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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

RABĪ'UT-THĀNĪ, 1349 A.H.

VOL. XVIII. SEPTEMBER, 1930 A.C.

No. 9

AFTER-EFFECTS OF THE GREAT WAR

By SHAIKH MUSHĪR HUSAIN KIDWĀ'Ī OF GADIA
(Barrister-at-Law)

(Continued from August (1930), "Islamic Review," p. 294.)

10. THE PRACTICABILITY OF ISLAM

As has been said before, the most sinister and serious effect of the Great War is the weakening of all religious influences. People have begun to think that there was no need of any religion in their lives and that they have "no use for the Church." In almost every country of the world, morality depended on religious influence, and when that influence was nearly withdrawn or rejected morality collapsed. In fact, just as the war began, Christian priests all over Europe found themselves on the horns of a dilemma. When Christian Powers butchered poor, weak, helpless, unarmed non-Christians and non-Europeans it did not matter much to the conscience-keepers of the Christian peoples. "Heathens" have no souls. "Kill them all, God will know His own," was the order of the Abbot Arnold, the Legate of the Pope, who was asked by a soldier when tired of slaughter how he should dis-

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tinguish the Catholic from the heretic. "Turn the other cheek when one is smitten" was not the maxim when the parties of this transaction were Christians and non-Christians. But it so happened in the Great War that Christians fought against Christians, Europeans against Europeans, and fought in such a spiteful, brutal, fiendish style as to put the vicegerents of Christ in a fix. Their behaviour proved that such a moral and ethical maxim as that of turning the other cheek when one is smitten sounds very nice, very noble, very grand, when spoken; it fits in very well with the copybook headlines for little children learning how to write their ABC, but in daily life those go for nothing. It has no value for a modern practical mind. For instance, can any person in America, where everybody is either already a millionaire or is a would-be millionaire, take seriously the saying of Christ that it is easier for a camel to get through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter Heaven. Of course business propositions when expounded in religious terms may appeal to the post-war American Christians, particularly if they are financially well off. A person who knows the mentality of the American Christians writes: "The Catholic custom of making spiritual benefits, whether for the living or for the dead, dependent on the payment of hard cash, the Nonconformist and Protestant promise of redemption on contribution to the funds of the Church and propagation of the Gospel among the heathens, were both in line with the dollar mentality. It fitted in admirably with the corruption of political and private life, for it encouraged the idea that the most corrupt politician or worst moral delinquent could set himself right with his God if he could afford God's price." Unfortunately the mercenary mentality prevails all over Europe since the Great War. Even the most humane profession of medicine seems to have become self-seeking. The Church itself in the "most Christian" and the greatest missionary-sending country has taken a mercenary turn. Because people have left off going to church and the offerings have diminished, the priests have to issue such advertisements as was issued at Owensbold: "Solomon a six-cylinder sport. Could you handle as many wives and

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concubines as this old bird? Rev. B. S. Hodge will preach on this subject on Sunday night at Seattle Memorial. You are welcome."

It was very unfortunate that St. Paul founded Christianity on the theory of human sinfulness. If every man and woman is born in sin, then when a man or woman commits a sin or an immoral act he or she simply confirms the Creator's design. He is helpless. He cannot but sin. Of other pagan beliefs adopted by Christianity this is probably the worst. Those who believe in the transmigration of the soul have also to believe that the very fact of a person being born in this world means that he is sinful, otherwise he would not have been sent down to this world at all. But St. Paul made the situation worse. A Hindu who believes in rebirths has to be good to avoid those rebirths or at least to better his position when he comes to this world again. A Christian has no incentive to be good in his actions as Christ has already expiated sins. He need not act aright. The only thing he has to do is to believe in the "Saviourship" of Christ. The burden of all the sins committed by Christians is not on their shoulders but on those of another man—the "Redeemer," Jesus Christ. What a difference between the Muslim and Christian ideals! Islam presumes everyone, whether man or woman, to be innocent. Every child, according to Muhammad, is born sinless and on the *right* path. In truth, God never created any evil. He is Himself all good. Evil is created by man himself. Man is responsible for all evil. No soul can bear the burden of any other. Every person is responsible for his acts of commission or omission. Not an iota of good acts is wasted. Not an item of bad deeds is left out without its due punishment in this very life or in after-life. The God of Nature is NOT revengeful. His mercy overwhelms His anger. But Nature with its laws and its machinery of works is revengeful—extremely revengeful. It sometimes delays in meting out punishment to those who defy its laws, but it never forgives. Islam therefore directs man to find out the laws of Nature, to regulate those for his own use, but not to defy them. The keynote of the ethics of Islam is personal respon-

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sibility. Islam imposes a universal personal responsibility without any distinction between the rich and the poor, the king and the peasant, and the man and the woman. In Islam man is the master of his destiny. If he acts rightly, if he can work within the laws of Nature, it is to his own benefit. If he errs it is to his own disadvantage. If he cannot learn how to use the machinery of Nature for his own advantage he may be caught in that machinery and mauled or destroyed ruthlessly.

The Qur-án says: " And every man's fate have We fastened about his neck; and on the day of resurrection will We bring forth to him a Book which shall be proffered to him wide open: ' Read thy book: there needeth none but thyself to make out an account against thee this day.' For his own good only shall the guided yield to guidance and to his own loss only shall the erring fall; and the heavily laden shall not be laden with another's load. We never punished until We sent a Warner."

On the day of requital the Judgment shall be passed, not on the recommendation of any " son of God " sitting on the right hand of God (THE JUDGE), but on the evidence—truthful and outspoken evidence—of our own hands and eyes and feet and other organs. The " Book," which has been automatically registering minutely and correctly all our deeds and thoughts at the very moment of performance or meditation, will be opened up before us and the Judgment will be passed. The Judgment will no doubt be coloured with inexhaustible Mercy. We have been assured that no mother loves her children more than the Creator loves His creatures. So we can safely expect that the Judgment will be permeated with the spirit of love. But we must never and never and never delude ourselves with the idea that the Judgment will lack justice or be based upon favouritism or canvassing; that any man or woman will receive unjust commendation or that any person, even Christ or Muhammad, will be exempted from full accountability.

The mere fact of our calling ourselves " a believing Muslim, a Jew, a Christian, or a Sabian " will make not the slightest difference in the tone or trend of the Judgment. To whatever persuasion we may belong we must put forward good deeds

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to get a favourable sentence. Because of His Mercy the Mighty Judge has shown us the right path through numerous Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, and many others sent to *every people in every country*. The RIGHT way that has been very distinctly and definitely marked down in a manner to be intelligible to persons of the lowest as well as the highest intellect in the last and final Guide Book, the indestructible, the unalterable Qur-án sent down by God in His Mercy through His Last Messenger is complete and perfect. The authors of *Chambers's Encyclopædia* have admitted the fact in these words: "That part of Islam which distinctly reveals the mind of its author is also its most complete and its most shining part—we mean the ethics of the Qur-án. They are not found, any more than the other laws, brought together in one or two or three Surats, but like golden threads they are woven into the very fabric of the religious constitution of Muhammad. Injustice, falsehood, pride, revengefulness, calumny, mockery, avarice, prodigality, debauchery, mistrust, and suspicion are inveighed against as ungodly and wicked, while benevolence, liberality, modesty, forbearance, patience, endurance, frugality, sincerity, straightforwardness, decency, love of peace and truth, and, above all, trust in one God and submitting to His will are considered as the pillars of true piety and the principal signs of a true believer." It is not Christianity alone that has failed, Judaism is also showing signs of breaking down, though the founder of Judaism was a far more practical man than was the founder of Christianity.

The Rev. Dr. A. Cohen, of Birmingham, said very recently in the course of his lecture on Jewish History at Manchester: "It must be apparent to all except those who had blinded themselves to patent facts that the Jewish religious system was breaking down very badly. . . ." As I have said before, ethical teaching is not the monopoly of any one Teacher or Prophet, but where Muhammad (Victory be to him and his!) surpassed all others without exception is in making ethical formula *actual guiding factors* in our daily life. The Qur-án has said, "Lā takūlūna mā lā tafa'lūn" ("Do not say what

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you do not act upon"). It has been acknowledged in the Hibbert Lectures, "The law of Islam contains admirable moral precepts. What is more, it succeeds *in bringing them into practice and powerfully supporting their observance*" (italics are mine). And even an enemy of Islam admits: "They [the moral acts] are the living things of Islam, and until they are neglected Islam will be a force in the world. Faults in the Muhammadan body are not difficult to find, but this at least may be said, that in no part of the world does there exist a Muhammadan society in which men are cruel to those whom they employ, indifferent to their parents, systematically dishonest to one another or socially oppressive to the poor, all of which odious vices are practised as common customs in the land whence come those persons who sally forth to regenerate the East. It is not Muhammadan Law [which Burke admits to be "interwoven with a system of the wisest, the most learned and most enlightened jurisprudence that ever existed in the world"] that we should admire, *but this observance by Muslims of their own free will of those social duties which Christians will not perform save at the end of a policeman's truncheon.*" It is that portion of Sir M. Sykes's remarks which I have italicized that should be particularly noted by all those who would like to reform that social condition of life which has become the post-war curse and will undoubtedly lead, sooner or later, the European nations to "Hell and oblivion."

