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Islamic Review

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

Vol. XX.]

[No. 4

ZU'L-HIJJ, 1350 A.H.

APRIL, 1932 A.C.

Annual Subscription, 10s.

Single Copy

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Telegrams : { Mosque, Woking
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THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION AND LITERARY TRUST (REGD).

(Incorporating the *Islamic Review*, The Muslim Literary Trust, The Basheer Muslim Library and The Isha'at-i-Islam).

Head Office :

AZEEZ MANZIL, Brandreth Road, Lahore, India.

Office in England :

THE MOSQUE, Woking, Surrey, England.

Bankers : LLOYDS BANK LTD., Lahore, India. BARCLAY'S BANK, LTD., Woking

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A Partial View of the Eid-ul-Fitr (1350 A.H.) Congregation at the Shah Jehan Mosque,
Woking, while at their prayers.



THE HOST OF THE HAPPY OCCASION :

H. E. 'Abd el-Wahhāb Dāwūd Bey, the Egyptian Chargé d'Affaires in London (3rd from the left),
with other Egyptian Friends at the Royal Egyptian Legation, London, W.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
شَهِدَهُ وَصَلَى عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

THE
ISLAMIC REVIEW

ZU'L-HIJJA, 1350 A. H.

VOL. XX.

APRIL, 1932 A. C.

No. 1.

EID-UL-FITR AT THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

East meets West in Oriental Road.

Thus ran the heading under which "The Evening Standard," the London Daily, owned by a Conservative Peer, published a description of the Eid-ul-Fitr Festival as celebrated at the Mosque, Woking, on Tuesday, the 9th February, 1931. On this occasion, we propose, by way of variety, to present our brethren with extracts from the account given in that paper, for it is always interesting to know what others think about us.

In describing the congregation, the reporter says:—

"There were sons of Ethiopia, black as coal, flat-nosed, with crisp hair; men and women of Persia, indistinguishable in colour from the darker Europeans; there were small Semitic looking men . . . there were young men and women, tawny and beautiful, straight as spears and grave, well-marked dignity. In dress, as in face, they were very various. A colourful picture they made when they were assembled in chattering groups on the rich carpets that floored the large electrically lit marquee on the lawn of the

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Mosque. There were fez hats of conventional red and tight-fitting little hats of astrakhan. There were turbans of scarlet and orange, of green and pink, some finished off with bows of flowing lawn. There were rich embroidered robes worn over flannel bags. There were legs swathed in white linen and legs in trousers of flapping silk. The burnoose adorned and ennobled two men of proud aspect, and there were many who wore the day-to-day English dress. There was a British Peer—Lord Headley—with his lady, and there were men shuffling about soundlessly in their socks. But most of them kept on their shoes. All this colour, with its evocation of the East, fell into three straight lines when the silky voice of the Imam began to intone the prayers.”

We need add nothing to this description, except perhaps a wish that the writer had given his impressions of the British Muslims, who were not so very few in number, saying their Islamic prayers side by side with their brethren from the East. His description would then have fitted in somewhat better with its heading. He might also have mentioned that taking part in this Muslim religious function were a large number of Christians and Hindus, as well as of men who profess no religion at all, and these were as welcome as any Muslim.

The prayer began at 11-30 a.m., and the sermon that followed, dealing with the solution, presented by Islam, of the problem of the distribution of wealth, closed at about 1 o'clock. After this, Lord Headley addressed the gathering for about twenty minutes on the prospects of the London Nizamiah Mosque. The Host of the occasion, His Excellency Abdul Wahhab Bey, Chargé d'Affaires of the Egyptian Legation, then rose to say a few words, wishing a happy Eid to his co-religionists assembled at the Mosque. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the renowned Indian-Muslim politician, also spoke in appreciation of the Mosque and its work. Then

EID-UL-FITR AT THE MOSQUE, WOKING

began that essential part of all functions—refreshments,—which lasted till 2-30 p.m., after which, the assembly began to disperse, but a party of English friends lingered on to have a quiet talk with us and partaking of tea in the course of the afternoon. It was not till past 7 o'clock that the officials of the Mosque began to feel that the Eid was over.

