was more kindly feeling than you would imagine. There was always also very high deference for official rank. I think in that respect the Muslim religion discourages wealth except as a means to increasing your retainers and a means of more extensively helping others. Not only that, but the Muslim religion extends its compassion

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and kindness to animals. There is no need for a Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Muslim countries. Many dogs in the streets have no masters, and manage for themselves, and are sometimes rather a nuisance coming in and out of houses. I remember a ship coming into Constantinople, and one of these dogs went on board and could not be got off, and the captain shot it, was arrested and heavily fined by the authorities, and he discovered that this country does not believe in being cruel to animals. I never saw horses better kept than in Muslim stables, when there is food to be got. In the War, of course, conditions were different. I remember, too, the case of a Turkish naval officer who was learning English and beginning to read it well, and he brought me some papers with long accounts of what had been done among the grouse on the 12th of August. He said: "What does this mean? These rich men go out to kill birds for amusement?" To kill animals for amusement would be deeply abhorrent to a Muslim—that is a point which deserves respect and consideration.

Now these are the three main duties, what Gibbon calls a simple and rational piety—Prayer, Self-government and Charity. These are emphasized in the religion of Islam and inculcated among children and adults wherever the religion is strong. Another thing is this—Muhammad seemed to make it a positive duty to be active in doing good actions. You have to go out of your way to help the indigent and unfortunate, and mere laziness in well-doing is condemned. The foregoing is more or less what one may learn from book-study. I would like to give some experience of my own among Muslims.

Living in Constantinople one sees a great deal of Muslim faith in action. Take the famous Church of St. Sofia: in 1453 it ceased to be used for Greek worship, and has since then been used for Muslim worship. It has not been broken down as our St. Andrew's Cathedral is, nor has it been turned into a brewery like many temples in Europe; it has been preserved reverently and a pure phase of worship has gone on ever since 1453. I happened to be there in Ramadán;

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with me there was an American Consul and one or two more, and we went into the gallery at St. Sofia, and after a long fast the men came in to worship—there were no women present, only men; there were about four thousand present. The Imam, who had a young voice, full and intense with feeling, stood (the Cathedral is not built towards the East and West; it is oriented to Jerusalem, but the praying carpets are laid towards Mecca). These four thousand men were standing to attention, and the Imam shouted out, "God is great," and they all fell on the ground and remained on the carpet for perhaps two minutes. Then the Imam said, "God is merciful," and they rose to the knee and remained in prayer for another minute or so. The Imam then said, "God is compassionate"—a sublime expression of the adoration of the Divine. And I thought, if St. Paul were here he would have joined in this service with a great deal of sympathy. We all felt the intensity of strength in that vast assembly. There was very little in it but what the Christian Church and religion would have assented to. The Saints and the Apostles in the New Testament would have a great deal in common with the deepest aspirations in this great service. That was the experience of one who had merely read about it in books as the American did.

Turkish naval officers do not talk religion unless they think you are seriously interested, but they feel it and are capable of giving a very reverent expression to religion. Most of the Christians—even missionaries—are not aware that the religion of the New Testament is treated with the deepest honour by the Muslim prayers and system. And if only Christendom were to be hospitable and seriously study the Muslim faith, if Christians knew as much about Islam as we know about their New Testament religion, it would do a great deal to foster the good will that would help them and do good to all.

To sum up, I will quote shortly the points I want to emphasize, of the value of Islam for a League of Nations.

After some five thousand years of unforgotten history, the human family on earth has now a chance of considering hopefully how it may in future avoid the calamities of war.

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There are some 1,600 millions of a population, and they were nearly all represented by the forty-four Powers which sat in friendly conference at The Hague in 1907. The last decade has furnished good reasons why nations should renounce the use of coercive violence and should endeavour to organize the moral and rational consensus of mankind.

The only hope of success lies in the existence of a sincere desire to avoid war, and a conscious cultivation of the temperament of good will. All the great religions desire peace; they are all conscious of failure when their adherents engage in fratricidal strife. They all seek to kindle the flame of faith and duty in the souls of individuals and thus to create a common temperament which transcends the barriers of language, of territory, of racial descent, of secular government. Therefore the temperament, which alone can offer success to a league of peace, depends largely on the fidelity of the religions to the ideals which brought them into being.