It is this very success which Muhammad obtained in turning noble precepts into noble actions that calls for his guidance to-day as it did over thirteen centuries ago when he transformed by personal example the most filthy conditions of life almost all over the world into a really angelic life—when he brought down on this earth that very "Kingdom of Heaven" which Christ had vainly dreamed of. There was not a single moral precept which Muhammad (Peace be upon him!) did not demonstrate by practice. Muhammad undoubtedly remains the very best Exemplar in every noble walk of life.

(To be continued.)

THE RAILWAY TRAIN IN VISION

THE RAILWAY TRAIN IN VISION

By KHWAJA 'ABDU 'L-GHANĪ

(Secretary, Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust)

A WONDERFUL PROPHECY

SYED MAQBOOL AHMAD, in his able article in the May (1930) number of the *Islamic Review*, discusses a chapter in the Qur-án, under the heading "Broadcasting." He gives the following quotations from the Holy Book:

"By the broadcaster broadcasting."

"By raisers of heavy load up."

"By gliders gliding swiftly on earth."

"By those who apportion mandates."

"Verily that wherewith you are threatened is bound to come."

"And the Faith shall be established."

There are other chapters in the Qur-án, as well as verses, which speak of the day when Islam shall have become the universal religion of the world. They give vivid description of those times and their various phases and then go on to speak of the establishment of the truth of Islam referred to in the last verse of the above quotations.

Words are, after all, but oral pictures of our concepts, but if the thing spoken of is still in embryo and has not yet become materialized, its description, however vivid and faithful it may be, must fail to convey any real meaning to others. There is, too, a further difficulty to be considered. If such a description happens to occur in a revealed book, commented on from time to time, the matter is likely to become confused, seeing that the commentator will deal with it in the light of the circumstances of his time and can hardly arrive at the right conclusion, since the thing spoken of in the Scripture on which he is engaged has not yet come into existence.

But if that scripture be from God, it will be free from any oracular ambiguity. Nay, it will not even be couched in terms poetical in imagery. Simple words of received significance and with unambiguous meaning, to be found in every lexicon,

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are to be accepted in such a case; any stretching of meanings or elasticity of connotation is unnecessary. I find this simple logic in all the prophetic expressions of the Qur-án. The Book speaks of things of our day as if it had been written by a person who had seen them with his own eyes. But it is not a matter of surprise, since it has been revealed by the Omniscient Lord, who has the past, the present, and the future simultaneously before his eyes. Commentaries written by those who belonged to bygone ages cannot convey the true idea. The beauty of the Qur-ánic prophecies lies in the fact that they do not strain verbal meanings unwarrantably or at all, but (if we take the text in its naked, literal sense) give a faithful picture of our days. I take the passage quoted above by way of illustration. The first verse literally means broadcasting, and here indeed is a most happy coincidence, for the inventor of the system used the very word "broadcasting," which is the literal interpretation of the Arabic word *zarwa*; and with the other verses the case is similar. But the fourth is something even more wonderful: "*By those who apportion mandates.*" The word *Amar* in the text, which has been translated to the English word "mandate," also means *rule*, *government*, and *command*—an absolutely accurate description of the League of Nations, which has come into existence in our own day for the first time since the birth of our race, a body whose function it is to *apportion rules and commands*. This is the literal rendering of the Qur-ánic text.

But the article of Syed Maqbool Ahmad reminds me of something just as wonderful—of the conveyance spoken of by the Holy Prophet which, he says, will appear in the coming days. It seems that Muhammad saw it in his vision, perhaps it passed before his eyes while in a trance. There was nothing in the world around him at that time which could possibly be identified with what he saw in the vision; and so he could not name it. He does, however, give the following description: A conveyance some seventy yards in length; coming westward in the evening, leaving for the east in the morning; carrying the treasures of various lands from place to place, moving by the contribution of water and fire, giving cries at stations to

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summon its passengers; and accompanied by a cloud (smoke) wherever it went.

What a power of vision was possessed by the Holy Prophet, who saw all this centuries before its time! He could not give it a name, but no one could have supplied a more vivid description than he has done.

Muhammad speaks of the conveyance as that which will be used by Dajjál, as he names the anti-Christ of the Bible; and, if the teachings of the Formal Church were indeed never given by Jesus but were lifted bodily from the pagan cult, they are anti-Christian without doubt.

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By PROFESSOR 'ABDU 'L-AHAD DĀWŪD, B.D.

V

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN AND JESUS ONLY A TYPE OF THE "SIBGHATU 'L-LĀH"¹

[The learned Professor is open to correspondence on the questions which may be suggested by the articles written by him. All letters can be addressed to him care of the Editor, the *Islamic Review*, Woking, England.—ED. I.R.]

It is a great pity that the Evangelists have not left us a complete and detailed account of the sermon of John the Baptist; and assuming they ever did, it is nothing short of a crime on the part of the Church not to have preserved its text. For it is impossible to imagine the mysterious and enigmatic words of the Baptist in their present shape could have been understood even by the most erudite among his audience. We know that the Jewish doctors and lawyers asked him to explain himself upon various points and to make his declarations more explicit and plain (John i. 19-23 and v. 33). There is no doubt that he elucidated those vital points to his hearers, and did not leave them in obscurity; for he was "a burning and enlightening

¹ Holy Qur-án ii. 138, Muhammad 'Alī's translation.

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candle," who "gave witness concerning the truth" (John v. 33, 35). What was this witness, and what was the nature of the truth about which that witness was given? And what makes it still more obscure is the fact that each Evangelist does not report the same points in identical terms. There is no precision about the character of the truth; was it about the person of Christ and the nature of his mission, or was it about the Apostle of Allah as foretold by Jacob (Gen. xlix.)? What were the precise terms of John's witness about Jesus, and about the future Prophet who was his superior?

In the third article of this series¹ I offered ample proofs that the Prophet foretold by the Baptist was other than Jesus Christ; and in the fourth article² we find several arguments in favour of the Apostle of Allah as being a superior and more powerful Prophet than John. Those arguments, in my humble opinion, and in my solid conviction, are logical, true, and conclusive. Each of those arguments could be easily developed so as to make a voluminous book. I am fully conscious of the fact that these argumentations will present a jarring sound to the fanatical ears of many a Christian. But truth exalts itself and extols him who propagates it. The truth about which John gave witness, as quoted above, we unhesitatingly believe to be concerning Muhammad. John gave two witnesses, one about the "Shliḥa d'Allaha"—according to the then Palestinian dialect, which means the "Apostle of Allah"—and the other about Jesus, whom he declared to have been born of the Holy Spirit and not of an earthly father; to be the true Messiah who was sent by Allah as the last great Jewish Prophet to give a new light and spirit to the Law of Moses; and to having been commissioned to teach the Jews that their salvation rested on submitting to the great son of Ishmael. Like the old Jews who threw into disorder their Scriptures, the new Jews of the Christian Church, in imitation of their forefathers, have corrupted their own. But even these corruptions in the Gospels cannot conceal the truth.

The principal point which constitutes the power and the superiority of the Prince of the Apostles of Allah is the baptism

¹ Vide *Islamic Review* for March–April, 1930.

² Ibid., May, 1930.

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with the Holy Spirit and with fire. The admission by the author of the Fourth Gospel that Jesus and his disciples also used to baptize with water simultaneously with John the Baptist is an abrogation *de facto* of the parenthetical note that "Jesus did not baptize himself, but his disciples only" (John iii. 23 and iv. 1, 2). But granting that he himself did not baptize, the admission that his disciples did, while yet initiates and unlearned, shows that their baptism was of the same nature as that of John's. Considering the fact that Jesus during the period of his earthly mission administered that rite exactly as the Baptist was doing at the streams or pools of water, and that he ordered his disciples to continue the same, it becomes as evident and as clear as a barn door that he was not the person intended by the Crier in the Wilderness when he foretold the advent of a powerful Prophet with the baptism of the Spirit and fire. It does not require much learning or an extraordinary intelligence to understand the force of the argument—namely, Jesus during his lifetime baptized *not a single person* with the Holy Spirit and with fire. How, then, can he be regarded as the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit and with fire, or be identified with the Prophet foretold by John? If words, sermons, and prophecies *mean* anything, and are uttered in order to *teach* anything at all, then the words of the Baptist *mean* and *teach* us that the baptism with water would continue to be practised until the Appearance of the "Shilohah" or the Apostle of Allah, and then it would *cease* and give place to the exercise of the baptism with the Spirit and fire. This is the only logical and intelligible conclusion to be deduced from the preaching as recorded in the third chapter of the First Gospel. The continuation of the Christian baptism and its elevation to the dignity of a Sacrament is a clear proof that the Church does not believe in a baptism other than that which is performed with water. Logic, common sense, and respect for any sacred writ ought to convince every impartial reader that the two baptisms are quite different things. The Prophet of the desert does not recognize the baptism with fire in the baptism with water. The nature and the efficacy of each baptism is distinctly stated and defined.

