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

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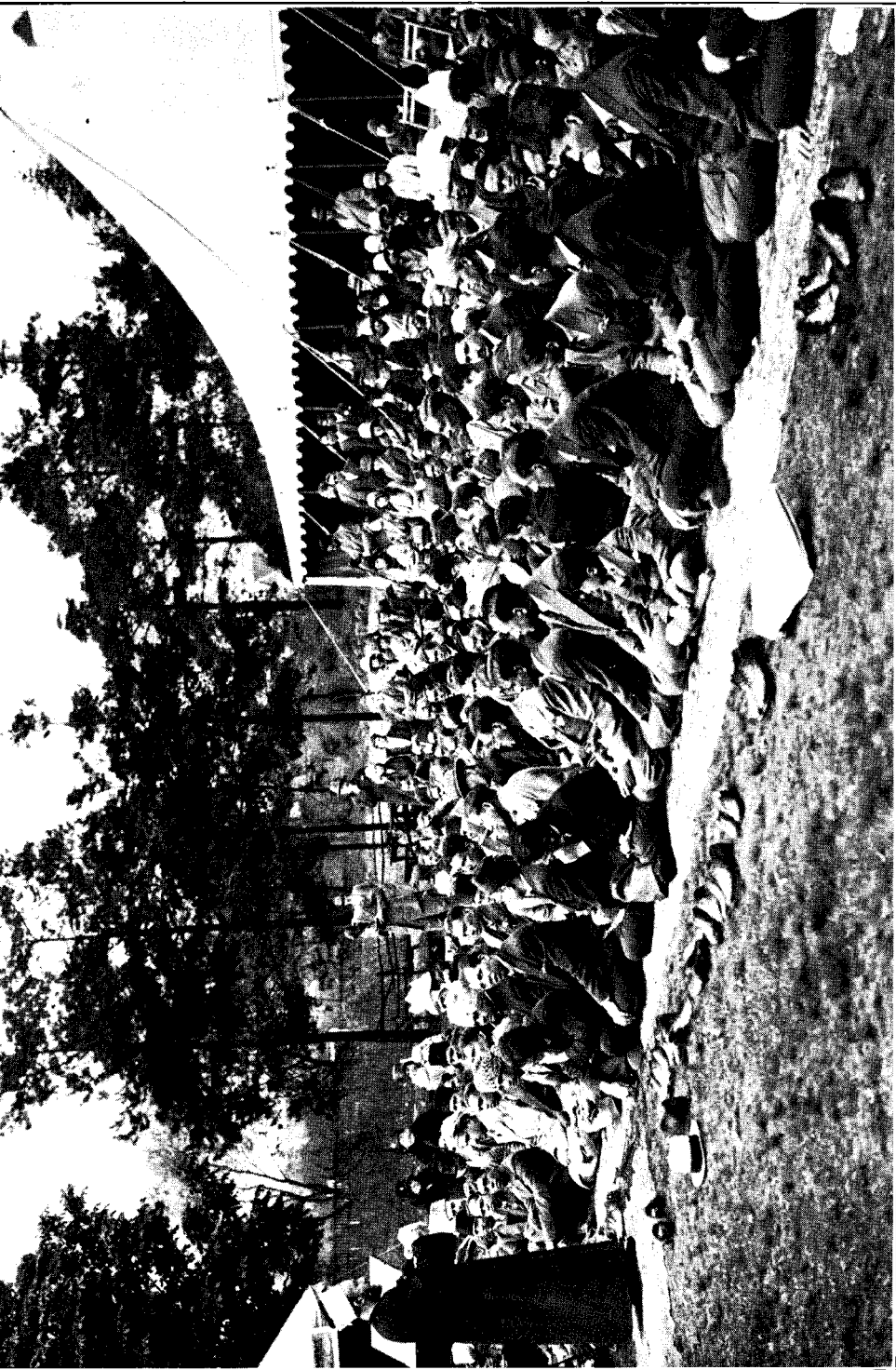
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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

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HIS EMINENCE SYED MUHAMMAD AMIN AL-HUSAINI, THE GRAND MUFTI OF PALESTINE AND PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME MUSLIM COUNCIL, JERUSALEM, WHO AT THE REQUEST OF MAULVI ABDUL MAJID, ACTING IMAM OF THE MOSQUE, WORKING, LED THE EID-UL-AZHA (1348 A.H.) PRAYERS, IS SEEN HERE
READING HIS SERMON ON FRIDAY, MAY 9, 1930

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى عَلَى رُسُلِهِ الْكِرِيمِ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

MUHARRAM, 1349 A.H.
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No. 6

IN MEMORIAM

HER HIGHNESS THE MOTHER-BEGUM OF
BHOPAL, INDIA

WE regret to announce the demise of our munificent patron, Her Highness the Mother-Begum of Bhopal, which occurred on Tuesday, May 13, 1930, at the age of 71.

Besides the recognized fact that Her Highness was one of the most remarkable women of our day, and that her memory would long endure in her state with its area of nearly 7,000 square miles and a population of about a million, she was one of those few chosen persons who never became oblivious of God and their duties to mankind even when placed in such a high station in life as she was. She ruled the state for more than half a century, working ceaselessly for the welfare of her subjects and her community.

She was well known for her devotion to Islam, and it was she who discerned in Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din the man to unfurl the banner of the Teachings of Islam in the Western countries. Ever since the inception of the Woking Muslim Mission she has been its admirer and practical supporter.

As an author Her Highness was best known by her works, written both in Urdu and English. She was a learned Persian

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scholar and took keen interest in the female education. That Primary Education is compulsory and free in Bhopal is due to her. She instituted four schools for girls in the state—one for her relatives, one for the nobility, one for the middle classes, and one for the poor. She had travelled widely, and performed the pilgrimage to Mecca in the third year of her rule and visited the Sultan of Turkey in that year as well.

In her well-advanced years Her Highness had to endure two severe successive blows at the deaths of her two sons in 1924. They each left two sons, and in the course of primogeniture the elder son of the eldest son of Her Highness was regarded as the heir-apparent. But she held that under Islamic law her surviving son, the present ruler of Bhopal, should succeed. The decision was given in favour of the claims of Her Highness in 1926, and with the approval of the British Government she abdicated in favour of her son in the same year.

As an example of her devotion to the principles of Islam, suffice it to say that she made her state "dry" at the cost of a heavy loss of revenue.

She was created G.C.I.E. in 1904, G.C.S.I. in 1910, C.I. in 1911, and G.B.E. in 1918.

She was the first Chancellor of the Muslim University of Aligarh, a position never before attained by any woman in any country of the world.

We close these few words written by way of our humble appreciation of Her Highness's memory with the consoling thought that Her Highness's deep sense of religion will always be a shining light to us all, and that though Her Highness is no longer in our midst, yet our beautiful Mosque here at Woking, erected through the piety of Her Highness's mother and generously maintained by Her Highness, is a constant reminder to us of all that we owe to the illustrious family of Her Highness and herself.

May her soul rest in peace. "Innā li' llāhi wa innā ilaihi raji 'ūn." ("Surely we are Allah's, and to Him shall we return.") (The Qur-ān.)

MUSLIM PRAYER AND ITS TEXT

MUSLIM PRAYER AND ITS TEXT

BY AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

ALMOST the whole of the religious world, with the exception of certain branches of what is known as the Protestant Church, uses in its prayers language which bears little relation to the common speech of every-day. The Romish Church uses Latin exclusively in all its services and ceremonies. The Muslims and Hindus use, respectively, the Qur-ánic and Vedic texts. There is some justification for the last-named doing so, but we fail to find any sound reason in the Romish practice. Both liturgy and prayer, with the exception of the Lord's Prayer, are, after all, the words of man, and Latin was not the mother-tongue of Jesus. In any case, one would think a prayer can hardly serve its purpose if offered in a language unknown to the worshipper. It can mean nothing to him, and he repeats the words parrot-like. On the other hand, if a prayer must necessarily be said in the original text for some valid reason or other, it is not difficult for the worshipper to acquaint himself with its meaning.

Foreign words, though at first unintelligible to us, become part and parcel of our own language when once we are fully aware of their significance. The English language as it stands comprises hundreds of words which were foreign in their origin but have since become part of it. The reason is not far to seek. It is difficult sometimes to hit upon an appropriate word in English that may properly convey the real meaning of a foreign word. A person, therefore, is compelled to use that foreign word in its original form, and in the course of time that word becomes anglicized, and no one finds the slightest difficulty in using or understanding it.