The congregation was estimated at about 400. Among the notabilities, the following names may be mentioned :—

Al-Hajj El-Farooq Lord Headley, Sir Umar Hubert Rankin, Bart., His Excellency the Chargé d'Affaires of the Egyptian Legation, His Excellency the Persian Minister, Sir B. N. Mitter, the High Commissioner for India, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Dr. Mahmood Riad Zada, the Secretary of the Hedjaz Minister, Lady Headley, Mrs. Buchanan Hamilton, Amir Adal Arsalan, the brother of the well-known Muslim leader Amir Shakib Arsalan, and Prince Muhammad Sadiq of Mangrol.

AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD.

EID-UL-AZHA GIFTS.

The Trustees of the Woking Muslim Mission Trust have decided to distribute Islamic Literature among the Non-Muslims at the occasion of the coming Eid-ul-Azha. Would the Muslim brethren all over join them by sending small donations to widen this free circulation.

Secretary, Woking Muslim Mission Trust.

A THEISTIC CONCEPTION.

BY K. KUDOS.

Theists, or the Brahmos of India, believe in the necessity of Divine guidance, but they do not believe that it comes directly from the Lord. They think that some of the highly evolved souls read the will of the Lord in this respect. It dawns upon their mind like poetical inspirations which they formulate in their own words.

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They think it impossible for human being to hear anything from the Above. They regard the so-called revelation as a creation of human mind, but not as a piece of knowledge that comes from without. The Holy Book meets the contention in three ways. Firstly, the Revelation speaks of things which are unseen. They cannot come within the range of sensuous perception. The Holy Qur-án predicts certain scientific evolutions. They disclose a knowledge which has recently come within scientific ken. If the said knowledge did not exist in the days of the Prophet, but came to the world centuries after, how could it dawn upon his mind if he did not receive it from some external agency. Secondly, we do not possess any knowledge at the time of our birth. It owes its existence to things existing in the outer world. Our eyes and ears are the chief senses that bring information of all sorts to our mind. If they appeal to it, they are relegated to memory, then they become a piece of our knowledge and help us in future as guidance. This is the only course through which we receive any knowledge. If Divine guidance is but a piece of knowledge, it cannot get its origin from within. Thirdly, the Book speaks of various other things that have been given to us to meet our various needs like wool, fur, shade and places of rest in the hills. All of them exist in the outer world. They were not the creatures of the mind.

It has been said that Revelation comes from the Lord for mental nourishment. The Holy Book says the same repeatedly. If human mind has no hand in the production of all other foods how can we look to it for its own food? It is an insult to the Providence if He failed in providing it. The law of demand and supply that obtains everywhere establishes the same truth. Everything has got some need, but the needful comes from without. If the ways of the Lord are unchangeable, He need not make an exception in this case.

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The Qur-án refers also to laws of life in this respect. They act in different forms in the Universe, but external causes always work out the life. Our life depends upon various products of the earth, they all come out of it with the help of water that comes from the heavens. Nations also meet life and death. There are two nations in the whole history of the world that came to life, as if it were, suddenly. The Hebrews and the Arabs were living as non-entities on the earth, but the appearance of the two great men brought them to life. They were Moses and Muhammad. But if their words are to be accepted in this respect, they were so actuated by a word from the Lord who spoke to them as man to man.

Though Theistic contention is not tenable on its very face, but it involves an assumption dangerous to the character of the Prophets. They observed the best of morals and taught the same to others. But they themselves committed wrong of the blackest dye in giving their message to the people. They were the author of the message, but they declared it as if it were from God. It was a worst piece of sin as they spoke lie on God. They themselves composed the Book but they declared that it was a Revelation from the Lord. The Holy Book refutes this assertion in a most eloquent way when it refers to the past life of the Holy Prophet. He was well-known for his honesty, so much so, that he had received the epithet of "Al-Amin" from his own people which means the "truthful." How could he speak such a wicked lie after passing 40 years of truthfulness? I quote the Qur-án in this respect :—

" Say : If Allah had desired (otherwise) I would not have recited it to you, nor would He have taught it to you : indeed I have lived a lifetime among you before it : do you not then understand ? " Who is then more unjust

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than he who forges a lie against Allah or (who) gives the lie to His communications? Surely the guilty shall not be successful." (10 : 16-17).