What share has Islam in creating the common temperament we desire? Islam is the latest version of Semitic monotheism and commands the glad assent of one-tenth of the human race. Gibbon testifies that "a philosophic theist might subscribe the popular creed of the Mahometans." He further truly adds that the precepts of Islam "inculcate a simple and rational piety," reverence and responsibility towards the Supreme Deity, self-mastery in the use of food and drink, and the exercise of an active compassion to animals as well as to the indigent and unfortunate. Islam teaches us all that external coercion is not the best way to attain temperance. By the volition of the individual, inspired by the command of the Prophet of Arabia, "a considerable portion of the globe has abjured the use of that salutary though dangerous liquor"—wine. Taking the life of animals for the sake of amusement is abhorrent to Muslim feeling. One-tenth of the race, honouring the generosity and magnanimity of Abraham as the Father of the Faithful, makes an appeal for peace, which the world cannot afford to ignore. From the time of the Khalifa Omar, down to our own, great souls can answer each other in generosity, however the

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languages they speak may differ. In the British Commonwealth we have learned to understand each other : and though misconceptions often cause difficulties, our common respect for honour, for chastity, for justice and forbearance, will keep us friendly among ourselves and tend to diffuse confidence and good will among others. The chief end of Islam, as its name implies, is universal peace ; its adhesion to the aims of the League of Nations is more important than the adhesion of any single national State.

THINGS MAHOMET¹ DID FOR WOMEN²

By PIERRE CRABITÈS

[In publishing this article dealing with a question of perennial interest we hope that it will tend to vindicate the position of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and help to dissolve some of the misconceptions regnant in the West on the status of women in Islam, especially more so because the article comes from the pen of an American writer who has been, since 1911, a judge of the Cairo Mixed Tribunals on behalf of the United States. But the publication of the article should not be understood to mean that the Editor subscribes to every line in it.]

HAD anyone told me sixteen years ago that Mahomet was probably the greatest champion of woman's rights the world has ever known, I should have thought that an attempt was being made at a new jest on a well-worn theme. But President Taft made me a judge in 1911 and sent me to Egypt to represent the United States in the Cairo Mixed Tribunals. I there came into intimate touch with a civilization that was new to me. I worked hard. I learned many things that interested me, others that enlarged my horizon, and still others that surprised me. When all is said and done, however, nothing astonished me more than to have the proof driven home to me that before A.D. 632 the Prophet of Islam had accomplished more to safeguard the property rights of the

¹ Reprinted by kind permission of the Editor of the *Asia* for January, 1927, New York, U.S.A.

² The spellings of the words "Mahomet" and "Mahomedan" have not been altered to conform to the *Islamic Review* usage.

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wives of his land than the legislature of Louisiana has as yet done for her who bears my name. And in speaking thus of the Pelican State I am citing only one of many American commonwealths.

One of my Egyptian colleagues, Ragheb Badr Pasha, took particular pleasure in calling my attention to the outstanding liberalism of Mahomedan laws. He was, and happily still is, a very able judge. But behind his juristic lore is an abiding sense of humour. He knew that I was a product of Occidental environment. He therefore assumed that I had but a vague idea, at best, of the status assigned to woman by Islam. Looking back in recognition of the innate kindness of the man's heart and his love of a joke, I now see that he had taken a fancy to me and that he made up his mind, to initiate me into my new life. At practically our first interview, accordingly, he felt called upon to tell me that he was poor and that his wife was rich. He then added, with a twinkle in his eye: "Should you, as an American, submit to such conditions? I am helpless. I must do so." One day, before I had cut my wisdom teeth, I dropped into his private office. There were three or four *fellaheen* present beside the Pasha. A document in Arabic lay before them. "Come in," said my friend to me in French. "I am my wife's agent. These men want to lease one of her farms. They have brought a contract all filled out, and they are trying to persuade me to sign it. They forget that I can do nothing without submitting every detail to my principal. I have her power of attorney. She trusts me to that extent. I know her too well, however, to make use of it without first having her approve of everything."