We Muslims say our prayers five times daily in the Qur-ánic words, with those prescribed by the Holy Prophet. But we are not prevented from adding to them such prayers as a particular occasion or need may demand, and in these we may use our mother-tongue. Prayer, after all, is an out-pouring of the human heart, and it springs to our lips when we are faced by unforeseen circumstances, and no language

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other than our own can give expression to what we feel at such a time. For this reason the Muslims make use of their respective mother-tongues *after* reading the prescribed prayer.

I do not wish to enter into discussion that justifies orthodox practice in the matter or lays any special stress upon the Divine and sacred nature of the Qur-ānic words in our prayers.

I may go so far, for the sake of argument, as to say that an English worshipper may say his prayers five times daily in his own language if he can do justice to the language prescribed.

The most important part of our prayer is *Fātiha*, the opening chapter of the Holy Qur-ān, and I can say without any fear of contradiction that its English translation is not only most inadequate, but destroys the very sense and spirit of the text. I may say that even the translation of the Qur-ān by Maulvī Muhammad 'Alī is a failure in this respect. It is not on account of any inability on the part of the learned translator, but it is solely owing to the poverty of the English language in supplying appropriate words for translation. I may go farther and assert that no rendering of *Fātiha* in any language can be faithful to the original. What I am about to write can hardly fail to substantiate my remarks in the opinion of thinking persons.

The first part of *Fātiha* consists of four of the attributes of God: Rabbu 'l-'Alamīn, Rahmān, Rahīm, and Mālikī Yaumi 'd-Dīn.

Rabbu 'l-'Alamīn has been translated into English as "The Lord of the Worlds." This I find in every other English translation of the sacred Book. The word "Lord" stands for "Rabb," and I may say that it is a very poor rendering of the Arabic word; nay, it destroys its very significance. Maulvī Muhammad 'Alī, in his translation, saw the difficulty and had to make the following remarks in his note:

"The Arabic word *Rabb* conveys not only the idea of *fostering*, *bringing-up*, or *nourishing*, but also that of regulating, completing, and accomplishing (TA-LL), i.e. of the evolution of things from the crudest state to that of the highest perfection. According to Rgh, *Rabb* signifies the *fostering of a thing in such*

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a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion. Hence *Rabb* is the Author of all existence, Who has not only given to the whole creation its means of nourishment, but has also beforehand ordained for each a sphere of capacity, and within that sphere provided the means by which it continues to attain gradually to its goal of perfection. It will thus be seen that the word *Rabb*, which, for want of a better word, I render as *Lord*, conveys a far nobler and grander idea than the word *ab* or *father*, which has comparatively a very limited significance. The Muslim prayer therefore prefers the use of the word *Rabb* or *Lord* to that of *ab* or *father* in addressing the Divine Being."

The letters TA in the above quotation stand for "Tāju 'l-'Urūs," a most reliable Arabic lexicon, and LL for "Lane's Dictionary." Similarly the letters Rgh stand for Imān Rāghib, who compiled a dictionary of the Qur-ānic words some time in the 5th Hijra century. Could the English word "Lord" for "Rabb" ever convey the idea of creating, fostering, bringing-up, or nourishing, which necessarily come within the connotation of the word "Rabb"; or does the word "Lord" suggest any notion at all of regulating, completing, or accomplishing? "Rabb" especially refers to God's care for the evolutionary stages through which every thing in the world passes on its course to perfection. In everyday life we have to face certain problems for which we seek the help of a Being with the qualities of Rabb. If the object can be achieved by using the word "Lord" when addressing the Almighty, I for one would allow it. But if no signification of the word "Lord" can convey the requirements of the word "Rabb," is there any difficulty for an Englishman in using the word "Rabbu 'l-'Alamīn" instead of "The Lord of all the worlds."

It should not be forgotten that every language becomes enriched by incorporating words from other languages. Words, after all, stand for certain concepts, and when once we are fully cognisant of the meaning, or meanings, of a foreign word, it becomes a part of our own knowledge and we feel no incon-

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venience in its use. Many words, for example, have been introduced from Hindustānī into the English language. They are not only used in conversation, but have now found their way into English dictionaries.

Next to Rabbu 'l-'Alamīn come the words "Ar-Rahmān" and "Ar-Rahīm"; and an Englishman, perhaps with some complacency of mind, renders them into his language by "The most merciful." In a way he thinks he improves the Arabic text by adding a word. Certain European critics also, of the less intelligent type, make a great point against the Holy Qur-ān in the matter of these two words. They regard them as tautology on the Qur-ān's part; but in this they are only showing their ignorance. No doubt the said two words come from the same root, i.e. Rahīm, meaning mercy. But there is a world of difference between the shades of meaning which the two words convey. Rahmān refers to that kind of mercy and beneficence of God which He has shown in providing us with all that is necessary to our existence. He created things which His creatures needed for their existence and sustenance long before those creatures were. And all this beneficence came to us of His own accord, and not by way of compensation or reward for any action on our part. In this respect the word differs from Rahīm, which refers to that kind of mercy which appears in God's rewarding our actions. But the said reward is always a hundredfold greater than our deserts. Are the words "mercy," "compassion," and "beneficence" capable of conveying these two shades of meaning? It should not be forgotten that the word "Rahmān" in itself strongly repudiates the superstructure of current Christian theology. The principle of "Sonships and Atonement" depends upon the belief that God cannot show His mercy or forgive any sin without exacting some penalty. The Church argues that man deserved punishment for the sin committed in the Garden of Eden, and God being a just God could not forgive him without punishment. But God's mercy willed to save him and so He sent His only Son to bear the penalty. In other words, according to Christian doctrines, Divine Grace cannot avail without compensation; while the Qur-ān, by the use of the word "Rahmān" as an attri-

MUSLIM PRAYER AND ITS TEXT

bute of God, says that His Grace comes to man without merit on our part, and not by way of reward, and in support of this the Holy Book, i.e. the Qur-án, refers to the innumerable blessings of God that we need for our very existence, all of which come to us without our doing anything to deserve these. He created them thousands of years before our time came.

If the word "mercy" can convey all and each of these beautiful ideas, I may say that a Muslim worshipper can use them in the place of Rahmān and Rahīm. But if such is not the case, how can he express his prayers in his own mother-tongue?

The fourth attribute is "Māliki Yaumi 'd-Dīn," which is usually rendered as "The owner of the day of Judgment or the Master of requittals." Here, again, the translation is most inappropriate. It, in a way, destroys the object of the Qur-án, as when using the word "Mālik" ("Owner") in place of the word "Ādil" ("Just") as one of the attributes of God. Justice demands that things be according to the law, and to meet the ends of justice a person in authority is bound to punish the culprit if he deserves it. But the ways of God, as manifested in the Qur-án as well as in the Book of Nature, are different. If a man, through his misdeed, injures the rights of others, he must be punished by God; but if his wrong consists in the violation of certain Divine laws without affecting his fellow-beings, he is dealt with in a different way.

In the first place he is forgiven, if such forgiveness may be the means of his repentance; but if the forgiveness only serves to put a premium on further wrongdoing and makes him stubborn, he is punished. In other words, the Divine punishment only comes for purposes of reclamation. Again, the word "Mālik" refers to His Ownership in us. We are, so to say, His property, and He as our Owner is interested in keeping us in safety. All these meanings have been given to the word "Māliki" in the Qur-án, and I fail to see how the words "Owner of the day of judgment" can convey all or any of these ideas. Again, the word "Day" is a wrong translation of the word "Yaum," which in Arabic means any period from

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a moment to a thousand years. Therefore, it is wrong to translate "Yaumi 'd-Dīn" as "Day of Judgment."

It is not a question of the English language only; every other language shows the same deficiency, and a Muslim is bound to repeat "Sura Fātiha" in his prayer in its original tongue if he wants to be faithful to the meaning of the original. On the other hand, it is not difficult to memorize *Fātiha* and keep its meanings before our eyes; for we do this when we use our own respective language. These four attributes begin with the word "Hamd," which not only means "praise," but "thanksgiving" as well, and literally refers to that particular thanksgiving which we owe for being blessed with capacities by means of which we may follow Allah in these attributes.