Again the Book says :—

" And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah, or says : It has been revealed to me ; while nothing has been revealed to him, and he who says : I can reveal the like of what Allah has revealed ? " (6 : 94).

The Theists do not fail to appreciate the situation, but they say that the prophets could not reform their people without adopting this policy, as they could not sanctify their work and enhance its importance without calling it a message from the Lord. But it is another scurrilous libel on the memory of these chosen people, nay, we are not true to ourselves in saying so. We sit at the feet of these men to learn lessons of morality, and truthfulness is one of the chief morals. The Qur-án repeatedly denounces falsehood in a very strong language. It calls a liar as one who is under the curse of the Lord, and yet the holiest of the holy as the Prophet is, seems to me a perpetrator of a most heinous wrong if the Theistic conception of Revelation is a correct one.

It seems to me the best of argument which the Qur-án advances in support of Prophet's claim to Divine Revelation. It is neither scholastic nor academical. It reasons out the case in the terms of human experience. If it appeals to an average mind, it also provides a cogent reason for a man of culture. The statement was equally accepted by friends and foes in the days of the Prophet though they looked to it from different angles. Those who were opposed to the Prophet could not declare him to be a liar. They knew that not a word of lie did ever pass his lips. They therefore took the Qur-án as a piece of hallucination coming from a mind possessed of madness or some evil-

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spirit. But this is not the position of the modern Theist. Like the Meccans, he regards the Holy Prophet as a man of truthfulness and verity. He would accept his words if the latter said that some of the Qur-ánic Revelations came to him without his intention or knowledge, but passed his mind suddenly with no association to his environments. Again if the Prophet said that he heard voices from the outer world or from a corner where there was no human being to articulate any sound, the Theist would accept the truth of these words. But he would style them as psychic experiences unknown perhaps in those days. The Theist would ascribe the first experience of the prophet to his sub-consciousness. As to the other he would take it as the work of a developed imagination that would clothe the creation of the mind with articulate sounds as if coming from outside. It could be taken as a plausible explanation if the Prophet had been the only witness of his experiences. But there are more than dozen of trustworthy people who speak of the peculiar phenomenon that they use to observe when a larger portion of the Qur-án was revealed.

The Qur-án speaks of three modes which God adopts when speaking to man :—

“ And it is not for any mortal that Allah should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases, surely He is High, Wise.” 42 : 51.

I speak here of the last one. It occurred in this way. The Holy Prophet while talking to the company of his friends all of a sudden his face began to change colours. A sort of senselessness overtook him. He gradually became unconscious of all his environments. He seemed, as if it were, to labour under a very heavy load. His whole body perspired. Sometimes his forehead became moistened with large drops of perspiration. His

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lips began to move and his tongue repeated some words with a rapidity that made it impossible for the companions to follow them. The Prophet sometimes remained in this condition for a considerable time. He would then recover, and ask his scribes to write the Revelation he thus received. No inspiration—poetic or philosophic—has ever come to man in this state of mind, especially when the composition revealed possessed the best of style and diction in matter of language. It gave the best of knowledge on ethics, morality, statesmanship and several other things appertaining to humanity. It sometimes spoke of sciences that the world had yet to discover centuries after. High composition always accompanies with deep thinking and sound meditation with full absorption of mind, but never a piece of knowledge came to man in such a state of unconsciousness. The merits of the Book baffle all explanations. It could not be a piece of madness as the Qur-án says in the following words :—

“(Consider) the inkstand and the pen and what they write. By the grace of your Lord you are not mad.

“And most surely you shall have a reward never to be cut off.

“And most surely you conform (yourself) to sublime morality.

“So you shall see, and they (too) shall see, which of you is afflicted with madness.

“Surely your Lord best knows him who errs from His way, and He best knows the followers of the right course.

“So do not yield to the rejecters.” 58 : 1-8.

The message that disclosed such sublime morality and worked out wonders in the world could not be the work of a madman. The book therefore asks its readers to see for themselves if the Books written by others on similar subjects could be the writings of the lunatics. But

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I would go further and ask the Theists to consider if the Qur-án could speak of unseen things. In addition to its other merits, it is not the work of an human mind. The above verses speak of the best of reward that had to come to the Prophet's followers. It did happen after his death, but it was prophesied scores of years before its occurrence.