The sincerity of the man impressed me. Yet something told me that he could not be telling the truth. It seemed preposterous to me that a Mahomedan husband could not validly do with his wife's property whatever he wanted. I had a notion that a Moslem woman was a kind of chattel that man employed for his own purposes. I could not bring myself to believe that such a nonentity had any rights whatsoever. But the categorical language that had been used

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made me desire to "look up the law." I therefore decided to consult my English colleague.

I did not hesitate to lay my misgivings before him. He was one of those men who inspire confidence. He laughed as soon as I had told him my tale. "Ragheb is extremely clever and has a heart of gold," said he. "I am almost certain that the meeting to which you refer had nothing to do with any private business whatsoever. He knows that all foreigners have radically wrong conception of the rights of Mahomedan wives. He wants you to get your bearings. He likes you. He told me so. He has a most practical turn of mind, and he is inventing concrete illustrations to drive home his point. His fairy-tale accentuated a fundamental truth."

With my appetite thus whetted for more data, I delved into Islamic laws, although they concerned but indirectly my official duties. It did not take me long to learn that the Moslem looks upon marriage solely as a matter of contract, the terms of which depend, within very wide limits, on the will of the parties. This agreement must be legalized by a *quad*, or a judge. The husband, however, must first have paid over a dower to his wife. No other formality is requisite. No religious ceremony is necessary. All this is very simple. Every feature is nevertheless pregnant with meaning.

This faculty of being able to write into marriage contract practically anything that the two cooing doves may agree upon nonplussed me. I know that throughout Europe the next of kin of the prospective couple get together and draw up some kind of financial pact upon the bride's dower and like questions. Here, however, was the very essence of marriage taken from the rubber stamp of church or state and made into the concrete expression of the will or of the caprice of the man and woman. Such a deduction clearly flowed from my study of the text. But I thought that it would be wise to get Sheikh Mansur Nasar's reaction to the law. He was a most erudite old gentleman; it was he who undertook the arduous task of bringing me into intellectual communion with the Near East. I have never met a more considerate, a more patient or more high-minded man. He

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spoke but one language. It was that of love for his fellow-man expressed in the purest of Arabic.

After I had explained to my friend what I had read, and how immense was the vista that my discovery seemed to open up before me, he drew his chair a little nearer to my desk and said: "Do not get frightened. You have grasped the spirit of the wisdom of the Prophet. He has done all of this so that every father may be able to protect his daughter if and when he thinks necessary to do so." It was a blistering *khamzin* day. A sand-storm was blowing, and my windows were closed to keep out the heat. But, as the dear old Sheikh in his flowing silk robes and turban waxed warm with eloquence, I forgot all about the heat and listened with rapture. "Polygamy," said he, "has, as you know, almost disappeared from our city life. The fellah still prefers to have several wives, just as your farmer manages to have many children. Both need labour for their fields. In Cairo and Alexandria, however, many fathers are unwilling for their sons-in-law to have plural wives. They therefore see to it that, when their girls marry, the contract contains a clause providing that, should the husband take a second spouse, the first consort shall automatically have the option of divorcing him. The Prophet, in truth, so arranged matters that no man can possibly maltreat a woman if her advisers have brains enough to draw up a proper marriage pact for her when she weds."

I have already said that the man must pay over a dower to his wife before a judge may countersign their contract. There is a joker in this provision. In Europe, as we all know, it is the girl who must make the marriage settlement; in the East it is the boy. This rule is adopted by Christians and Jews as well as by Mahomedans. I believe, in fact, that Islam borrowed it from Israel. A case that came up before me during the last term brings out the intention of the lawmaker. One of the members of a prominent banking-house died. A suit arose between the surviving members and some of the heirs of the deceased partner. The marriage contract of one of the disputants was offered in evidence. One of its clauses read as follows: "X, the prospective groom,

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has paid over to Y, his bride-to-be, in the presence of the undersigned Grand Rabbi, the sum of £E10,000 (\$50,000) as compensatory damages for the right of depriving her of her virginity." It is therefore clear that, as a general proposition, the dower paid a widow or a divorcee is less than that accorded a maid.