Next, the coming verse speaks of our service to God, and of our seeking His help. Here we find the same difficulty in our way if we use our mother-tongue in place of the original text.

The word "Na'budu" in the text comes from "'Abd," which in its ordinary sense means *service*, but literally "Powdering"—that is to say, the powdering of a thing that is intended to be cast into a mould. Besides, it means obedience to God to the extent to which we lose ourselves in imitating Allah's Attributes. In other words, it means that obedience to God whereby we give up our own colour and dye ourselves in the colours of God. The next word in the verse is "Nasta'in." It may mean *help*, but it has got a special shade of meaning. It means that kind of help which we look for when we have exhausted all our other resources. It means that we have no business to seek Divine Help before we ourselves have done our utmost in achieving the purpose we aim at. Could this idea, which is so necessary to man's initiative and for making him utilize his faculties in doing his duty, be brought to the human mind by the use of the English word "help"?

I have tried to be brief in this article, yet it has become longer than was my intention. I conclude it with some remarks on the words "Maghdūb-i-'alaihim" and "Dāllīn" of the original text, which have been rendered as follows:

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“Those on whom Thy wrath comes and those who are misled.”

I admit that this is a partial translation of the Arabic text, but these two words refer to the whole philosophy of human morals. The word “Maghdūb” means “Wrath-ridden,” and the word “Dāllin” means “one wrongly possessed by desire.” Anger and Lust are the two root passions in man which give rise to various kinds of good and bad morality. Thus, for instance, justice, bravery, the defence of right, the punishment of evildoers are the good forms of anger, while malice, vengeance, and slander are among its bad forms. Desire in its better aspect takes the forms of mercy, love, generosity, and sympathy. At its worst it becomes avarice, lust, cupidity, and the like. In short, the whole catalogue of morals, good or bad, consists of the different forms of anger and lust. *Fātiha*, in the prayer part of it, tells us to beseech God to show us the way under which we may possess morals in their desirable form for which the word “An’amta” stands in the text, and keep us from ways which are of those who are Maghdūb, i.e. anger-ridden, or have given way to undue desires.

Fātiha consists of but seven small verses, which I know have been committed to memory by most of the European New-Muslims, including Lord Headley and others. It should not be forgotten that *Fātiha* is not only a prayer but a guidance for our lives. If those who advocate the saying of *Fātiha* by each in his own mother-tongue can ensure that the words which they propose in their language or *Fātiha*’s actually do convey the meaning of it, they are welcome to do so, but if they cannot, they are only doing wrong if they fail to use *Fātiha* in its original form in their prayer. They may add to it any prayer they like, and that may be said by them in their own language, but they must repeat *Fātiha* as it is in the Qur-án.

I hope to write further as to the remaining portion of the Muslim prayer, and am quite confident that I shall be able to show that it cannot be rendered into any language other than

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Arabic. The words used in it are so rich in meaning as to be incapable of any adequate translation.

Since it is not for us to read books in the presence of God when at prayer, we have therefore to choose the most concise form and words that may stand for volumes, and of such are the words of *Fātiha*.

UNIVERSALISM AND CIVILIZATION

By Dr. ATA 'LLAH, M.B., B.S.

RELIGION, the chief factor of Civilization, as I shall attempt to show in these pages, should preach Universalism. It should include the whole world in its scope and bring the many conflicting elements of humanity under its harmonious influence by creating in them unity of belief.

No one who is interested in the general course of human progress can fail to appreciate the importance of Religion. Its true function must always be that of accelerating our advancement by destroying all such differences, and the intolerance consequent thereupon, as have arisen everywhere on account of disunity in faith. It is this disunity which has brought old civilizations to their ends. Babylon's fall must be ascribed to this most fatal cause; for discord in Religion kills the very spirit of co-operation and leaves no chance for that mutual help which is essential for the furtherance of progress.

Hinduism will furnish a very apt illustration of the harm which the spirit of exclusiveness has wrought in India. More than one hundred and eleven millions of people in that country have been treated for thousands of years as if they had neither part nor lot in common humanity. They have been, and are, known as the "Untouchables." There are undesirable class-distinctions, doubtless, in the West, but a Westerner can hardly imagine the cruel treatment meted out to those poor souls in India. They have been kept in abject servitude from a time beyond the memory of man; even the shadow of one of them will pollute a high-class Hindu, as the Hindu scriptures teach.

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It is, however, a happy sign of our times that almost every religion has now begun to appreciate the value of Universalism. The preachers of the various creeds now claim Universalism for their respective faiths—each asserting that his religion has been sent for the whole world. They may or may not be right in their claims, but it is comforting to find a desire in the human mind to see one religion followed by the whole world.

Here, however, it may be noted that none of the holy founders of pre-Islamic religions believed in proselytizing except among their own people. They were strenuously opposed to any such course. Their followers, if we except latter-day Christianity, have retained to this day almost the same spirit of exclusiveness. The Hindu Shashtras taught in the clearest terms that the religion of the Vedas—the Hindu revealed Book—came only for the benefit of the three high classes in India. The other classes in that country, though permitted to describe themselves as Hindus, were not even allowed to listen to a reading of the Vedas. A Shudra, one of the low-class people, would have had his ears filled with molten lead if he had been unlucky enough to have been known to have overheard a single word from that holy scripture. Those who lived out of India were declared by the sacred Hindu Shashtras to be *Usar*, *Malleches*, and *Dates*—that is to say, devils and evil spirits. But political exigencies have compelled the Hindus of our time to dispense tentatively with the old caste system. They recognize that it will be suicidal to continue strictly to follow the teaching of their religious books. They need numerical strength, and therefore are compelled to attempt to reclaim those whom they had discarded before. This has now become the creed of Hindu politicians; but millions of the orthodox class still deem it a most heinous innovation. They regard it, indeed, with absolute loathing. The new school of Hindu thought has also, for the same reason, opened the door of conversion at least to those who have been renegades from their mother-faith. The Zoroastrians and the Israelites have in like manner been averse from incorporating foreign elements. Such, too, has been the case, to a greater

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extent, with the Buddhists. "It is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company with or come into the company of one of another nation."¹ Christianity, no doubt, has latterly cut a different figure in this respect. But Jesus was a Jew of the Jews. It was impossible for him to be untrue to the national dislike of those outside the pale of Judaism. He would not cast pearls before swine nor the bread of the children to the dogs. Such were the names the gentle Nazarene was pleased to bestow on those of another faith. The present-day Foreign Christian Missionary movement busies itself with foreign nations, but it is only a Pauline heresy. Discarded by his own colleagues, St. Paul turned "to the Gentiles," though this was against the teachings of the Master.

Jesus, it is said, changed his views in this respect after the Crucifixion, as appears from the few concluding verses in the Gospel of St. Mark. He is reported there to have deputed his followers to "go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."² But these lines are admittedly an addition to the original text. They do not appear in the Vulgate nor in the ancient Grecian version. This was pointed out by the first translators of the Bible into English in a marginal note. What remained in the Book the Foreign Missionary Societies thought it impolitic to retain, seeing that it went directly against the very idea of missions. These additions and subtractions do not reflect favourably on the genuineness of the Bible.

In short, all pre-Islamic religions had no use for strangers. Perhaps their attitude was a prudent one, since they belonged to ages when natural or artificial barriers separated sections of the human race from each other. People in general were not even aware of the existence of other nations at that time. Universalism, if preached then, would have sounded both strange and fantastic. One may see that this must have been so if these great Masters of humanity confined their missions to local or tribal areas, but we fail to find any justification for their speaking ill of others.

The Qur-án, however, struck a perfectly new note when

¹ The Acts x. 28.

² St. Mark xvi. 15.

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it deputed Muhammad to address the people in the following words:

“ Say: O people! surely I am the Apostle of Allah to you all, of Him whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, there is no god but He; He brings to life and causes to die, therefore believe in Allah and His apostle, the *Ummi* Prophet who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him so that you may walk in the right way ” (vii. 158).

Perhaps the time to receive a universal message had arrived. The world was at the threshold of a new order. It was beginning to assume a cosmopolitan character, when every man would become a citizen of the whole world. Soon after the appearance of Islam in Arabia means were discovered for facilitating trade and traffic between various countries. They began to lose their old isolated ways and give easy access to the denizens of other lands. People were finding homes in foreign countries and the whole world was beginning to assume the aspect of one big country, with countries as towns in it. If the conditions of the day had brought humanity together in mundane affairs, the same unity in religion would complete the harmony which is essential for real development.