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What the Westerner thinks of Religion Outside the Church.

Towards the end of November 1931 *the Daily Herald* published four articles dealing with the idea of God as conceived by four persons eminent in the public life of England. The policy of the paper being what is commonly termed "broad" as regards matters religious, it does not, generally, rule out opinions that sound heretical to the ears of orthodox Christians. In the present case, of the four persons, two alone have shown any anxiety to identify themselves with Christianity, and these two are Mr. G. K. Chesterton and Mr. Paul Robeson. But the other two, and curiously enough both happen to be ladies, express themselves in a manner quite incomprehensible if they are Christians. It is remarkable that in forming its concepts of God, the British public does not, now, regard the Church as the indispensable guide. The very fact that the Church is interested in the opinions of secularist leaders on spiritual matters shows how things are moving in this island. But the most remarkable aspect of the matter is that women, who are regarded as the most ready victims to Sacerdotalism in every country and age, should be more forward than men in cutting themselves loose from Church slavery. Perhaps a more contemptuous defiance of organized religion has never hitherto been witnessed.

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The God of Religion.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton would believe in a God who has "made men free that they may love Him and serve Him—or not—as they choose." In his opinion "a Christian must be a rebel against the Modern World, which more and more enslaves men—which gives them less and less the power of choice." Although Mr. Chesterton, graduating, as we may say, in the Church of England, is now a Roman Catholic, he has a good word for the atheist. "I believe him to have been wrong in his conclusions," he says, "but he reached conclusions, he thought things out, his ideas matched,—they meant something. And so you could argue with him." His whole rage is directed against those "who have a bundle of ideas which bear no logical relation to each other," and with whom, consequently, it is impossible to argue. The attack is evidently directed against the Protestant Church, especially the Established Church of England, which, besides making an absurd show of Puritanism in a cult based on Passion Play, has strangely sought to blend Sacerdotalism with parliamentary control of religious belief and ritual. Whatever may be the other faults of Catholicism, it deserves credit for its consistency. A Catholic is perhaps as consistent and logical in his blind faith as is his friend at the opposite pole—the atheist. Mr. Chesterton is rightly proud of this merit of his faith, and his invective against the reformed Church is, therefore, justified so far as that aspect of the question is concerned.

Christianity and Freedom.

But one word as to the attitude of Christianity towards Freedom. Mr. Chesterton is a man of letters, and he must be well aware of the blood-stained pages contributed to the World's book by the Church to which he belongs. The treatment meted out by the Romish Church to unbelievers, heretics and scholars emboldened by the light of truth

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have no parallel in history. And still Mr. Chesterton has the hardihood to assert that "Christianity is based on man's right to be free." This is a bold statement, indeed. If Mr. Chesterton would only forget for the time being that he is a novelist, he might think it worth while to substantiate his assertions by facts of history.

Of course, when we talk of Christianity we do not mean the teaching of Jesus, because no historical religion was ever based on them. It is, indeed, a matter for wonder that any group of men could ever dream of living by them, or that the words "Resist not Evil" could be a message of any help to living beings. One cannot even imagine how absolute passivity of this kind can ever be reconciled with any idea of liberty. Christianity, however, as generally known, was born at the Council of Nice, and its enunciations, as given by Athanasius, presented a liveable creed, no doubt, but fit only for a society whose highest consciousness could never go beyond the impulse of the animal. Quite naturally it gave a tremendous set-back to the growing spiritual consciousness of Man, towards which Humanity was then fast moving. It brought a period of reaction, servility, oppression and suppression. It is inconceivable how a Church, thus founded, could have any room even for the very conception of Freedom. A Church that insists on blind faith in respect of a doctrine that finds no support from the experience of man and the laws of nature, and is violently opposed to the elementary rules of thought, cannot possibly have anything to do with freedom of mind, without which no freedom is possible. And if we do find freedom in intellectual and social lives of Christian peoples to-day, we should not forget that it is not on account of the Christianity, for which the Church stands, but, on the contrary, this result has been achieved in spite of it. Those who know the history of freedom and that of the Humanitarian movements in the West are not

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unaware of the fact that the Church invariably opposed them at the outset, and tolerated them generally when they had got out of control, but never gave active lead or moral support to any. The history of the Anti-Slavery movement is enough to show the attitude of the Church (and what is Christianity minus the Church ?) towards such matters.