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The one is performed by immersing or washing the body with water as a sign or mark of repentance; and the other is performed *no longer* by water but by the Holy Spirit and the fire, the effect of which is a *thorough change* of heart, faith, and feeling. One purifies the body, the other enlightens the mind, confirms the faith, and regenerates the heart. One is outward, it is Judaism; the other is inward, it is Islam. The baptism of John and Jesus washes the shell, but the baptism of the Apostle of Allah washes the kernel. In short, the Judæo-Christian baptism is substituted by the Islamic "Ghusl" and "Wodhu"—or the ablutions which are performed, not by a prophet or priest, but *by the believing individual himself*. The Judæo-Christian baptism was necessary and obligatory so long as the baptism of Allah—the Qur-ānic "Sibghatu 'l-Lāh"—was anticipated; and when Muhammad thundered the divine revelations of the Qur-ān, then it was that the former baptism vanished as a shadow.

The extreme importance of the two baptisms deserves a very serious consideration, and I believe the observations made in this article must considerably interest both the Muslims and other readers. For the point under discussion, from a religious standpoint, is vital to salvation. The Christians, I honestly maintain, are not justified in perpetuating their baptism with water *ad infinitum*, since their own Gospels foretell that it will be abrogated by *another one* which will *exclude* the use of water altogether. I submit the following observations to the thoughtful and impartial judgment of my readers.

WHAT BAPTISM IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

(a) It is within our rights to agree or to disagree with a doctrine or a theory, but nothing can justify our conduct if we deliberately distort and misrepresent a doctrine in order to prove our own theory about it. To distort the Scriptures is iniquitous and criminal; for the error caused in this respect is irreparable and pernicious. Now the baptism of John and Jesus is plainly described and illustrated to us in the Gospels, and is entirely alien and opposed to the baptism of the Churches.

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We are not positively certain about the original Hebrew or Aramaic word for the Greek baptism. The Pshitttha Version uses the word "ma'muditha" from the verb "aīmād" and "aa'mid," which means "to stand up like an *a'muda*" (a pillar or column), and its causative form "aa'mid" "to erect, set up, establish, confirm" and so on, but it has no signification of "to immerse, dip, wash, sprinkle, bathe," as the ecclesiastical baptism is supposed to mean. The original Hebrew verbs "raḥas" "to bathe," "ṭabhal" (read "ṭaval") "to dip, to immerse," might give the sense conveyed by the Greek word "baptizo"—"I baptize." The Arabic versions of the New Testament have adopted the Aramaic form, and call the Baptist "al-Mā'midān," and "ma'mudiyeh" for "baptism." In all the Semitic languages, including the Arabic, the verb "a'mad" signifies in its simple or *qal* form "to stand erect like a pillar," and does not contain the meaning of washing or immersion; and therefore it could not be the original word from which the Greek "baptismos" is the translation. There is no necessity to argue that both John and Jesus never heard of the word "baptismos" in its Greek form, but that there was evidently another Semitic nomenclature used by them.

(b) Considering the classical signification of the Greek "baptismos" (βαπτισμός), which means "tincture, dye, and immersion," the word in use could not be other than "Saba," and the Arabic "Sabagha," "to dye." It is a well-known fact that the Sabians, mentioned in the Qur-ān and by the early Christian Fathers—such as Epiphanius and others—were the followers of John. The very name "Sabians," according to the celebrated Ernest Renan (*La Vie de Jesus*, ch. vi), signifies "Baptists." They practised baptism, and like the old Ḥassayi (Essenians, or al-Chassāites) and Ibionayi (Ebionites) led an austere life. Considering the fact that their founder, Budasp, was a Chaldean sage, the true orthography of their name would be "Saba'ī," i.e. "Dyers" or "Baptists." A famous Chaldean or Assyrian Catholicos of the fourth century, Mar Shimon, was called "Bar Saba'ī," "Son of the Dyers." Probably his family belonged to the Sabian religion. The Qur-ān writes this name "Sābi'in" with the *hamza* vowel instead of

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ain as it is in the original Aramaic "Sābā'ī." I am cognisant, however, of other interpretations placed on the name "Sabian": some authors suppose it to be derived from "Sābi'," the son of Sheth, and others from the Hebrew "Sabā," which means "army," because they used to have a kind of special devotion to the stars as the host of heaven. Although they have nothing in common with the Christian Churches, except their peculiar "Sab'utha," or Baptism, they are wrongly called "the Christians of St. John-Baptist." The Qur-ān, as usual, writes all foreign names as they were pronounced by the Arabs.

An extensive and deep research in the religion of the Sabians, who had almost overrun the Arab nation long before the light of Islam shone with the appearance of the Holy Apostle of Allah, will show us several truths. There were three forms of baptism practised by the Jews, the Sabians, and the Christians. The Jewish baptism, which had no origin in their sacred books, was invented chiefly for the proselytes. Each religion had its definite baptismal formula and a special ritual. The Jewish "Kohen" (priest) baptized his convert in the name of Allah; the Sabian in the name of Allah and of John; but the Christian "Qashīsha" (in Arabic "qassis" or presbyter) baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in which the names of Allah and of Jesus are not directly recited. The diversity and the antagonism of the three baptismal systems is apparent. The Jew, as a true Unitarian, could not tolerate the name of John to be associated with that of the Elohim; whereas the Christian formula was extremely repugnant to his religious taste. There is no doubt that the Christian baptism, with its sacramental character and polytheistic taint, was abhorred also by the Sabians. The symbol of the covenant between Allah and His people was *not* baptism but circumcision (Gen. xvii.), an ancient institution which was strictly observed, not only by the three religions, but also by many pagan Arab tribes. These diverse baptismal forms and rituals among the Semitic peoples in the East were not an essential divine institution, but only a symbol or sign, and therefore not strong and efficacious enough to supplant one another. They all used water for the

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material of their baptism, and, more or less, in similar form or manner. But each religion adopted a different name to distinguish its own practice from that of the other two. The original Aramaic "Sab'utha"—properly and truly translated into the Greek "baptismos"—was faithfully preserved by the Saba'ites (Sabians). It appears that the Semitic Christians, in order to distinguish their sacramental baptism from that of the Sabaïtes, adopted the appellation of "ma'muditha" which, from a linguistic point of view, has nothing whatever to do with baptism or *even* with washing or immersion. It is only an ecclesiastical coinage. Why "ma'muditha" was adopted to replace "Sab'utha" is a question altogether foreign to our present subject; but *en passant*, I may add that this word in the Pshittha is used also for a pool, a basin for ablution (John v. 2). The only explanation which may lead towards the solution of this problem of the "ma'muditha" is the fact that John the Baptist and his followers, including Jesus the son of Mary and his disciples, caused a penitent or a proselyte to stand straight like a pillar in a pool of water or in a river in order to be bathed with water; hence the names of "āa'mid" and "ma'muditha."

(c) The Christian baptism, notwithstanding its fanfaronade definitions, is nothing more or less than an aspersion with water or an immersion in it. The Council of Trent anathematizes anyone who would say that the Christian baptism is the same as that of St. John's. I venture to declare that the Christian baptism has not only no spiritual character or effect, but is also even below the baptism of the Baptist. And if I deserve the anathema of the Church for my conviction, I shall deem it as a great honour before my Creator. I consider the pretensions of a Christian priest about the baptism as a means of purification of the soul from original sin and all the rest of it as of a piece with the claims of a sorcerer. The baptism with water was *only* a symbol of baptism with the Holy Spirit and with fire, and after the establishment of Islam as the official kingdom of God all the three previous baptisms vanished and were abolished.

(d) From the meagre and scant account in the Gospels

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we cannot get a positive definition of the true nature of the baptism practised by John and Jesus. The claim that the Church is the depository of the divine revelation and its true interpreter is as absurd as is ridiculous the claim that the baptized infant or adult receives the Holy Spirit and becomes a child of God.