“ The universality of the Holy Prophet’s mission really dates from the first message he received, because in the opening chapter, which is undoubtedly one of the earliest revelations, Allah is spoken of, not as the Lord of Arabs, but as the Lord of the whole world and of all nations. In vain would anyone search the pages of any other sacred book to discover a message of this nature by any other prophet in the world. In fact, every prophet was sent to one people, his mission being limited to the reformation and unification of one nation; but Muhammad (may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) came to unite all nations into one and to blot out all limitations of nationality and colour. That he was successful in this mission the history of Islam amply testifies. As soon as a man enters the fold of Islam his particular nationality sinks into insignificance before the vaster conception of humanity for which Islam opens the mind. It may be said, in fact,

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that a Muslim's nationality is universal, and Islam is the religion of all Humanity—not the religion of a particular nation. The unlearned Arab mind could not entertain so vast a conception of religion; it was the word of God which caused a revolution in the history of religion, for no prophet before him had ever entertained the idea of a religion for all Humanity. Even Christ said to a non-Israelite woman that he was 'not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Matt. xv. 24); and being pressed again, only answered that 'It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs' (26). It is Muhammad's message alone that speaks of all men alike as the children of the heavenly father, *the Lord of the worlds*. The invidious distinction of *children* and *dogs* is not known to the religion of Islam."¹

The universality of the Prophet's message is also spoken of in other places in the Qur-án. "And We have not sent you but to all the men as a bearer of good news and as a warner" (xxxiv. 28). "Blessed is He Who sent down the distinction upon His servant that he may be a warner to the nations" (xxv. 1).

The Book came to mankind as a whole and not merely to the Arabs. It contains more than five hundred injunctions, almost all of which are intended for the whole human race. Islam is not a tribal faith, but a religion of humanity. The very first order in the Holy Book is for everyone:

"O *men*! serve your Lord Who created you and those before you so that you may become righteous" (ii. 21).

All that I have said is based on scriptural authority; but this fact may not carry weight with some. I therefore approach the subject from another angle. Religion has always been an indispensable institution with man. He has found it everywhere. Judea did not bring the whole earth within its frontiers. There were others in the world besides the Jews, and these were equally entitled to the Divine Message; and that message came to them separately and individually. Though the various faiths now active in the world differ from

¹ Muhammad 'Alí's English translation of the Qur-án.

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each other even in their cardinal tenets, yet they each and all claim to have come from one and the same Source. It is not difficult, in the light of present-day research, to explain their difference. Almost every religion has suffered changes at human hands; it is therefore quite natural that these faiths could not keep their pristine purity, and brought forth dissension and discord. The Lord of Hosts and the Maintainer of all people could not choose one tribe to be the recipient of His spiritual blessings and neglect the others, as Jew and Hindu thought in the olden days and still think. The whole creation of the Lord exhibits a moral principle, broad enough to bring everyone within the scope of His bounty. "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."¹ The Lord has shown no invidious distinction between man and man in the distribution of his physical gifts throughout the world. He could not do otherwise in His spiritual dispensation. Every part of the human race therefore is entitled to have received a message of guidance from Above, if the vouchsafing of a Revelation from God to man is among His methods. His Laws are everywhere the same. They suffer no change,² and I cannot understand how any sane person can possibly take exception to so obvious a truism. Either all nations should have individually a religion from Him, or God should send one religion to all of them. But in neither case should there be any crucial difference in teaching.

To suit all temperament, a religion on universal lines should be free from all local or tribal prejudice. It should come from the God of all nations and God the chief theme of His Book, as He is the object of universal adoration. This religion should have nothing to do with the worship of tribal heroes. Every nation has its own hero naturally enough, and our prepossessions hardly permit us to pay respect to a hero from another country, especially when it is to the neglect or belittlement of our own people. Besides, if it is an admissible proposition, that religion should come to every nation; and any distinction between the various prophets is an

¹ St. Matt. v. 45.

² Holy Qur-án, xxxv. 43.

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absurdity. A Book for the whole world should award equal respect to all Teachers of religion. They were all raised up by the same God to discharge a mission of the same nature. And a religion of humanity should also be free from dogmatized theology, which makes some particular thing an essential of belief. Its main object should be to inspire us to do good and shun evil. Righteousness should be the only means of salvation under its teaching, and it should show how righteousness is within the reach of every person.

A religion of humanity should do away with racial prejudices and declare all men to be members of one family. It should also ascribe a Divine Origin to all the other religions, and accept the Mission of all the prophets as from God. This religion should not be called after a country, a tribe, or a personality. If God is the God of all nations and obedience to Him is the first duty of man, then submission to His Will should be our creed.

I have given some of the features that appeal to me as necessary to a universal religion. I could not find them in the teachings of any religions before Islam. But there is an obvious reason for that, since the latter were designed for a merely local or tribal dispensation.

The Qur-án does not speak of "the God of Abraham" or of "the God of Isaac and Jacob." It glorifies Allah "the Lord of all the worlds," and the Nourisher of all men, Who, impartially and with perfect justice, dispenses to all His physical and spiritual gifts. I give here the following quotations from the Qur-án, which soar above local or personal limits and breathe a pure cosmopolitan spirit:

(a) *God of all nations.*

"(All) Praise is due to Allah the Lord of the Worlds" (i. 1).

(b) *Religion, to serve God alone.*

"(Receive) the baptism of Allah, and who is better than Allah in baptizing? and Him do we serve" (ii. 138).

"Say: Allah (it is Whom) I serve, being sincere to Him in my obedience" (xxxix. 11).

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" I am commanded that I should serve Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience " (xxxix. 16).

(c) *Name of Religion.*

" This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you and chosen for you Islam [Submission to God] as a religion " (v. 3).

" He named you Muslim " (he who gives complete submission to God) (xxii. 78).

(d) *All the human race a family.*

" (All) people are a single nation " (ii. 213).

" And people are naught but a single nation " (x. 19).

(e) *Revelation a universal gift.*

" You are naught but a warner . . . and there is not a people but a warner has gone among them " (xxxv. 23, 24).

" There is a guide for every nation " (xiii. 7).

(f) *No distinction between Prophets; obedience to all.*

" Say: We believe in Allah and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that *which was given to the prophets from their Lord*; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit " (ii. 136).

(g) *Religion to do good and shun evil.*

" And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful." " You are the best of the nations, raised up for the benefit of men: you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong " (ii. 103, 109).

(h) *No caste or class distinction in righteousness.*

" O you men! surely we have created you of a male and a female and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you who is most righteous ", (xlix. 13).

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(i) *Prophets to account for their actions.*

Speaking of Abraham and his sons the Book says: " This is people that have passed away: they shall have what they earned and you shall have what you earn " (ii. 141).

(j) *Only actions wanted.*

" Say: Do you dispute with us about Allah, and He is our Lord and your Lord, and we shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds " (ii. 239).

There are many other things needed to make this the Ideal Religion acceptable to all, but what has been quoted above contains all the essentials of such a faith. It is sure to get support from very many quarters, because it is free from any trace of an exclusive spirit. Rather does it breathe anew into Religion the pure spirit of democracy. If a prophet has to account for his deeds like other men, it removes all individual distinction. He is without doubt one of the chosen class, but he is burdened with the same obligations as are his followers.

" Say: I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your god is one God " (xviii. 110).

" And I [the prophet] am commanded that I shall be the first of those who submit " (xxxix. 12).

THE VICEGERENT OF GOD ON EARTH

By KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

PREFATORY NOTE

RELIGION is not at present in the good books of what is commonly called " culture," and for obvious reasons. The Religion of Law, which had at one time a direct appeal to the human mind, has given way to Ceremonialism; and the Religion of Grace is merely a Religion of Sacraments—admittedly a replica or relic of Paganism. It is not a matter for surprise, then, if both forms of religion have failed to find favour with men of reason and learning.