The Problem of Evil as Solved by Christianity.

Another assertion made by Mr. Chesterton invites criticism from the Muslim point of view. He says " The problem of evil is a real one, but whether you believe in God or not, that problem exists, and I came to believe that *Christianity offers the only reasonable solution of it.*¹

The world knows very well what that reasonable solution is. It is that the very existence of man on this earth is due to his sinful nature, that evil is engrained in the nature of man, and that it cannot be overcome by man's own efforts. It was for this reason that millions and millions of years after the expulsion of man from heaven, God had to send to this earth " His only begotten son " to atone for this fundamental fault of human nature. We do not know if the nature of man has, in any way, changed since then, or whether any section of mankind has been brought nearer to God by that " atonement. " But one thing should be known to the people that believe in that ununderstandable solution of the problem of evil in man—that the Divine instinct in their minds were left uncultivated for centuries. But a very different set of principles was preached and practised by the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his followers. These principles filtered through various processes, and gained ground in the Christian minds and thoroughly changed their outlook on life. To the students of history, the reformed and renascent world of Christianity since the 14th century

¹ The italics are ours.

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is, therefore, a world hypocritically subscribing to the Christian dogmas, perhaps out of a feeling of national arrogance, but following in practice the principles of Islam without which no progress is possible. In other words, the present-day Christian's code of life, in its better aspects, is drawn from the teachings of Muhammad whom he is so ready to malign. The laws for the prevention of crime, the efforts to combat death, disease and misery, the attempts to make people more and more moral and law-abiding all run counter to the Christian doctrine of the innate and incurable viciousness of man and his lot on this planet. If we were to examine the spirit underlying these struggles for a better life, we shall at once detect the principles of Islam working beneath.

The Solution Offered by Islam.

The solution offered by Islam is very simple. According to Islam, a man is neither virtuous nor sinful by nature. Both the tendencies of good and evil lie in him, equally strong in potentiality. It is for man to develop the one or the other by his own effort. Again, no action, nay, nothing in the world, is absolutely good or bad. The very existence of the evil aspects of things, and the tendency of evil in human mind, is owing to the fact that man has been given freedom of action. He is not compelled, like other created beings, to follow the right path. The Qur-án says in this connection : " There is no compulsion in religion ; the right way has become distinct from the way of perdition."¹

For a modern man it is not at all difficult to understand how morality presupposes freedom, and freedom presupposes the power and scope to do wrong. But it is strange that this simple proposition should be baffling the wits of the learned theologians of Christianity all through these centuries.

¹ 2 : 256.

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God, The Figment of the Human Mind.

The most intelligent attitude towards the question is that taken by Miss Ellen Wilkinson. She speaks out a great truth when she says :

The burglar who confessed in a London Police Court that before he set out for a job, he always put a prayer that he should not be caught, was not startlingly different from the bishops on the opposite side of the fighting line, who demanded God's help in the killing of fellow Christians.

Yes, it is the currency of these gods created by men, out of their low desires, that has made religion, in general, and the idea of God, in particular, objects of ridicule among the intelligent circles of humanity. To the great misfortune of humanity, the current notions of The Supreme Being, instead of holding out any lofty ideals, the realization of which should make mankind more and more perfect, tend to the formation of an outlook and character that debases human nature. Such a degenerating influence in religion is easily observable, and palpably felt everywhere, especially in Christian Europe. It is no wonder, then, that the current religion here, "whether professed by Orthodox or non-Conformist, is dead in the hearts of the thinking youth of the Modern World." The fact of the death of such a religion, in the hearts of the rising generation promises a good future for humanity, indeed.

The Christian Creed a Relic of an age of Intellectual Torpor.

Miss Wilkinson's criticism of the Christian faith is very outspoken. Says she :—

It is a relic of the time when science was banned by the Church, when the mind of man, barred from scientific inquiry, turned in upon itself, and invented complication upon complication—absurdities like the Athanasian creed. There are not three Incomprehensibles, but One Incomprehensible, not three Unknowables, but One Unknowable.