If the Greek word "baptismos" is the exact word for the Aramaic "Sab'utha" or "Sbhu'tha," which I am sure it is, then the Arabic "Sibghat" in the Qur-án, not only does it solve the problem and uncover the veil hiding the mysterious prophecy of John the Baptist, but also is a marvellous proof that the sacred scripture of Islam is a direct revelation of Allah, and that His Apostle was inspired and the real person whom John predicted! The baptist ("Saba'ā") plunges or immerses his neophyte or an infant into a pond, as a dyer or a fuller plunges a cloth or garment into a kettle of dye. It is easily understood that baptism is not a "ṭhāra," purification or washing, nor "ṭabhāla," an immersion, nor even a "rāḥṣa," a bathing or washing, but "sab'aitha," a dyeing, a colouring. It is extremely important to know these distinctions. Just as a "saba'a," a dyer, gives a new colour to a garment by dipping it into a kettle of tincture, so a baptist gives his convert a new spiritual hue. Here we must make a fundamental distinction between a proselyte Gentile and a penitent Jew and Ishmaelite Arab. The former was formally circumcized, whereas the latter baptized only. By the circumcision a Gentile was admitted into the family of Abraham, and therefore into the fold of God's people. By baptism a circumcized believer was admitted into the society of the penitent and reformed believers. Circumcision is an ancient divine institution which was not abrogated by Jesus nor by Muhammad. The baptism practised by John and the Christ was only for the benefit of the penitent persons among the circumcized. Both these institutions indicated and presented a religion. The baptism of John and of his cousin Jesus was a mark of admission into the society of the purified penitents who promised loyalty and homage to the Apostle of Allah whose coming they both foretold.

It follows, therefore, that just as circumcision signified the

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religion of Abraham and his adherents (his slaves were also circumcized), so baptism signified the religion of John and Jesus, which was a preparation for the Jews and the Gentiles to accord a cordial reception to the Founder of Islam and to embrace his religion.

(e) According to the testimony of St. Mark (i. 1-8), the baptism of John had the character of the "remission of sins." It is stated that "all the country of Judæa and the inhabitants of Jerusalem went out to him and were all baptized by him in the River Jordan while confessing their sins." This is tantamount to saying that millions of the penitent Jews confessed their sins, were baptized by the Prophet, and then their sins were obliterated by the waters of baptism. It is generally admitted that St. Mark's Gospel is the oldest of the Four Gospels. All the ancient Greek manuscripts do not contain the last twelve verses added to chapter xvi. of this Gospel (verses 9-20). Even in these supplementary verses the formula "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" is not inscribed. Jesus simply says: "Go and preach my Gospel unto the whole world; he who believes and is baptized shall live, and he who does not believe shall be damned."

It is evident that the baptism of Jesus was the same as that of John's and a continuation of it. If the baptism of John was a sufficient means of the remission of sins, then the assertion that the "Lamb of God carries away the sins of the world" (John i.) is exploded. If the waters of the Jordan were efficacious enough to cleanse the leprosy of Naaman through the prayer of the Prophet Elisha (2 Kings v.), and to remit the sins of the myriads through that of the Prophet John, the shedding of the blood of a god would be superfluous and, indeed, incompatible with the divine justice.

There is no doubt that until the appearance of the Apostle Paul on the scene, the followers of Jesus Christ practised the baptismal ritual of John-Baptist. It is significant to note that Paul was a "Pharisee" belonging to a famous Jewish sect—like that of the Saducees—whom John and Jesus denounced as "the sons of the vipers." It is also to be observed that the

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author of the fifth book of the New Testament, called the "Acts of the Apostles," was a companion of this Paul, and pretends to show that those baptized by John the Baptist had not received the Holy Spirit "and therefore were re-baptized and then filled" with the Holy Spirit (Acts viii. 16, 17 and xix. 2-7), *not* through baptism in the name of Jesus, *but* through the "laying of hands." It is clearly stated in these quotations that the two baptisms were identical in their nature and efficacy, and that they did not "bring down" the Holy Spirit upon the person baptized whether by John, Jesus, or in the name of either of the two. By the "laying of their hands" of the Apostles upon a baptized person the Holy Spirit touched his heart, to fill it with faith and love of God. But this divine gift was granted only to the Apostles who were really prophets and inspired, and cannot be claimed by their so-called successors.

(f) If the Gospels mean anything at all in their statements concerning baptism, they leave behind the impression that there was no difference between the two baptisms, except that they were administered in the name of one or other of the two Prophets. The great Pharisee Paul or Saul of Tarsus has not a single kind word about John the Baptist, who had branded the sect of the Pharisees with the opprobrious epithet "the children of the vipers." There is a tinge of grudge against John and against the value of his baptism in the remarks made by Luke in the "Acts of the Apostles." And Luke was a disciple and companion of Paul. The admission by Luke that the baptism in the name of Jesus, too, was not carried out by the Holy Spirit is a sure proof against the Church which has arbitrarily and wantonly transformed it into a sacrament or a mystery. The Church's baptism was a perpetuation of John's baptism and nothing more; but the baptism with the Holy Spirit and with fire was reserved only for Islam. The expression that some twelve persons in Samaria "had not yet received the Holy Spirit, *because they were only baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus*" (Acts vii. 16, 17), is decisive to frustrate the pretensions of the Church.

HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND ZAID

THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND ZAID

By MUHAMMAD 'ALĪ AL-HAJJ SALMIN

(Editor, *The Divine Message*)

THE present conflict between Islam and Christianity has disclosed the ruthless wounds inflicted by the fanaticism of the writings of European writers, for the most part in the dark, on the fame of Islamic culture by their mutilation of Islamic history, in a light so amazing that every Muslim of our times burns to sweep away all Christian influence from the literary world which, menaced by the venomous effect of such writing, has become reduced to a useless, selfish form. Many are the heroes of Islam in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. who have been victimized by these literary tigers, to the glorification of Christianity and to the belittlement of Islam. But why mention others when the Prophet of Islam himself suffers defamation at the hands of these personifications of fanaticism and religious spite? It is through such influences as these that the life of Zaid, a child-companion of the Prophet, has been painted by these writers in a sinister light; and so a short sketch of the life of Zaid is given below only for the purpose of removing the unjust "imputations" so unworthily cast upon his name.

His mother was the daughter of Tha'laba, who was the son of Abd 'Āmir. She belonged to the tribe of Moon Bin Tai. The great savant, Muhammad Abdu 'l-Bāqī Zurqānī, writes in the third volume of *Mawāhib* that when Zaid was, at the age of eight, captured by the tribe of Banī Qīn, and sold at the 'Ukāz Market, Hakim, the son of Hazim, bought him for four hundred dirahms for his paternal aunt, Khadijatu' l-Kubrā, who was generally known as Khadija. When the Prophet married Khadija he took Zaid from her care and straightway set him free from the bondage of slavery.

Ibn Hajr 'Asqalānī writes in his third volume of *Isāba fī-Tamyīzi 's-Sahāba* that the mother of Zaid had gone with him to visit the members of her tribe. This was at a very

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dark period of history when ignorance and ferocity were at their height in Arabia; and without warning a body of men from the tribe of Q̄in made a surprise raid on houses belonging to the tribe of Moon. In the midst of the attack the raiders seized Zaid, a mere child of a little more than seven, and carried him off. The child was very intelligent, and the marks of wisdom and deep penetration were conspicuous on his face. Thus it was that he was sold in the slave-market of 'Ukāz to Hakim, who eventually presented him to his paternal aunt, Khadija.

It is written in the *Sīrat Ibn Ishāq* that Hakim, the son of Hazim, brought certain slaves from Syria, among whom was Zaid. Khadija had come to her nephew's house immediately after her marriage to the Prophet Muhammad, and Hakim, as a matter of hospitality having exhibited all the slaves, asked her which she preferred for her own self. She singled out Zaid and carried him to the Prophet, who, as has been said, took him from her and forthwith gave him his liberty.

The view of Ibn Ishāq that the Prophet had adopted him soon after he had obtained his freedom is not correct, because before the adoption occurred the Prophet had been married to Khadija, and was expecting a child ere long. In the circumstances his adoption of Zaid becomes meaningless, for according to the ancient custom of that day the adoption of a child could be effected only when the adopter had no hope for one of his own. No such reason was present in this case. *Isāba* says that when Zaid became a slave in Khadija's household the latter was not yet married to the Prophet; which suggests that when the Prophet got Zaid for himself it was shortly before his marriage to Khadija. Then how can it even be possible that one who was on the point of being married and whose hopes were about to attain their fulfilment should, like hopeless and despairing persons, adopt another man's child?