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Everything in the dumb and unconscious world is on the right path to perfection. It has been set on that path by the First Intelligent Cause, and brings forth gradually all that it has to bring. Man, the supreme achievement of Creation, could not be left without this guidance. The reasonable attitude on such subjects acknowledges him as one supplied with infinite capacities. But for thousands of years most of the forces reposed in man remained in abeyance. Modern research has brought us to material progress, but it has also increased the measure of human misery that has been clouding humanity's progress from the very beginning; and that is because the moral forces hidden in us have had no chance of development. So we see that man is in dire need of the same guidance on the plane of consciousness which has been given to other occupants of the universe. Design has now been universally admitted to be a salient feature of the whole creation, but that same design somehow seems to have missed fire in the case of man. Man appears to surpass the whole of nature in his possession of wonderful capacities, but he is groping in the dark. The Hand behind the scene is guiding everything to its goal. If He is so far providing for the body, can He remain indifferent to the mind? Revelation from on High should surely concern itself with the latter. It is no question of simply glorifying God with our lips—He has no need of such perfunctory praise. His glory lies in the accomplishment of the object which He had in mind in creating all things in the world, including man.

All I intend to show is just this, that the whole object of Revelation has all along been the same, and that it reached finality in the Qur-án.

But here I have a word to spare for the Secularist. Even an atheist cannot dispense with Law; he is as much its slave as others are, so I ask him first to disabuse his mind of all that he has hitherto thought or heard of religion in general, and consider the case of Islam for awhile. He himself is not without a creed, which is none other than the Religion of Obedience to Law. Islam literally means just that; though, technically, it signifies Divine Laws, which in their turn have

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been styled in scientific terms Laws of Nature. A mere difference in phraseology should not disturb a mind which is free from bias, if the two words mean the same thing. Such a mind may regard God and Divine Laws, so often spoken of in these pages, as a substitute for Nature and Natural Laws. It may do the same in the case of the Divine attributes to which I have referred in this article. It may look to them as morals exhibited by Nature, and then judge for itself whether the message given by the Qur-án was not the one we needed most for the justification of our very existence on the earth. The Qur-án came to lift us to the height of civilization in all the pursuits of life. It was the first Book to define the real constituents of human civilization and to teach us how to achieve it. The Muslims remained in possession of it for about one thousand years, but lost it when they ceased to follow the said laws through idleness caused by luxury.

I also ask the adherents of other religions to see for themselves whether the laws cited in these pages from the Qur-án are not designed to perfect human happiness here as well as in the world to come. This ought to be the sole object of every civilization and religion, for it consists chiefly in two things: first, in reducing all the forces of Nature to our service; and secondly, in the observance by us of the highest moral standards.

Service to God is service to humanity, according to Islamic tenets. If men speak of other things, including even Devotion to God, they all tend to the same object. "Do you wish to love God?" so said Muhammad. "Then love His creatures." Half religion becomes perfected if we follow that dictum. The other half lies in discovering the means whereby that love may find its best expression by alleviating human misery.

THE OBJECT OF DIVINE REVELATION

"Read in the name of your Lord [Rabb] who created. He created man from a clot. Read and your Lord [Rabb] is most honourable, Who taught to write with the pen, Taught man what he knew not" (Holy Qur-án, xcvi. 1-5).

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Such were the words that came to Muhammad in a voice like thunder as he lay alone in the cave of Hira, near Mecca, lost in contemplation, with a soul sick unto death and in despair for the universal evil that seemed in his time to have darkened the whole atmosphere of the world and to have reached its culminating point in Arabia. Corruption was rife all over the world before his advent. "Death—mental, moral, and spiritual—had overtaken the human race, and darkness prevailed everywhere, clouding the beliefs and perverting the actions of the people." Religions had, one and all, lost their healthy influence on the lives of their adherents. "The Christianity of the Seventh Century was itself decrepit and corrupt."¹ The Holy Qur-án thus briefly describes the conditions of that period: "Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea, of what the hands of men has wrought" (xxx. 40).

The words were spoken by a Mighty Form, an Archangel, says the Holy Prophet. Let materialists, if they will, regard it as a vision resulting from the Prophet's imagination; yet unless he was possessed of quite unusual imagination accompanied by supernatural foresight, materialists must be in error; since events that were presently to come completely disproved such theories. For the Revelation vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet was to be most clearly fulfilled. The sacred words not only foretold the great honour that was in store for the human race, the time for which had then arrived, but they also spoke of the one remedy that could avail to save it from the poison that was sapping its very life. The Revelation declared that the shape in which matter had become evolved in the human frame was not the final stage of its progress. It had no doubt reached finality in its material journey; but this finality was but the starting-point of coming stages in human advancement. The physical nature of man had given birth to something new²—human consciousness,

¹ Muir.

² "And certainly We created man of an extract of clay, Then We made him a small life-germ in a firm resting-place, Then We made the life-germ a clot, then We made the clot a lump of flesh, then We made (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, then We caused it to grow into another creation" (Holy Qur-án, xxiii. 12-14).

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something differing in its vastness and other capabilities from anything to be detected in other animals. It in fact furnished a nucleus for further progress on the mental, moral, and spiritual planes.

In this connection the sacred words speak also of an attribute of God—that is to say, Rabb. The Arabic word that has not been properly translated by the word “Lord,” for want of a better rendering in English, does not only mean “creator,” but signifies also the endowing with various capacities of everything in creation, and “the fostering of it in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion.”¹ The same Rabb who, according to this Revelation, evolved a physically perfect creation like man out of a clot of blood, now intended to give him further privileges that would come to him through a new learning to be attained by him through the power to read and write. The subsequent Revelations explained the above position in clearer terms when they said: “And when your Lord [Rabb] said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth one who shall rule (in it) . . . And He gave Adam knowledge of all the things, then presented them to the angels . . . And when We said to the angels, Make obeisance to Adam, they did obeisance” (Holy Qur-án, ii. 30, 31, 34).

The prayer of Jesus found its response from the Lord, some six hundred years later, in the revelations of Muhammad. The former prayed for the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth; while it was revealed to the latter that the time had come when man shall be shown such things as will enable him to rule the earth as God’s Vicegerent. The above quotation also hinted at the means, fully set out later on in the Qur-án, by which this grand object was to be achieved. The angels, who according to Islamic teaching are the sentient beings which bring all forces of nature into operation, were ordered to pay homage

¹ Muhammad ‘Alí, in his English translation of the Qur-án, quoting from Imān Rāghib’s dictionary of the Qur-án, which was written centuries before the theory of Evolution was started by Darwin and continued by Herbert Spencer.

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to him and minister to his wishes; but he had first to acquire "knowledge of all the things" in the universe, after which the movers of natural forces would obey him in actualizing the potentialities inherent in creation. The Qur-án also revealed that the things in nature, as has been said before, were not purposeless, but had all been designed for his service and benefit, and that he had been equipped with the capacities necessary for working out this design.

This was the main object of Divine Revelation, the object for which, according to Qur-ánic teaching, Religion was given to man. Its purpose was to bring out his latent faculties, and carry him to the height of material, moral, and spiritual prosperity and happiness.

I cannot understand how what calls itself Culture can conceivably take exception to a religion which came primarily for the very purpose which Culture itself professedly sets out to achieve. That purpose is to educate the human race to a civilization which will enable it to rule Nature on the morally highest principles—a proceeding which alone can serve to alleviate the misery and unhappiness which till now have deprived man of much of the means for happiness at his disposal. Man in these days partially commands riches and wealth, but this affluence has in effect but added the more to his misery. The sad conditions that obtain all over the world to-day have arisen from the lack in us of that high morality which the working of God exhibits in Nature. The Divine lieutenancy spoken of in the above sacred words cannot become complete unless man brings forth a good moral and spiritual harvest keeping pace with his material progress. "The vicegerency of God" spoken of in the Qur-án, or "Thy kingdom come . . ." is not the dream of a religious crank. Its materialization, according to Islam, means that the achievement of that civilization lies in a study of the condition that obtains in the realm of Nature, where things necessary for our happiness are always in process of creation, and then are distributed in us according to our merits, but mostly on principles of broadmindedness. When man shall have come to work on these lines he will become God's Viceroy

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on earth. Even the Secularist could not take exception to it, if he looked at the question merely from the point of view of utility. Capitalism, or Socialism—now known as Communism—or any other system without desirable morals, cannot remedy the prevailing evil. Everything in Nature, except man, is happy and content. Man, the image of God, is labouring under misfortune in this respect, but he can easily avoid it if he will endeavour to possess himself of those morals and ethics which the Most High manifests in the universe.