Unlike most of those who criticize religion in these days, Miss Wilkinson is not at all arrogant in her attitude.

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She gives valuable advice to her co-religionists when she says :

Instead of proudly regarding ourselves as the heirs of revealed religion, as the favoured folk ' who know it all ' and can put it into a neat dogma, the working of the Almighty Mind, we must become again, not perhaps ' little children ', but the humblest inquirers, the simplest learners on the threshold of the Great Temple of Scientific Research.

Further :

What I believe is, that Mankind can only be saved by the Scientific attitude of mind, applied not only to the physical sciences, but to every aspect of a man's life on Earth as well.

Science Not God.

But with all this vituperation against the current religion, Miss Wilkinson is not an Atheist. She cannot afford to be one. She says : " It is very difficult for a really happy person to be an atheist." Neither does she make a God, like the so-called atheists of modern times, out of physical science and its discoveries. She is too wise for that. She sounds a note of warning in the following words :

I do not suggest that we should attempt to replace a personal God by an abstract concept of Science with a capital S. The science which can save life and civilize it, can as easily, more easily, destroy it.

A Religion for the New World.

We are further assured by the writer that the present " is not an irreligious generation. Rather is there a very earnest, if largely inarticulate desire among younger people to find a philosophy, a religion, some working guide that fits their world." What they reject is the " doctrines that violate every scientific concept they have learned". Here comes the most serious aspect of the question. How can such a religion be obtained ? Should its discovery be left to the human mind ? Does the writer think that the present age of intellectual fermentation is an accidental circumstance ? If it is accidental, will it not be succeeded by an age of never-ending darkness in a manner similarly

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accidental ? These are pertinent questions, and an honest and bold thinker, like Miss Wilkinson, must face them. We should like to tell her, first of all, that the creature cannot know the mind of the Creator, unless the Creator Himself reveals it to him. Man with all his efforts can, at best, know something about the general plan of external creation. But the destiny of man and the duties that lead thereto, are not things that man can know of himself. Man, as he is, scarcely knows his own mind. The most intelligent of men have only lived a life of self-deception. So numerous are the partings of the ways, and so strongly does the struggle for existence weigh upon the Human Mind, that even the most clear-visioned men are liable to confuse the perspective of things—realities with their appearance. It is on these grounds that we Muslims, with all our faith in Science and the intellectual powers of Man, believe in the necessity of a revealed religion. We hold that God, being not a mineral substance, cannot be discovered from the heaps of dead matter which constitute His Creation. If He is to be known at all, He must of Himself reveal his purpose to us. And as a matter of fact, He has been revealing His mind to mankind through its spiritual representatives. The Man-Jesus was one such representative although the religion passing under his name is nothing but a huge deception and fraud. The Revelation vouchsafed to him was adulterated by mean-minded and selfish people, to suit their own vile purposes. But God is never weary of sending His Revelation anew. Although Man is too prone to corrupt, yet it is for God to set things right. That is the process in physical nature, and it cannot be otherwise in the case of things spiritual. And God did surely reveal His mind to humanity again in the early days of the 7th Century of the Christian era, when the message of Jesus had become hopelessly lost, and the renaissance of learning and culture in the midst of which

NOTES

we find ourselves, owes its existence to that fact. If we would read history from this point of view, we shall certainly discover that the present activities of the human mind have their root in the revelation that came to Muhammad in the 7th Century. Fortunately for us, that Revelation has *not* allowed itself to be polluted in any way up to the present moment. If the ground for the non-acceptance of a revealed religion be its conflict with the findings of science and scientific inquiries we can assure the sceptical minds of Europe that that ground is absent in the case of the Qur-án—that is, in the dispensation revealed to Muhammad. We appreciate the attitude taken by the present generation of Europe, with regard to the function of religion—revealed or otherwise. Religion, if it is anything, is only the will of God with regard to the destiny of Man. As such, it cannot have any conflict with science, which is also the will of God as manifested in the physical World. Again the Reason of man is the only thing that entitles him to any religion at all. Brutes cannot be conceived as having a religion, that is to say, a Code of Life, which they are free to follow or transgress. A true religion should not, therefore, be opposed to reason. It should not only conform to the demands of reason, but also widen its range of action, as a telescope widens the scope of man's vision. It should accelerate the progress of scientific culture rather than retard it. It should help practical philosophy to come to definite conclusions rather than ban it. And if the Qur-án, claiming to be a revealed Book, and having the authority of the most representative men the world has ever produced, fulfils all these conditions, we do not see any reason why Islam should not be accepted by the rising generation of Europe, whom Miss Wilkinson claims to represent, as the religion it needs.