The Prophet was extremely kind to Zaid, and loved him as most elderly persons love those younger than themselves. The Prophet loved Zaid so much that he often called him "son," and this has led many historians to the erroneous

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idea of adoption. Gradually this falsity spread and became generally accepted, and historians of every age have recorded it without any attempt on their part to ascertain its truth. Otherwise it is quite clear that it was only from the natural affection of an elderly man for Zaid that the Prophet habitually called him "son." This may be corroborated by the following circumstance. When his father and uncle came to offer a good ransom for the release of Zaid the Prophet authorized the latter to do just as he proposed. Zaid then replied that he would never prefer anyone to the Great Prophet, who had always regarded him as a son more than uncle or father ever had. From the above it may readily be gathered that if Zaid had been an adopted child he would never have said that the Prophet acted thus towards him. Rather he would have said that he was then adopted by the Prophet, and hence his refusal to go with his father. It is usual for a child to regard a kind and generous benefactor in the light of a parent, and this is quite sufficient to account for Zaid's reply. And a further point is to be considered, which is that when Zaid said of the Prophet that he acted more like a parent than had his father and uncle, by using the word "uncle" he made it abundantly clear that he was not adopted but only treated and regarded by the Prophet as a son, for which Zaid felt deeply grateful to so noble and sympathetic a master.

It is no less ridiculous that in speaking of the life of Zaid certain prejudiced and fanatical Christian priests and others have set it down, out of their sheer hatred for Islam, that Zaid was a specialist in the doctrines of Christianity, and that the Prophet used to learn many things about the Christian religion from him, for which reason the Prophet had adopted him as his own son. Sir William Muir and other Christian historians state that Zaid was one of the slaves of Khadija who used to teach the Prophet Christian doctrines in his early days; that Muhammad had an affection for him and hence his adoption as his son. This is a monstrous invention—for propaganda purposes, and for which there is no foundation whatever. No Islamic history asserts that Zaid and his father were Christians, nor is there any suggestion from any original

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source that they were really Christians and the followers of Christ. Zaid was only eight years old when he became one of the slaves of Khadija and was subsequently handed over to the Prophet. A mere child of eight, who was ruthlessly snatched away from the company of his parents, losing every chance of being decently brought up by them, can hardly be expected to know the ins and outs of any religion. When a child does not even comprehend what religion means, how can he be expected to be fully acquainted with all its divine, spiritual, and material principles? It is obvious that since the age of eight he received moral and religious instruction only at the hands of the Prophet. So that his knowledge of such subjects was obtained solely from the Prophet. Of course, if we are prepared to accept impossibilities as facts we might take him to be one, like Christ, receiving a vast and comprehensive education at the hands of God's angels, or in dreams, in a very short period of time; or like a Hindu recluse, who is sometimes born learned, or considered to be an educational prodigy at the very early age of five or six. If in these days of materialistic progress and advanced civilization we are not prepared to admit the probability of such a situation, how farcical it seems that an eight-year-old boy should be considered an expert in the knowledge of such a religion as Christianity!

As regards the father of Zaid, whose name was Hārith, the specialist Zurqāni has explained, with the help of a narrative by Ibn Falāh, that he too was converted by the founder of Islam. Ibn Hajr 'Asqalānī has given his biography in *Isāba*, and has mentioned him as one of the Prophet's companions. It is therefore little short of scandalous that Christian writers should call him a Christian in face of these facts. Zaid was very dear to the Prophet and considered his service the only means of salvation, and never did he wish to be absent, even for a moment, from so beloved and adorable a master.

Zuhri, Ibn Hajr 'Asqalānī, and Wāqidī, with reference to Sulaimān bin Yasār, say that Zaid was among the first to accept Islam.

Zaid participated in the Battle of Badr and others following.

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At times he would act as the Prophet's lieutenant. 'Ayesah, the dearest wife of the Prophet, says that with every deputation to the Quraishites, Zaid was sent as its head; and in some cases, if he was dispatched after the deputation had started, it was always as viceroy and chief representative of the Prophet.

His first marriage was with a maid-servant of the Prophet whose name was Umme 'Ainain, and who gave birth to Asmā. He was married a second time to Zainab, daughter of Jahsh, who was afterwards divorced and succeeded by Umme Kulthūm. At the age of fifty-five he was killed in the Battle of Mauta, during the month of Muharram, the first month of the Muslim lunar year, when he himself was acting as the head of the army.

SOME RELIGIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH EUROPEANS

By S. M. S. FARUQUE

[WE have much pleasure in printing the following article of our young friend Mr. Sheikh Muhammad Siddique Faruque, not only because it describes in a vivid manner his experiences and observations he made during his five years' stay with us at the Sir Salar Jung Memorial House, Woking, but also because they tend to show how the Muslim youth of the present day could turn to advantage its vast sphere of activities to the service of Islam. To carry the message of Islam and to jealously safeguard the honour of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is a duty incumbent on every one of us.—ED. I.R.]

THE first conversation I had was a great surprise both to myself and my interviewer. It happened some years ago at Woking, where I had, as usual, the pleasure of showing the Mosque to visitors who often come from various parts of England to see it. One day an elderly Roman Catholic lady came to the Mosque. She was a widow and apparently thought it would do her soul some good if she could convert me to her religion. So she boldly questioned me as to my religion. I was taken aback by her boldness, but remembering my Bible lessons, of which I have had a great deal in England, I summoned up my courage to point out to her that I believed

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Jesus was a holy prophet of God as he taught the same lessons as other prophets mentioned in the Bible had done before him, and as our Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon all prophets!) did afterwards. I told her that there was a unity of religion as well as a unity of Godhead in all their teachings. The commandments taught by Christ were the commandments taught by Moses and re-taught by the Holy Qur-án. After having heard all this she was aghast at my line of argument and said, "But don't you believe Jesus was the son of God?" I said, "How could anyone who had read the Bible believe that?" She said, "Why?" I said, "Well, if Jesus was God or the son of God, how was it that when he was on the Cross he cried out, 'Elli, Elli lama sabachtani' [i.e. "O God! O God! why hast thou forsaken me?"] Is it likely," I said, "that a person who was himself God would cry to another God? And is it not strange that that God should have forsaken Himself or His only son? None would ever be guilty of such a contradiction. It amounted to saying that God had forsaken Himself and was helplessly crying for aid." After having spoken these words I asked her for an explanation or answer. She simply said, "I don't know," and left the Mosque. She afterwards sent me printed matter headed *How to become a Roman Catholic*.

As a contrast to this conversation I would now relate to you a talk I had with another Roman Catholic lady on board the ship *Kashmir* on my voyage from London to Penang. She got into conversation with me, and as she was interested in religion I asked her what she believed in. She said she believed in the three mysteries: viz. (1) the mystery of the birth of Jesus from Virgin Mary; (2) the mystery of the resurrection of Jesus after his death on the Cross; and (3) the mystery of three Persons being One.

I very politely told her that it was no use believing in mysteries which no one could explain and that it would be better to believe in a religion which was fair and reasonable rather than mysteries which could not be proved to be true. I told her that the mystery of Jesus' resurrection was no mystery at all, but that even according to the Bible, Jesus had

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not died on the Cross.¹ According to the testimony of the narrators there were three persons who were nailed to the Cross at the time in question, and when their bodies were taken down two of them had their legs broken, but the legs of Jesus were not broken. He had been merely wounded and the time he had been on the Cross was not sufficient to have caused his death. He was taken down alive, and there being great confusion at the time there was not a tittle of evidence that he had actually died. So that there was no mystery of his resurrection. In fact, there was no resurrection at all. He was living then and some time afterwards. Ignorant people who are always willing to make mysteries and miracles out of their minds fancied it to be a coming back to life. Even now if a person escapes what appears to be unavoidable death from disease or illness we often say figuratively that he has come back to life or got a new lease of life. We don't say he has been resurrected. In this way I disposed of one of her mysteries, and if I had had time I am sure the other two mysteries would also have disappeared, for three cannot be one and one cannot be three, and they cannot be the same as they have different attributes. As to the birth of Christ, even if it is believed that Mary was a virgin at the time of his birth, it is no mystery, for science shows us innumerable examples of the birth of animals from a single parent. In fact, all birth originally was without sex.

Coming back to my lady interviewer on board the ship, I questioned her as to what she thought the Bible to be. She said, "Oh, it is merely a book of literature."

The third conversation I am going to relate was very brief, but it was a great shock to me and I am sure it was no less so to my interviewer.

One day a young lady came to see the Woking Mosque. She was in search of our secrets, for she looked very carefully at the pulpit, at the *Mehrab* (or the niche), the windows, and finally at the dome through which the light of the sun shone and lit the interior of the Mosque in a most wonderful manner.