An atheist may not believe in the existence of the Moral Ruler, though modern scientific research has brought him nearer to Monotheism, but he cannot, with all his sceptic tendencies, fail to observe generally intellect accompanied by liberality and compassion in the working of Nature. The Muslims ascribe all this to the Being they call Rabb; and supposing that supreme Moral Ruler to exist, we could banish evil and misery from human society if we were content to walk humbly with Him. This again I say is the chief object of Religion. All other aspects of it which unfortunately have tended to monopolize human devotion are mere accessories, though some of them are essential means towards achieving the end. It is true that Religion has recently lost much ground. Though it is regaining it since the Great War, it is still treated as a back number by a large section of cultured people. It is not really wanted. That may fairly be termed the general position in the West. But the blame for this must be laid at the door of Religion by reason of the form it has generally been content to assume.

Religion, as I said before, has come to man in two forms from time immemorial—the Religion of Commandments and Obedience, and the Religion of Expiation and Atonement. The former could appeal to reason and intelligence, since the rule of Law and Obedience permeates the whole of Nature and success lies in its observance. But unfortunately this aspect of Religion has, as Religion, been looked at askance, so that it has become merged in Ceremonialism—the spirit lost and the letter worshipped. It has ceased therefore to com-

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mand any respect from those who respect reason and look for utility in every pursuit. As to the Religion of Atonement, its tenets can only be accepted by the mutilation or total disregard of intelligence. Church dogma in the West is its principal specimen at present. Moreover, the blessed son of Mary was not the first Christ of whom the earth had heard. The ancient world spoke of many Christs before him. All of them repeated the same story of which we read in the Synoptic and Pauline literature. All of them were believed to have been born of a virgin and came to give their lives for the purpose of saving humanity from the penalty of sin. Belief in such a dogmatized theology is now on the wane; the effects of participation in the Eucharistic meals are treated either as mere imaginative consolation or in the light of "magic and charms of the mystery cult," as the Bishop of Birmingham calls them. Such theology, especially when it receives no support from Natural Theology, gives scant credit to the Deity, Who, as is believed by the Formal Church in the West, condemned the whole human race for a wrong done by our first parents. The Deity also would see us to possess a strange notion of justice in according forgiveness to sinners only by the sacrifice of an innocent soul on the cross. Omniscience, it is believed, is one of His attributes; but He seems to evince here an awful ignorance in saddling us for four thousand years with Law when He, according to the Church tenets, knew that we were born in sin and therefore incapable of observing that Law, thereby obliging Himself to devise a new scheme for our regeneration. It is as inconceivable a plan as the belief in the efficacy of ceremonial piety for the cleansing of sin when unaccompanied by good actions.

Islam, however, came with quite a new conception of religion. It also gave a new significance to Divine worship. The uplifting of man from animality to the Divinity which seems to work in the "Civilization of Nature" was the religion taught by the Qur-án. Devotion to God, according to the same Book, consists chiefly in following such laws as may enable man to achieve this purpose, the chief features of which are beneficence and compassion.

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“ It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflict—these are they who are true to (themselves), and these are they who guard (against evil) ” (Holy Qur-án, ii. 177).

Let us examine the main features of our modern civilization. It consists in the discovery of the laws which are creating innumerable things for our benefit in the universe, and then in the application of those laws to a like purpose. For example, we need perfect knowledge of mechanics and electricity. But we cannot improve on Nature in this respect. In fact, we shall reach the highest point of attainment in them if we could find out the laws actually at work in the universe which govern mechanical and electrical forces. Whatever we have achieved hitherto in these departments is but an incomplete and slavish imitation of the Hand that is working there. There lies a wonderful adaptability in all things when applied to the manufacture of different kinds of machinery. Mechanism has commanded and dominated Nature; and so Spencer saw it. We do not create qualities in the various things that we use in mechanism. We only try to discover qualities already inherent in them and the laws prescribed for their working. Similarly, the world has made startling progress since we began to make research in the field of electricity. Here again we seek to discover the lines already marked out on which electricity works under the Hand of God. But mechanism and electricity ought not to exhaust our activities. We have to ransack the other stores of Nature if we wish to perfect our civilization. We have still to make discoveries concerning innumerable components of the world. They are all made for the use of man, so the Qur-án taught

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us centuries ago, and goaded us to find out ways that might enable us to bring them to our service. Here again we shall have to walk humbly with the Lord. If all these phenomena are the work of Rabb (God), as the Qur-án says, the Book simply disclosed a truism when it declared that the object of creating man was to send him as His vicegerent on earth. The Book therefore gave him a religion under which he should become dyed in the colours of God; which means that he should act on earth as his Lord does in Heaven. This is what Jesus meant when he prayed, "Thy Kingdom come; on earth as it is in Heaven."

I have already remarked that with all our material achievements, misery and pain are still with us. Even those rolling in wealth wear a veritable mask which conceals pain possibly more poignant than that experienced by the victims of poverty; which clearly shows that Capitalism is no remedy. Capitalism cannot perfect our happiness. Besides the personal troubles of those in opulence, riches induce crime in its various forms— theft, cheating, deception, fornication, prostitution, and other cognate evils. Neither is Communism the true alternative, for it kills every incentive for effort and hard work. If our earnings go to constitute national estate, and we are deprived of their ownership and only allowed a pittance out of our acquisitions for our own maintenance, it is sufficient to damp all our zeal in the making of wealth. Thus both Capitalism and Communism as they are understood to-day do no good to the human race, excluding each other as they do from their respective provinces. What we do need is a happy coalition of certain good principles in each of them. Ownership can only induce us to strain our nerves in the acquisition of wealth. But it needs, further, a liberal distribution among poorer men if we are to banish misery.

In short, we do need to follow Divine attributes in the creation and distribution of wealth; which is the condition precedent for soaring to the higher regions of the Divine Realm.

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ANTHROPOMORPHISM AND ISLAM

In this respect Islam has been accused of *anthropomorphic* teachings. The Qur-án, it is alleged, assigns to God attributes such as belong to man. But this is not the case. The chief of these attributes were displayed by the Creator of the universe long before man appeared on the scene. The rest of them are only their offshoots. Natural Theology has however done great service to Islam in exonerating it from such a charge. It has also settled an old question which has been troubling men of a philosophic turn on this subject. They think that God is not only transcendental and unknowable in His Essence, but also in the matter of His attributes surpasses the bounds of human comprehension. He is an impersonal and—if the word be permitted—an unattributable God. This is the corner-stone of the received Buddhistic theology. Others think that the Creator, though absolutely unknowable in essence, as the Qur-án holds, has certain of the attributes that can come within our cognizance. In other words, He is a Personal God. But this conception unfortunately went farther and clothed the Deity with anthropomorphic attributes. By others He was invested with all the human passions.

The Holy Qur-án has placed some of the excellent names of God before man to aid him in building up his moral fabric, and I believe it to be the best creed for our inspiration in all our activities; yet it is alleged that the Book has only preached anthropomorphism. A very superficial knowledge of the Qur-ánic attributes of God would contradict any such allegations. The Book no doubt speaks of a Personal God, but one who in no case is an anthropomorphic Deity, i.e. one fashioned after the human form and endowed with human passions. The Qur-ánic Divine Attributes not only exclude even a semblance of our low passions from their scope, but also they negate their very existence. They will enable their owner amongst us to bring all his carnal passions under strict control and use them in their best form when required. The conception of an Impersonal God—the Deity of whose attributes we are totally unable to conceive—no doubt provides a fascinating philosophy at its outset, but it brings no practical

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good to us, nor does it profit man in any way. Our worshipping instinct has always placed some Deity before it; we adore Him and receive all good inspirations from Him, in the moulding of our character, by contemplating His attributes. But the conception of an Impersonal God leads us to contemplate something that amounts to nothing. Contemplation without an objective is in itself an impossibility. Belief in an Impersonal God would tend to make us all agnostics and establish atheism in the long run, as it did in the subsequent development of Buddhism. Though it was an old conception in Hindu theology, and we read of it also in ancient Greek and Roman philosophies, yet it has received its greatest prominence in the teachings passing under the name of Buddha. The great Sage, in my humble opinion, could not be the author of ideas that proved so pernicious to theism; on the other hand, I find him speaking of "liberality and compassion" as the chief characteristics of the Divine Hand in Nature. He therefore believes in a Personal God.