But Mahomet insisted upon two particulars that buttress the rights of woman. First of all he made it the duty of the judge to satisfy himself that the cash consideration "shall be reasonable with reference to the means of the husband and the social standing of the wife." And then he inaugurated a custom that only one-half of this sum may be paid when the marriage is contracted. This means that, when a man is trying to win a woman—in other words, when he is in a generous mood—he fixes the alimony he must pay her in case of divorce. As the establishment of this latter dole really involves a matter of public policy, the judge is called upon to see that an adequate dower is stipulated. The half-cash plan protects the wife. Since a man rarely divorces a helpmate unless he has his weather-eye on another, the necessity of paying a brunette makes him stop before completely proving that "gentlemen prefer blondes."

It is not lawful for a woman to have two or more husbands. She is obliged to observe an interval, called an *'iddat*, between the termination by death or divorce of one matrimonial alliance and the commencement of another. It is lawful, however, for a man to have as many as four wives at a time, but no more. Since slavery has been abolished, the right of having concubines no longer obtains.

All of this seemed to me to create an unfair distinction in favour of man. Knowing my Sheikh's unflinching sense of fairness, I put the question to him plainly. His reply had as its abiding note the refrain: "Do not blame the Prophet. Allah has done all of this." "But," said I, "won't you be more specific? I cannot follow your reasoning." And then he looked around and lowered his voice. He seemed to hesitate. It was clear that some instinctive delicacy was clogging his speech. But my eyes pleaded with him, and

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one by one the words came. "The child has rights that prime those of the mother," ran his argument. "It did not ask to come into the world. It is at least entitled to know who bore it and who begot it. Polygamy gives an offspring every opportunity of identifying its father. Polyandry would not. How should you have the woman handle the question? You would surely not permit her one morning to summon her husbands before her, and say: 'I am about to become a mother. Among yourselves please make choice of a father.' No, that cannot be done because Allah has so decreed."

Of course, the answer to such reasoning is that true equality would allow a man but one wife. But I simply did not have the courage to advance such a reply. I knew that as erudite a Biblical student as Martin Luther had officially advised Phillip of Hesse that the New Testament did not prohibit polygamy. I therefore felt it more prudent to keep my mouth shut. One never knows how much or how little an Oriental has fathomed of the Occident. Besides, economic conditions and education have made the West monogamous. The East is working towards the same principle. Had Mahomet attempted too much, his Tammany Hall would have turned against him. He played practical politics. He reduced the evil of polygamy in so far as it affected his followers. He allowed time to do the rest.

One day I took up with my Sheikh that most criticized text which allows a husband to repudiate his wife without cause or provocation. No court procedure is required. He need only say to her in the presence of witnesses, "I divorce thee, I divorce thee, I divorce thee," repeating the words three times, and the bond of matrimony is severed. "How can you defend the grant of so unfair a prerogative?" I asked. For an instant, an infinitesimally short one, my benevolent autocrat appeared to be provoked. But the placidity of his temperament was at once restored. "You forgot," was his dignified reply, "my having mentioned months ago that the man and the woman may write into the marriage agreement almost anything they want. A

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father may reserve this same prerogative to his daughter or he may insist upon the husband's contracting away. With such a shield defending woman, is it fair to quote an isolated section ? ”

But, when all is said and done, Mahomet's outstanding contribution to the cause of woman resides in the property rights that he conferred upon the wives of his people. The juridical status of a wife, if so technical a term may be pardoned, is exactly the same as that of a husband. The Moslem spouse, in so far as her property is concerned, is as free as a bird. The law permits her to do with her financial assets whatever she pleases without consulting her consort. In such matters he has no greater rights than would have any perfect stranger. I have already spoken of my colleague's holding his wife's power of attorney. She could legally have given this mandate to Tom, Dick or Harry, and the hands of her husbands would have been tied. She, acting in person or through any third party chosen by her, could sign away her property, put the sum accruing into her pocket or throw it away and laugh in the face of her spouse. A wife, technically speaking, does not even take her husband's name. A Moslem girl born Aisha bint Omar (Aisha daughter of Omar) may marry ten times but her individuality is not absorbed by that of her various husbands. She is not a moon that shines through reflected light. She is a solar planet, with a name and a legal personality of her own.

I must hasten to say that I am not discussing veils and *habaras*, harems and eunuchs, seraglios and disenchantment. Mahomet is my theme. I am writing of a man who died nearly thirteen hundred years ago, who made Islam bone-dry some eight centuries before wine-drinking Columbus discovered the land of enforced prohibition and who gave a wife a legal identity at least one hundred and ten decades ere a single common-law state got away from the principle that the very being of a wife is incorporated and consolidated in that of her husband. It is therefore useless to tell me that the Moslem woman is nothing but a human lacteal machine, that her soul is not her own and that man is her lord and master.