¹ Cf. *Are the Gospels Inspired*, by Maulvi Sarrud-din; published by the Mosque, Woking. Price 8d.

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But the lady did not find what she was looking for. At last she turned to me and said, "Where is the idol?" I felt as if lightning had fallen from Heaven and for a minute I was rooted to the ground. My face was red with anger and my eyes must have radiated with the fire of faith, but somehow I controlled my tongue and told her that we Muslims did not worship idols, that our religion was the worship of One True God and that there was no god but One. She left immediately. This will illustrate in brief words the egregious misconceptions pregnant in the West about us. There are tens of thousands of ignorant Christians in the West who think that we either worship (God forbid!) Muhammad or that Allah is an ordinary deity like one of the deities of idol-worshippers. However, it is a matter of great pleasure to note that the truth is filtering through the gross dark prejudices of Christians, and there are a few Englishmen who have realized the futility of there being three gods or one God divided into three. As I was about to leave England a school-friend of mine, who lived five miles away from Woking, invited me to his place and said that his people were interested in religion. They were still Christians, and I am glad I had an opportunity of talking to them. The family consisted of father, mother, and three children. The father seemed to me to be the most interested in religion. They told me that a few days previous a European priest had delivered a sermon at Brookwood and had told them something about Islam, and that they wanted to hear more from me. I told them what I could about the teachings of our Holy Prophet and how the Holy Qur-án insisted on the worship of One God and Islam as being the only true religion from Adam unto Muhammad (Peace be upon them both!). I referred to the difference between the English Bible and the Holy Qur-án. I told them that the Bible could not be the Word of God, and that in fact it did not profess to be so. It was merely a "book of literature" and dealt with the life of Jesus as it was reported to the writers through the medium of various sources, and that there were serious contradictions in the various versions of the Bible according to the idiosyncracies of the writers or the narrators. This so impressed

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them that at last the father could not restrain himself and said (addressing me), "You and I could in fact sit down and write all that stuff." I presented the family with a copy of my father's¹ translation of the Holy Qur-án, and I am sure if I had lived longer in England I would have converted the whole family. I nearly did so in that short interview.

I will only give you one more illustration of the kind of conversation I have been having with Europeans and what success has attended my efforts.

A young man on board the ship *Kashmir* was always saying, "O Jesus, O Jesus!" Once when he was too much troubled by this cry I gently approached him and asked him why he was in such distress. He was startled, as no one had ever put him such a question, and woke from his reverie. At last he said, "Don't you believe in Jesus?" I said, "Yes, I believe in Jesus as a prophet of God, but not as a son of God, for God is Unique and has no sons or relations." The conversation then turned on to the relative merits of the Bible and the Holy Qur-án. I told him that if our Holy Prophet Muhammad had devised the Holy Qur-án out of his own mind he might have followed the Bible in attributing numerous miracles to himself, but the fact is that he never claimed to perform a single miracle. On the other hand, the stories of miracles in the Bible had been deprived of their miraculous character in the Qur-án and were related to be as ordinary natural events. I gave him the example of Jonah's story of being swallowed up by a fish as it appears in the Bible, which science now proves to be impossible. The Holy Qur-án only says that he was caught in the mouth of a fish (or whale), but was not swallowed. These facts so impressed him that he finally banged his knee and exclaimed, "Darn it, Jesus cannot be the son of God." But he said, "I don't like your Prophet because he allowed polygamy." I had to explain to him that polygamy was in existence prior to Muhammad and had been practised by Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, and other prophets mentioned in the Bible, and when Muhammad

¹ *Translation of the Holy Qur-án*, by H. G. Sarwar, M.A., the Mosque, Woking.

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appeared on the scene there was no limit to it. The Holy Qur-án not only put a limit of four wives to one man, but at the same time stated that if the husband could not keep equality he must marry only one. The law was therefore really in favour of monogamy and against polygamy. In exceptional cases, however, polygamy was a blessing rather than a drawback and tended towards morality and equity and prevented sensuality and adultery. These circumstances were exceptional and so was the permission of polygamy. In a perfect society the only law allowed was monogamy. He was very pleased with my statement of the Muslim law of marriage and said, "I now have much greater respect for your Prophet than I had before," and repeated the same statement at the dinner-table.

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The Lambeth Report.

The official papers of the Lambeth Conference, along with the Encyclical Letter and its resolutions, being the result of sitting in secret for five weeks, were made public on August 14, 1930.

The bishops define and restate their attitude towards such fundamental problems as marriage, divorce, birth-control, family life, union of the Churches, women and the ministry, youth and its vocation, and race.

The conclusions of the Conference on marriage and sex are interesting. We reproduce the resolutions.

The Conference recommends that "the marriage of one whose former partner is still living should not be celebrated according to the rites of the Church; where an innocent person has remarried under civil sanction and desires to receive the Holy Communion, the case should be referred for the Bishop's consideration, subject to provincial regulations; but all Bishops and clergy should keep before them the Church's 'unceasing responsibility for the spiritual welfare of all her members who have come short of her standard.'"

The following resolution was carried by 193 votes to 67:

"Where there is a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood, the method must be decided on Christian principles. The primary and obvious method is complete abstinence from inter-

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course (as far as may be necessary) in a life of discipline and self-control lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, in those cases where there is such a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood, and where there is a morally sound reason for avoiding complete abstinence, the Conference agrees that other methods may be used, provided that this is done in the light of the same Christian principles. The Conference records its strong condemnation of the use of any methods of conception-control from motives of selfishness, luxury, or mere convenience."

On problems of race and war, the most acute problem, it says

that the ruling of one race by another can only be justified when the admission of the subject race "to an increasing share in the government of the country is an objective steadfastly pursued." It resolves that all communicants without distinction of race or colour should have access in any church to the Holy Table, and urges that where, owing to diversity of language or custom, Christians of different races normally worship apart, special occasions should be sought for united services and corporate communion.

War as a method of settling disputes is condemned as incompatible with Christian teaching. Believing that peace will never be achieved until international relations are controlled by religious and ethical standards, the Conference appeals to the religious leaders of all nations to promote the ideals for which the League of Nations stands. A resolution welcomes the agreement of the leading statesmen of the world renouncing recourse to war as an instrument of policy, and appeals to all Christians to support this agreement to their utmost; and another urges that "the Christian Church in every nation should refuse to countenance any war in regard to which the Government of its own country has not declared its willingness to submit the matter in dispute to arbitration or conciliation."

On a study of the reports and criticism in the daily Press one is forced to come to the conclusion that the bishops—300 in number as they were—do not offer us a bold, fearless leadership. They instead betray a pathetic effort to follow the thinking of 1930, without being too far behind.

The proposal of the Conference compromises with the needs and the spirit of the age. Why is this so? It is because they, as usual, base their judgment on their Divine right to legislate for the people because of the patent fact that, to use the words of the Report, "it is no part of the purpose of the Scriptures to give information on those themes which are the proper subject-matter of scientific inquiry" while asserting in the same breath the supreme and unbroken authority of the Holy

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Scriptures. This is a feat which only the bishops can perform. Why should one go to a source at all when one recognizes once for all its incapability to meet with your demands?

The *Daily Express* for August 15th says, "the labours of the Bishops have resulted in nothing more than a half-hearted attempt to catch up with the turbulent current of modern life. . . .

But the leaders of the Church, like the leaders of politics, are following instead of leading.

Surely the duty of the bishops is to raise the banner of evangelism, to rouse the slumbering spirituality of the people, to preach the supremacy of goodness, to live the life of Christ, and to expound the teachings of Christ.

The Church that has failed to fire the souls of men with a passionate faith cannot hope to control the conduct of men by debated measures conceived in fear and born in compromise."

The *Sunday Chronicle* for August 17, 1930, thus expresses its opinion on some of the important problems discussed in its resolutions:

There is a more enlightened view of modern sex problems. But on divorce there is very little change of attitude. It may be that, as the bishops argue, divorce is unnatural; but there is something else which is unnatural, too—the prolongation of a marriage when love, respect, happiness, and even decency have fled from it.

Why does the Church fight shy of facing that plain fact? It may be regrettable, but it exists. To ignore it adds seriously to the unhappiness in the world to-day.

The spirit of to-day is definitely against the bishops on this fundamental matter, and that is why frank, modern thinkers will see a kind of sad comedy in this refusal to look at problems as they are.

We welcome Lambeth in so far as it is progressive. We regret it for the rest—and the rest is a very great deal.

The Bishops' Failure.