No doubt the Lord Buddha preached strongly against the anthropomorphism which was prevailing in the Hindu religion in his days, for it generated a worse type of morality in its believers.

It is matter for great gratification that Natural Theology has solved these theological riddles propounded by various persuasions. It is reasonable to imagine that the transcendental God should not share attributes in common with His creatures, but Nature has something different to tell.

In their attempt to give God every human passion His worshippers under anthropomorphism have deified even man's lowest passions. All that is abominable in humanity appears in those Beings who grace the throne of Godhood in the pantheisms of Hindu, Greek, and Roman mythology. They come on the earth and enter into amorous relations with the wives of men and of each other. In a word, they indulge in all things fatal to morality and order.

Divine worship and adoration everywhere consist chiefly in doing things that are the pleasure of God and fulfil the requirements of His Attributes. Hence the temples of these

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gods were the scenes of obscenity, where all sorts of bacchanalian orgies were practised in the spirit of a true votary. The evil, unfortunately, did not remain confined to places of worship in the Puranic days in India—and this was the case everywhere in the world, especially at the time when Muhammad appeared—it was regarded as one of the essentials of sanctity, especially in the sacerdotal class.

Unfortunately this conception of an Impersonal God produced similar results though to a very limited extent. An Impersonal God must stand beyond any human limitations, as they think. It would be consistent with His Omnipotence if He remained independent of all human obligations that moral order requires. "God can speak a lie," so wrote an advocate of Omnipotence in his treatise on the subject which appeared from Ferozepur (India) some twenty years ago. Similar ideas gave the Deity certain other undesirable characteristics under a system of anthropomorphic theology.

The Qur-án solved the difficult problem. God is not knowable. His essence stands beyond our perceptions, but He does possess qualities also which can come within human comprehension, and may inspire man with thought that can raise him from animality to the Divine precincts and make him a worthy ruler of God's kingdom on earth. If he has been fashioned after the image of God, he should have the capacity to become sooner or later clothed with Divine attributes. He will rise from animality, but with a consciousness that can develop and assume the Divine colour. He has also an imitative instinct. He needed a model. The Work and Word of God—Nature and Revelation—supplied him with the model. Man did not give morals to God, but God has planted His own morals in man—liberality, compassion, design, and intellect, with many other qualities found in the working of Nature, which existed before man was created. How can these morals be man's exclusive possessions?

Friday Prayer and Sermon.—At the London Muslim Prayer House—111, Camden Hill Road, London, W.8, close to Notting Hill Gate Tube Station—every Friday at 1 p.m. **Sunday Lectures** at 7.30 p.m. **Qur-án and Arabic Classes**—every Sunday at 5.30–7 p.m. Nearest Tube Station: Notting Hill Gate.

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

NOTES

NOTES

Eid-ul-Azha (1348 A.H.) at the Mosque.

The festival of Eid-ul-Azha, at which the hearts of Muslims all over the world are lifted up in sympathy with their more fortunate brethren gathered together in the sacred city of Mecca (to which Islam ordains that all those who can afford it should make pilgrimage once a year), was celebrated on Friday, May 9, 1930. This gathering comprises all nations and languages, brought together from the ends of the earth, to pray in that sacred place towards which all the faces of the faithful are set on each occasion of private worship in their distant homes. No flight of religious genius could, it is generally agreed, have conceived a better method for impressing on the minds of the faithful a sense of their common life and of their vast and comprehensive brotherhood in the bonds of faith. For it is at Mecca that in a supreme act of common worship the Negro of the West Coast of Africa, the Chinaman of the distant East, and the courtly and polished of all nations recognize their brother Muslim in the Islander from the uttermost parts of the Malayan Sea.

To the Mosque, Woking, among the Surrey pines, friends from all over England began to pour in at about 9.30 a.m., and by the time of the prayers the number had far exceeded 300. The spacious lawn facing the Sir Salar Jung Memorial House was covered with precious Persian carpets kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. Mohyiudin al-Arabi. The prayer was led by His Eminence Syed Muhammad Amīn al-Husainī, the Grand Mufti of Palestine and President of the Supreme Muslim Council, who had kindly consented to officiate at the request of Maulvi 'Abdul Majid, M.A., the Acting Imām. His Eminence, who is a regular visitor to the London Muslim Prayer House, 111, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, W.8, has won the respect of all Muslims resident in London by his charm of manner and broadmindedness, the essential characteristics of a Muslim. After the prayers His Eminence read a short sermon in Arabic which was translated into English by Maulvi Abdul Majid for the benefit of such of our

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friends as were not conversant with Arabic. His Eminence pointed out that the secret of the present-day trouble of the Muslim community was fully explained in the Qur-án, and that each and every Muslim should live and act up to the verses and the commandments of the Holy Book. The festival of Eid-ul-Azha, he added, was celebrated by Muslims to keep up the spirit of sacrifice, of which the best example was to be found in the life of Ishmael and Abraham, who both showed all readiness to lay down their lives at the bidding of Allah. Religion has no meaning without sacrifice, and no nation has ever progressed without sacrifice.

The prayers being over, the friends wished each other a "Happy Eid."

The weather in England, which is a constant menace to our social gatherings on account of the want of a sufficiently commodious building, was exceptionally cold, in spite of the fact that we are so well advanced in the year. The Eid Day itself broke with glorious sunshine, but only to be quenched by threatening clouds long before the time appointed for the prayers, which, by the grace of Allah, escaped the rain with the exception of a few drops at the close of the sermon.

Luncheon, consisting of Indian dishes, was served under a spacious marquee, and our most cordial thanks are due to all those friends who kindly volunteered their services in waiting upon the guests.

Friday prayers, conducted by Maulvi Abdul Majid, M.A., were offered at 2.30 p.m., after which the guests began to depart.

Among those present were His Highness Sirdar Shah Wali Khan, the Afghan Minister in London, Khan Zulfikar Khan, Lord and Lady Headley, Professor H. M. Léon and Madame Léon, Mr. Lovegrove (Secretary of the Muslim Society of Great Britain), Sir Umar Hayat Khan, Mrs. Buchanan-Hamilton, Mr. 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Alī, and some members of the Persian Legation.

His Excellency Musā Kāzim Pāsha, Head of the Arab Palestine Delegation, and His Excellency the Egyptian Minister were unable to attend.

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Catching at a Straw.

The Very Reverend W. R. Inge, Dean of St. Paul's, has, by way of saving appearances and thus affording a new if short lease of life to the Church's hold on the people, made two interesting suggestions recently during the course of his address at a Diocesan Conference at Newcastle. He said:

"I am strongly in favour of the strict interpretation of Christ's moral laws on marriage, and cannot think of anything more revolting than marriage depicted in popular novels and practised by the idle rich.

"The most disgraceful thing any man can do is deliberately to break the sacred marriage vow which is the most solemn in his life and made in the sight of God.

"If people do not wish to take life-long vows, then the State must recognize two kinds of marriage—that made in the Church, which is indissoluble, and that of persons who make vows outside the Church." (*Daily Chronicle*, May 14, 1930).

Now the words of Jesus on the subject of divorce are so emphatically clear that even the Nonconformist bodies have been driven to express themselves in much the same tone and language. For example, Dr. Norwood, in his presidential address at the conference of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, at the City Temple, London, said:

"Marriage is a more delicate and fragile association than it used to be, but at least its successful maintenance is a greater achievement than in days gone by.

"Divorce should be impossible between two Christian people, and almost impossible where only one is Christian, but why spend our strength trying to enforce a Christian inhibition in cases where there never was a shred of Christian principle?

"Divorce is a betrayal of faith. The word plighted at the height of emotion, and buttressed by the most solemn pledges, is broken at least by one party. The moral damage done is irreparable.

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"The State, for its own sake, to prevent the disruption of society, must pass such restrictive laws as it deems to be necessary. Christian people in their personal capacity may support such laws as they consider best.

"But the Church, as the Society of Christ, cannot hand herself over to a legal system. Her function is to assert, and to support her assertion by the example of her communicants, that a Christian marriage demands the Christian spirit, and is, in fact, a high intellectual, moral, and spiritual achievement." (*Sunday Chronicle*, May 14, 1930.)