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I am not dealing with social conditions ; I am drawing a picture of the work of a great legislator and of the legal edifice constructed by him.

But if I were pressed too hard, I should not fear to face the issue on this score of woman's effective power. I should begin by challenging the right of any man or woman to cast the first stone unless he or she could demonstrate that the wives of his or her state enjoy legal prerogatives which measure up to those of the hidden flowers of Islam. I think that I should be perfectly justified in applying such a rule. I am afraid that it would somewhat seriously restrict the quota of eligibles. But that is not my fault. I should then invite those who thus passed Ellis Island to come to my court. There I should probably be able to show them veiled sisters with tattooed arms, rings in their noses and fly-covered children on their shoulders, without lawyer or friend, standing before judge or counsel and defending their rights with an assurance, a volubility and a mastery that would be sure to arouse to admiration. If this spectacle should still leave my inquirers unconvinced, I should ask them to find out, from somebody or through someone in whom they had confidence, just who first kindled in Egypt the spark that is now threatening England, who has kept the flame aglow and who are the blindest, the most fearless and the most intractable foes to any form of compromise. To such a query there could be but one answer. It is that, for good or for evil, the Moslem woman is a driving force which was fashioned by a master-mind. In a word, rights beget responsibility, responsibility engenders leadership, and leadership always asserts itself. It was Mahomet who fixed with unerring discernment the property rights of the married women of his land. It was he who gave them a legal personality of their own. He has thus put the sceptre within their grasp. His heir was a daughter. She has inherited the land. Man is essentially an egoist. He always thinks of himself. And when he passes away, he looks after his own. So did the Prophet of Islam.

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Mystical Elements in Mohammed. By J. C. ARCHER. Yale Oriental Series Researches, Vol. XI, Part I. New Haven (U.S.A.). (Yale University Press, 1924. 7s. Mr. Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, London.)

Muhammad, the great Founder of Islam, was a versatile genius and a character so comprehensive that workers and investigators in the most diverse fields find in him inspiration as well as a fruitful subject for study. This little book is devoted to a study of the mystical elements in him.

The thesis of the book may be stated in the author's own words: "In any proper historical survey of Islam the mystical current is seen to loom large. Its source, however, has not plainly appeared in view. Greek and Persian and Buddhist waters have joined the stream and swelled it, but it arose first of all out of the deserts of Arabia—not mirage, but a bubbling spring, a Mohammedan origin, the experience of the Prophet himself." How far the author has succeeded in establishing this thesis must be left to the personal judgment of the reader himself. But as to the spirit in which he approaches his theme and carries it through, there can be no two opinions. It is the spirit of utter freedom from bias or narrow prejudice. He neither praises nor blames. Scientific objectivity, the pursuit of truth for its own sake, is his main concern. Western writers often go out of their way to abuse Islam and its founder. This book is wholly free from these fanaticisms, and any Muslim, howsoever sensitive, may read it without offence.

This is not empty praise, but a well-deserved acknowledgment. Nor does it blind us to its shortcomings. The treatment of "Mohammed's Idea of God" leaves much to be desired, and the author's summing up of "Mohammed's View of the World"—"There is a deft balancing evident throughout, an acceptance of but yet a subordination of the world, a *Weltvernichtung* (the author probably means *Welt-*

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verneinung), but for the sake of overcoming the world" (p. 55)—is far too inadequate an expression of the Islamic idea. Speaking of the various aspects of Islam, he says (p. 27): "Of a third aspect, the rational, there is very little indeed. Belief was urged on authority; unquestioning assent and submission are required." All those appeals to nature, all those appeals to reason and human conscience, of which the Qur-án is full, are passed over in silence. "Islam"—i.e. absolute submission to the will of God—he interprets as "unquestioning assent" and "belief on authority," and the rest follows as a matter of course. That there is very little of the rational in Islam is news indeed. There are also a few Arabic expressions not quite well understood. For instance, in the Qur-án, xxxiii. 44 he interprets *Sháhid* as a witness to the past; *az-Záhir* (Qur-án, lvii. 3) as the outside of things, etc. In rendering Abu Bakr's title of *as-Siddiq* into *credulous*, he seems to have been misled by Margoliouth's characterization of that great man. Are we to suppose that the most intimate companion of Muhammad and his great successor went through life with this damaging title attached to his name?