The bishops have posed long enough as the custodians and expounders of the mind of Jesus Christ. But is it not strange to find from the Report of the Conference that the mind of Jesus Christ—that is, if the resolutions of the Conference can at all be taken as an index to the mind of Jesus—is never abreast of the times. It always lags too far behind. The hollowness of this claim is being made more and more evident. The Church has its foundations on vague phrases, ambiguous words of unauthentic teachings. Success can never come

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through ambiguity. When one is not sure of the words of Jesus Christ, how can one be sure of the conclusions? This explains the ever-changing face of the Church.

To illustrate this, just take its attitude towards war now and in the fateful year of 1914. Time was when it countenanced it and blessed it. But now it condemns it. Let us be sure its condemnation is not because the Gospels condemn it, but because times have changed and because the Kellogg Pact has been signed and ratified by various governing bodies. If there had been explicit war-ethics in the Gospels or in the life of Jesus Christ, or if the Church was a truly inspired body, we ask, could it have been at all possible to so quickly change front?

There is no doubt that the Conference tried to grapple with some of the most burning points essential to its existence and that of society. Its deliberations, therefore, were destined to cause a furore. But what we fail to understand is, how reform can come from the Church without undoing and condemning its previous attitudes and decisions. Points on which it offers compromising decisions now are precisely the ones against which it has thundered its anathemas for centuries.

We are living in an inquiring age, and people are not ready to be led by the nose. In proportion to the advancement in learning, people will have nothing to do with an institution which shuffles the cards so often.

The Church, for instance, now approves of birth-control under the shelter of piety. It condemns divorce and re-privies it. It was not always so. In the medieval ages there was no birth-control, not even in monasteries or convents, and divorce was out of the question. They simply had an unlimited number of concubines (see Lea, *Sacerdotal Celibacy*.) There is no need to enlarge, nowadays, on the injustice of a marital union where one partner is tied to another who may be insane, a drunkard, or a criminal with no prospect of release because it is supposed to be against the law of God. Did a God of Justice and Love frame this law? We doubt it.

The bishops do and have, by opposing divorce reform, put a premium on irregular sex conditions. Instead of making,

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or helping to make, a happy home they are fostering vice and evil. They encouraged opposition to temperance and sobriety, to reform in the working conditions among children, and to education, and now claim to be its protagonists. Is this action consistent, inspired, or divinely revealed?

The *Evening Standard* for August 15th, in its leader, makes some telling comments on the attitude of the Church on the problems of divorce. We reproduce the rather lengthy excerpt, for it makes interesting reading:

It is useless to shut our eyes to the fact that moral standards which were formerly taken for granted are to-day the subject of keen criticism. The Bishops were obliged to recognize it, and there were two ways in which they might have dealt with the situation thus created. They might have said: "This criticism is a modern and malignant growth, a disease of the time. The ancient standards remain, the Church reaffirms them, and the Church will uphold them." Or they might have said: "The new age requires new methods, in morality as well as in other things. Since it falls to the Church to guide the people, we will boldly announce wherein the ancient standards must be modified."

But they have done neither of these things. They have compromised with modernity, but they have done so in a reluctant, carping, and querulous manner. The futility of this document is amply demonstrated by one sentence which says that "sexual intercourse between persons who are not legally married is a grievous sin." Did it really need three hundred odd Archbishops and Bishops, come from all the ends of the earth, to tell us that this was the opinion of the Church?

Most people, however, will hasten past profundities of this nature to learn whether the Conference has anything constructive to say upon the problems of marriage and divorce. It has. It declares that "to maintain the ideal of marriage is to preserve the social health of the community," and that "it follows that divorce is unnatural." In its opposition to divorce the Church may be right, but the arguments produced by the Conference make no attempt to meet the arguments on the other side, nor is it explained how "the ideal of marriage" is to be preserved by keeping decent and innocent people indissolubly linked to adulterers, criminals, drunkards, and lunatics.

The Bishops do, however, recognize that people insist on getting divorced, and therefore they propose a singularly illogical method of dealing with them. The innocent petitioner is not, in any circumstances, to be remarried according to the ceremonies of the Church, but may, if the Bishop of the diocese so decides, be admitted to Holy Communion.

This appears to us to be little short of amazing. If the Church so far disapproves of the remarriage of divorced persons as to refuse to remarry them, it must surely consider that, when they avail themselves of the services of the State to the same end, they are living in open sin. But persons living in open sin ought not to be admitted to

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Holy Communion. This is typical of the situations which the timidity of the Conference has produced.

Speaking generally, the Bishops have followed the example of the Scottish minister who, interpreting a knotty text, said: "Here, ma freens, is a deeficulty. And what must we do wi' that deeficulty? We must look it straight in the face—and pass on." This is an attitude which will not help the Church to take her place in the life of the nation.

Marriage is purely and simply a civil contract; in early times it was recognized as a means of securing property succession in legitimacy, and for securing property and material goods, as well as a social safeguard. When Christianity became the State religion, the Pope sought to consolidate his power. The idea was promulgated that the Church had right and power to regulate and control this contract. It was promptly made a *sacrament*. We do not find that this was taught by Jesus and nowhere can this claim be verified. The teachings of the early Christians did not recognize the sacraments, and as a matter of fact the number of them was not decided until about the thirteenth century. They did not know how many there were: some said five, others said six, and finally it was fixed at seven, probably because there were seven days in the week and seven was a lucky number.

The various Councils argued, quarrelled, and fought, and finally fixed the tenets and the Canonical Books of inspired writers. It is said that all were put together in a church overnight and in the morning the canonical and uncanonical were found miraculously sorted out and the wheat separated from the chaff. Hence by this means the spurious Gospels were deleted. No one is ready to believe such a fairy tale, knowing as we do the proneness to forgery and fraud displayed in all Church history, from the last chapter of St. Mark to the multiplicity of relics—pieces of the cross, among other things, enough to build a good-sized house—the several heads of John the Baptist, and lastly the fraud of the Donation of Constantine. Certainly the Church and all belonging to it is inspired, but it is with deception, error, and misteaching, which did not come from the Deity, nor from Jesus, but from human-made ideas of a God made in man's own image.

The revealed and authentic, or said to be authentic, teach-

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ings of Jesus can be boiled down to a chapter or two of the New Testament, the rest is neither divine nor authentic, but priest and monk-made. For instance, Jesus is said to have been born in Nazareth and Bethlehem: he could not have been born in both the places; his genealogy differs in the accounts given. Paul seems to have been ignorant of some facts in the life and mission of his Master. Various instances could be given of the discrepancies in the basic Christian doctrines which show glaring ignorance. If the doctrines had been inspired, this could not be. It is plentifully sprinkled with evidence of its human origin, and full of error at that. Where, then, are the revealed teachings which the Church claims to have?

It is remarked (*Daily Herald*, August 15th): "They [the bishops] will say that the Church has been losing its grip because it has been losing understanding, and its increasing life can only be built upon teachings relating more nearly to the need of common people." Quite so. As far as understanding of the needs of the common people is concerned, *it never had it*, it was always a bar to progress and still is: if it had had any understanding of the needs of the people it would never have opposed their welfare.

It has consistently fought the welfare of the people, and does so to-day. How can it expect adherence? It fought against temperance, and in the early days of the movement forbade the use of churches and rooms for meetings, probably because revenue came from the sale of drink. It fought against remedying the abuse of child labour in the mills and factories of Lancashire (Clayton, *Bishops as Legislators*). It fought against the passage of Education Bills; why? There is no need to ask why; it fought against social reform and the elimination of abuses in the life of the people. It fought time and again, and does now, against the abuse of injustice in marriage and divorce laws. Judges have said that the divorce laws of England are no credit to her. And in spite of all this the Church claims to be divinely inspired. It is self-deceived, and if this claim is based on the bolstering up of conditions which are opposed to its Founder's teachings, there

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is only one inference to be drawn, and that is this—that it is a glaring fraud.

The result of all this will always be what we see to-day in the pages of the Lambeth Report—Failure writ large.

The Individuality of a Wife in Christianity and Islam.

Although on all sides it is being proclaimed, even by eminent lawyers and judges of courts, that women of the present day have more privileges than men, yet it is strange to observe that there are anomalies which still persist as a remnant of the hold of Christian custom and dogmatism on law and social life. A woman in Christendom, for instance, loses her name at the time of her marriage. This last vestige of bondage of woman to man may or may not disappear, but the fact remains that the existence of this institution gives a lie to the idea that the rising status of woman is due to Christianity. This idea is a common one and can be only maintained by dint of ignorance of Christian history.

We were accordingly glad to read an article of Mr. Robert Graves on this point in the *Evening Standard* for February 19, 1930, which expresses the absurdity of this custom and enters a plea for its early abolition. Mr. Graves remarks:

Now that women have overcome so many enormous obstacles put in the way of their political and economic equality with men, and have won such confidence in themselves and learned to dress sensibly to match this confidence, and have even forced an alteration in the marriage-vow, why do they consent to carry on this ugliest and most unnecessary of all symbols of their recent complete subservience to male power and tradition?