In striking contrast to the views of these two eminent theologians of the English Christian world are those of a leading English daily newspaper, the *Daily Herald*, in its issue of May 15, 1930. We extract the following from its leaderette entitled "Divorce." And it may be noted that the words of the *Daily Herald*, an organ emphatically representative of the new order, might well have come from the pen of a Muslim, for they are neither more nor less than a free paraphrase of the dicta of Muhammad on this problem:

"Dean Inge has two mind-sides. This is manifest in his proposal that there should be two kinds of marriage, one celebrated by the Church to be indissoluble, the other a civil ceremony in which divorce is permissible.

"What is the reaction of the average man or woman to the idea?

"We suggest that even those who hold religious vows with veneration as great as that of Dean Inge will reject the conception of a marriage unbreakable in any circumstances.

"People usually marry in the early twenties. They love each other. They are perfectly sincere when they vow at the altar to cling together until death does them part.

"But time passes. Differences, grave differences, unforeseen in the rosy dawn of early marriage, develop.

"Every effort should be made to heal those differences. But when these prove unbridgeable?

"Surely there is neither true religion nor humanity in

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compelling two people to be intensely unhappy for the remainder of their lives.

"On all reasonable grounds such a marriage should be dissolved in the interests of all concerned.

"Dean Inge would appear to recognize this in his civil ceremony suggestion. But he turns his back on it where the marriage is in church.

"That will not do. Dean Inge must try again. He cannot have it both ways."

Here is a clear proof of the fact that the religion of Islam is the religion of nature, the penetration of whose principles is irresistible.

Europe in its obstinacy may still refuse to recognize openly its debt of gratitude to Muhammad, but the testimony of European conduct cannot well be brushed aside.

The suggestion—or the solution, call it what you will—discovered by the Dean betrays the mentality of one whose resources are at their lowest ebb, and is a natural corollary to our examination of the words of Jesus for clear guidance on the vexed problems of our social life. He is, for example, woefully silent on the topics of war, slavery, and in fact almost every one of the all-important problems of our modern social life. He as a rule refrains from enunciating any laws, and if ever he does lay down such, we find that the acid tests of time and actual practice do but expose mercilessly its inefficiency and hollowness to such a glaring extent that the Christian world has begun to endeavour to find a way round them, or even to play with them.

Attempts like that of Dr. Inge will continue to be made, and have indeed been made at every stage of Christian history, but they must always and necessarily prove futile; and that is why we Muslims are supremely conscious of a special mission to mankind.

Yet Another Blow to the Authenticity of the Bible.

In the *Sunday Express* of May 18, 1930, reference is made, both in the editorial and news columns, of the discovery that

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one of the most famous passages in the Bible, around which for hundreds of years there "has raged bitter controversy, is now declared to be incorrect."

The discovery of the error is made by one Benjamin Donath, a Viennese Bible student.

"The presentation of God as 'God of Wrath and Vengeance,' in Exodus, ch. 20, v. 5, is based, it is alleged, on a false translation of the original Hebrew, and it is reported that the Vatican International Commission of the Revision of the Bible is taking steps to correct the passages.

"The discovery refers to the quotation:—

"'For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. . . .'

"The literal translation should read, it is claimed:—

"'For I, the Lord thy God, am a God of loving kindness and mercy considering the errors of the fathers as mitigating circumstances in judging the sins of the children unto the third and fourth generation. . . .'

"The quotation, 'For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God,' is incorporated in the Second Commandment of the Protestant Churches.

"It has just become known that Donath was summoned to Rome two years ago by Cardinal Gasquet, who was President of the Revision Commission of the Vulgate until a few months ago, when he died.

"Cardinal Gasquet and his associates marvelled at the learning of Donath, and after hours of intricate debate over the points of issue are said to have agreed that the version of a 'God of Vengeance' is faulty. The Cardinal declared at that time that an official application would be made to the Vatican to make the necessary correction.

"The mistake, according to Donath, was made in the year 270 before the birth of Christ, when seventy Hebrew divines translated the Old Testament Scriptures into Greek at Alexandria. This Greek translation was later the basis to a large extent of the Vulgate, the version of the Bible accepted as official and canonical by the Roman Catholic Church. . . .

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“Donath is now attempting to have Protestant bodies admit the mistake with a view to removing the erroneous translation from subsequent new versions of the Bible.”

We are not here concerned with the actual text; that it may be wrong, noble, or otherwise is a question for others to debate. The surprising thing is to know that the discovery is based on manuscripts which are themselves faulty and unauthentic.

One of the clergy, Father Woodlock of the Roman Catholic Church, on being consulted, expressed himself thus:

“This is inconceivable. From the beginning of the Church scholars of Scripture have held the Commandments to be of fundamental importance, so how could any error in translation have survived the scrutiny of so many hundreds of learned Catholics and Protestants?

“It is unthinkable that the first translators of the Hebrew who made the Septuagint version should have started an error of such dimensions which remained undetected till the present day.”

Such is the historical value of the book; but this is further cause for wonder when we reflect that, to use the words of the *Sunday Express*, “it is still the greatest standby and comfort of millions of men and women in every walk of life” and that the Editor of the *Sunday Express* records his personal satisfaction at the change in the words:

“At this stage, however, this much may be said: The revised rendering is more in harmony with the modern conception of Christianity. It is a version which will bring comfort and consolation to the ever-growing army of men and women who in this world, at any rate, have to pay dearly for the sins and excesses of their erring parents.”

“The modern conception of Christianity!” Does the Editor mean to assert that whatever we associate with the good and noble must of necessity be ascribed to Christianity; even when there is no sanction for it in the pages of the oft-revised Bible? If so, where is the need for the Bible? Why

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not do away with it once and for all, and call "Christianity" whatever suits our tastes, ideas, and ideals?

As against this, the Qur-án, the source of inspiration to and guidance of the Muslim, has remained unaltered throughout all the fourteen centuries. On which of the two the choice of an intelligent man should fall is clear enough.

The Muslim Society of Great Britain entertains the Arab Palestine Delegation.

To mark their sympathy with the Arab cause as opposed to the British policy based on the inequitable "Balfour Declaration," the members of the Muslim Society of Great Britain arranged an "At Home" in honour of the Arab Palestine Delegation, who have come to England on a mission of peace, on Friday, May 2nd, at 8 p.m. in the Caxton Hall, Westminster, London, S.W.

The occasion afforded a wonderful opportunity for all Muslim and non-Muslim friends to acquaint themselves with the views of the Delegation.

The guests were received by the Right Honourable Lord Headley, the President of the Society, who requested Mr. 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali to recite a few verses of the Holy Qur-án to open the evening's proceedings, which being done, his Lordship extended a most hearty welcome to the members of the Delegation. Lord Headley, in the course of his aptly chosen remarks, pointed out that the injustice which was being done to the Arab cause would never pay. He then called upon His Eminence the Grand Mufti, who observed that it must be realized that the Palestine question was not either a local or a national one. It was a question which involved the whole of the Muslim world. He was followed by His Excellency Musā Kāzīm Pāsha, who with characteristic wit pointed out that Jews were living up to their old traditions. When Moses wanted them to fight in the path of Allah they replied: "Go, you and your Lord should fight; we are not coming with you." And now they say to the British people: "You go and fight with your bayonets and money and we will come and take possession of Palestine." His Excellency

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was followed by his Worship the Mayor of Jerusalem, who reminded his hearers of some of the broken pledges and perfidious actions of British diplomacy during the Great War. He said that if the Arabs had known how they were to be disillusioned after the war had been won they would never have espoused the cause of the Allies, and that it was their credulity for which they were paying heavily at the present time.

Brigadier-General Blakeney thereupon rose to point out that if the British public were to know the truth, its sympathy would be, heart and soul, with the Arabs.

The guests of the evening having been thanked by Mr. 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Alī, the Chairman suggested an adjournment for refreshment and a less formal interchange of views; and it was not until approximately 10.30 p.m. that this most enjoyable gathering came to an end.

The Muslim Society of Great Britain deserve the thanks of all for affording us an opportunity for meeting and exchanging ideas with our distinguished visitors.

TO PARENTS

intending to send their sons to England for Secondary School education it will be interesting to know that satisfactory arrangements at moderate expense for their stay can be made at Sir Sala Jung Memorial House, Woking, under the direct supervision and care of the Imām of the Mosque, Woking. Woking possesses a well-equipped County Council School for boys which prepares them for London Matriculation and other examinations of an equal standard.

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WHAT IS ISLAM ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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