But these are matters of detail, and do not affect the main argument. The author takes his start from the so-called pathological case, and argues that the so-called "fits" cannot be explained otherwise than as ecstatic, mystical moments. "Pathology does not explain Mohammed's insight," he says (p. 15), "and what it does explain seems to be neither vital nor cogent." Conscious of the strength of his own position, he lets his opponents speak. Of those who stand for the theory of epilepsy, he picks four as representatives. Of these, Nöldeke and Margoliouth may be ignored, for they only pick up the crumbs that fall from other people's tables. The distinction between the other two, Sprenger and Macdonald, consists in this, that whereas the former thinks there is a casual connection between the Prophet's revelations and the "fits," Macdonald denies this causal connection, and says that genius and epilepsy existed side by side. Sprenger's thesis has been rejected by the majority of Orientalists. The

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objection may be stated in the words of Deutsch, who wrote shortly after. "Much wisdom and medical knowledge," he says,¹ "have been wasted on this point to explain Mohammed's revelation and success. We for our part do not believe that epilepsy ever made a man appear as a prophet, even to the people of the Orient, or, for the matter of that, filled him with the same heart-moving teachings and glorious visions," as was the case with Muhammad. Macdonald's thesis shifts the question on to another basis, which, however, from the religious standpoint, robs the theory of its worth. For to suffer from a physical ailment is no crime, and if a person so suffering becomes the founder of a religion and the creator of a great civilization, his physical ailment—a disabling and hindering factor—is all the more evidence of the generous power of his mind, of the immensity of his intellectual faculties and the greatness of his personality. Robbed of its implications, the question now assumes an objective colouring. Was he an epileptic, or was he not? Here we meet with two difficulties. The first concerns historical evidence. The Western Orientalists have as yet touched only the periphery of the *Ḥadis* literature, and they let motives and interests guide their choice of materials. The second difficulty is that the question, shorn of its religious associations, falls more properly within the sphere of the physician—and the Orientalists are no physicians. It is well, therefore, to hear what a physician has to say in this matter. Dr. Med. Karl Opitz has gone over the whole field of literature, and comes to this conclusion:² "The theory put forth by laymen that Muhammad was an epileptic is utterly untenable (*völlig haltlos*)."

The pathological case, then, can stand neither as an explanation of the phenomenon of revelation, nor as an isolated fact in the life of Muhammad by itself. But that phenomenon itself demands yet a further explanation: that explanation is furnished by our author, who says that the revelations were ecstatic, trance-like mystical moments, and he accepts the explanation of Ibn Khaldun. Dr. Archer's view is in sub-

¹ *Die Medizin im Koran*, Stuttgart, 1906, p. 26.

² *Der Islam*, Berlin, 1873, p. 25.

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stance the same as that of most Muslim thinkers. There are, however, two points which require to be noticed. On p. 72 the author says: "Revelation for him became in time an art, and ceased being a matter of chance inspiration." Similar statements are made in several other places. This is mere assertion. He neither advances any argument nor any evidence for it, none whatever, for none exists, not even a "weak" one. Again, the author's treatment of the "Mystical Element" (pp. 24-27) makes a painful impression of inconsequence, as if the mystical and the practical lay side by side, although in friendly intercourse, so to speak. We can arrive at the truth only if we give up the idea that the mystical is the higher form of religious life, a notion the presence of which in the writer's mind is unmistakable. Now the mystical is certainly not the ultimate stage of religious development; there is a higher stage, that of the establishment and fixation, as it were, of personality. A mere mystic, a Dervish, is "sunk and *lost* in the abyss of the Deity," and Muhammad too did for a while sink in that abyss round about the fortieth year of his life. But he was not *lost*. His powerful personality *overcame* the frenzy and fire of the love of God and entered into restful assurance of constant association; passing beyond the stage of *Fana*, he had entered the land of *Baqa*. Hence he became a teacher and a leader of men, which no mere mystic or visionary ever is.

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