When Mary Smith marries, the registrar or parson can be counted on to say with a smirk, "And now, Mrs. Wulfric Wilson, you will sign your maiden name for the last time." Mary Smith can then be counted on to smile and say to Wulfric, "Darling, I must get some cards printed at once with my proper name." The fact is that Mary loves and trusts Wulfric, and to take his name is to her a romantic unifying of their identities.

Unfortunately this romance is strictly one-sided, for there never was a Wulfric who delighted to call himself Mr. Mary Smith. This one-sidedness may seem a trivial thing at the time, but afterwards Mary will realize what it means to a hundred and one people out of a hundred: that she is at best a junior partner in the Wulfric firm, at worst a possession of Wulfric's, stamped with his initials and tagged with his laundry mark.

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No day will pass without one or more reminders that she is assumed to have lost all power of initiative, particularly where money is concerned, since she persuaded Wulfric to lend her the protection of his name. No business or official transaction that she was accustomed to manage quite easily as Mary Smith can be carried through now without Wulfric Wilson being dragged into it. If she is a woman of any self-respect, and however good to her Wulfric may be, she will wish herself Mary Smith again. . . .

The Mary Smith who has had the constancy to remain Smith will be glad of it in the end. Particularly if Wulfric turns out bad and she has to divorce him. She will be able to describe herself then as "Mary Smith, unmarried," and business will not be complicated with inquiries as to the occupation and present whereabouts of a man whom she is doing her best to forget about. And when Wulfric remarries she will be able to smile at the appearance in the telephone book of a Mrs. Wulfric Wilson, or even eventually of two or three Mrs. Wulfric Wilsons.

It is largely women's complaisance towards this change-of-name system that delays the reform of that other most one-sided and unjust convention—the compulsory taking of a husband's nationality by a wife, an acquisition which clings to her even after his death, divorce, or desertion of her.

Those who are still devoted to marriage as an institution, and those who though not devoted to it yet regard it as necessary in the present fundamentally wrong economic system (let me admit that I belong to neither of these categories), should realize that the only way to bring it back to repute as an "honourable estate" is to allow the contract to become, both in fact and in symbol, as honourable for the woman as for the man.

The importance of the symbol in influencing the fact cannot be over-estimated.

We would, as a befitting conclusion, wind up his remarks by the observations of an eminent lawyer on this self-same topic as far as Islam is concerned. Pierre Crabitte, a Judge of the Cairo Mixed Tribunal, in *Asia* for January, 1927, New York, says:

In Islam, a wife, technically speaking, does not take her husband's name. A Muslim girl born Aysha 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.

As to her business or official transaction he observes as follows:

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 matter he has no greater rights than would have any perfect stranger.

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The Probable Course of English Religion during the Next Generation.

The writings and views of Dr. Barnes, the Bishop of Birmingham, always interest us, not so much because they are revolutionary and tend to almost coincide with the views of Islam, as because they can be regarded as representative of the modern age. A few months ago he made a notable statement (*vide the Church Times* for January 31, 1930) on the probable course of English religion during the next generation.

The excerpt given below is worthy of the close attention of every Muslim, and this consideration is our only justification of the lengthy quotation from the Encyclical, which reads:

After the great scientific advance at the end of the seventeenth century there came the Latitudinarianism of the first half of the eighteenth century. There is real danger that a similar development will now set in.

Modernism is a presentation of the Christian faith in the light of the new knowledge, especially of science and the Bible, which is now available for all. As this knowledge spreads, all that is opposed to it in Anglo-Catholicism and Evangelicalism will wither or remain among small groups of irrational Obscurantism.

In the country as a whole new knowledge, while it has probably not spread faster, has had a more disintegrating effect on faith than within the Church. The result is that Latitudinarianism is now widespread outside the Church. Unless devout and learned Modernists can keep it at bay it will almost necessarily infect our clergy and congregations, and the scandalous laxity of the eighteenth century will revive. Already there are signs of such decay.

But what is Modernist faith? What can we teach our people? These questions come increasingly from thoughtful laymen and from embarrassed clergy. I have not space in which to give an adequate answer; but, in brief, evolution is the key to the modern approach to the Christian faith.

(1) The Creative Process, by which alike stars and men have been fashioned, is a unity. The Process is unthinkable as a mechanism. It is purposive. Behind it lie not only Power but also Intelligence. Moreover, because its outcome on earth is man, with his ethical ideals and aspirations, Creative Purpose is moral. Thus we arrive at Christ's intuition that God, the creator and ground of all, is our Father.

(2) Further, the Universe is, for our thought, rational. Yet it would be profoundly irrational were man's life to end with the grave. We must then accept that doctrine of a future life which is central in Christ's teaching.

(3) Christ's teaching of man's duty, which is associated with the phrase "the Kingdom of Heaven," naturally follows from belief in the Fatherhood of God.

(4) That we are morally free, and therefore responsible to God for

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our actions, follows from our constant and invariable experience of life. Thus there is no escape from the severity of Christ's teaching with regard to wrong-doing.

(5) The appeal of Christ, and the ground of our reverence for Him, must be based on what in our highest moments we feel to be His spiritual knowledge and authority, His power to reveal God and to guide mankind. All extraneous credentials are of slight value.

Such, briefly, is the positive faith of Modernism. On its negative side it rejects *in toto* the dualisms of popular and of traditional thought.

(1) It refuses to cut the Universe into two parts—a natural and a supernatural. The whole is God's. His guidance and rule are everywhere, save where the freedom which He allows His creatures conflicts with His purpose.

(2) Modernism similarly refuses to oppose the Sacraments of the Church to those of Nature. God reveals Himself in many ways. The Holy Communion is not invariably superior to, nor is it different in kind from, other channels of Divine grace.

(3) Similarly, Modernism refuses to sever Jesus from humanity. He was God *and man*. The union was possible because in all men some degree of Divine indwelling can take place. Of course, in such a doctrine the Modernist is reaffirming the purest orthodoxy of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries.

(4) Once again, Modernism refuses to allow that the Bible is different from other collections of books in that it is miraculously free from error. The Modernist finds in the Bible a quality and range of spiritual excellence unequalled elsewhere. But the writer and teachers whose message it gives made mistakes, for they were human. We must search out the gold: what remains can be ignored.

In thus sketching the principles of Modernism I submit what, as I believe, will be the religion of the Church half a century hence. Of course, the Church of England may then be but a memory. Faction fights may have torn it to pieces; but I hope not.

His observations on the Bible and Jesus embodied in the negative side of Modernism are particularly important. How clearly they approach the Islamic conception of Jesus will be easily understood by a perusal of the editorial comments of the *Church Times* for January 31, 1930. We read:

Dr. Barnes has taken pains to let his diocese know exactly what he believes or disbelieves. His confession, printed in the *Diocesan Leaflet*, is, we suggest, hardly to be distinguished from Unitarianism. He rejects the doctrine of Sacramental grace, as the Church has always understood it, with the assertion: "The Holy Communion is not invariably superior to, nor is it different in kind from, other channels of Divine grace." He would seem to reject the doctrine of the uniqueness of our Lord, the One Incarnate Son of God, with the assertion: "He was God and Man. The union was possible because in all men some degree of Divine indwelling can take place." We agree that this statement is patent of a Catholic interpretation, but, used by Dr. Barnes, it is fair to assume that it implies that our Lord was different from all other men in degree and not in kind. The Bishop

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makes no reference to the Virgin Birth, the Sacrifice on Calvary, or the Resurrection. This colourless, pedantic faith is, in Dr. Barnes's opinion, certain to prevail. All that is opposed to it will wither or be dispersed as "emotional obscurantism." In fifty years' time the Church of England will be Modernist, or a mere memory. "Faction fights may have torn it to pieces." The Bishop obviously has Birmingham in mind. But there were no faction fights in Birmingham before Mr. MacDonald made the fatal blunder of sending Dr. Barnes there.

The learned reverend gentleman, like a Muslim in other words, believes that Jesus is the natural son of Joseph and Mary, was inspired and gifted, possessed glorious moral and religious excellence, is one of the noblest of God's creatures, is one of the most disinterested lovers of mankind, and that he is not the everlasting son of "the Father," and that he is not the creator of the world.

As to the Bible, he just corroborates the verse of the Qur-án which reads:

"And most surely there is a party of them who lie about the Book [the Bible], that you may consider it to be (a part) of the Book while it is not (a part) of the Book, and they say, It is from Allah, while it is not from Allah; and they tell a lie against Allah whilst they know" (iii. 77).

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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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