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THE WORKING MUSLIM MISSION AND LITERARY TRUST'S

BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30TH APRIL 1931.

Liabilities.	Rs. a. p.		Assets.	Rs. a. p.		Rs. a. p.	
Capital Account of the Trust ..	83,999	4 3	<i>Reserve Fund.</i>				
			Fixed Deposits in the Lloyd's Bank, Ltd., Lahore ..			40,390	0 0
			<i>Investments.</i>				
Accumulated balance being the excess of income over expenditure ..	3,957	8 3	4% Government Loan Bonds for 1960-70 ..			20,000	0 0
			Re : Mangrola Donation.				
			<i>Cash in Bank.</i>				
			Saving Bank Account ..	876	9 11		
			Current Account ..	438	3 7		
						1,314	13 6
			Cash in hand ..			59	7 9
			Postage Stamps ..			10	4 0
			Stationery ..			111	2 0
			<i>Stock of Books.</i>				
			In India ..	3,000	0 0		
			In England ..	6,450	0 0	9,450	0 0
			<i>Furniture.</i>				
			In India ..	200	0 0		
			In England ..	10,000	0 0	10,200	0 0
			Advances recoverable ..			6,421	1 3
	87,956	12 6				87,956	12 6

The above Balance Sheet has been prepared from the records maintained in the office of the Trust and exhibits the exact state of affairs of the Trust.

The books and vouchers have been checked and found in order.

The bank balances, both in the Current and Saving Bank accounts, have been verified with the Pass Books and found correct.

The investments in Fixed Deposits and in Loan Bonds have also been verified by actual reference to the Deposit Receipts and the Bonds.

(Sd.) ABDUL HAMID BUTT,
Auditor.

During the year ending 30th April 1931 funds fell short to meet current expenditure. A sum of Rs. 3,024-14-0 was, therefore, borrowed from the Saving Bank Account and transferred to the Current Account.

The Current Account therefore owes the above amount which, it is expected, if financed generously by the donors, will be able to meet the liability during the ensuing year.

The sum of Rs. 3,957-8-3 shown as accumulated balance represent the financial state of affairs as a whole.

(Sd.) DOCTOR GHULAM MOHD., M.B., B.S.,
Honorary Financial Secretary,
The W. M. M. & Lity. Trust, Lahore.

(Sd.) KHWAJA ABDUL GHANI,
SECRETARY,
The W. M. M. & Lity. Trust, Lahore.

CORRESPONDENCE

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE IMAM,

THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

..... Although born a Christian, of Christian parents, the idea of the Trinity was always repugnant to me; and that was the great thing that set me thinking. I would not go over to the Jewish faith, because they had no place for Jesus, and I loved him as I still do.

I had heard and read of the great power of the mind; this I claimed was the gift of God, and, Jesus by following the Commandments of God, and so living a righteous life developed this power to such an extent that he was able to do the miracles we read of; surely, I thought on account of him being so perfect he was the son of God, son of God even as we are the sons and daughters of God, but, created, not begotten as the Christian faith would have it. For, according to their creed, Jesus is God's begotten son. This I claimed, and still do claim, to be the greatest blasphemy that man could ever conceive in his mind.

Then I heard something of Islam. I heard that it believed in one God, and that Jesus, in its teachings, was a prophet of God, and not the son of God, as claimed by Christians; also that it believed, to a certain extent, in the old and new testaments of the Bible. This I thought good, but unfortunately this was not all that I heard of Islam. I heard some of the most disgusting things concerning the Muslims, their faith, and their prophet Muhammad, details of which I will not attempt to set down. I then coldly dropped all sympathetic feelings I had for Islam.

I then began thinking how nice it would be to have all the good in all the religions of the world collected in one great religion, and my mind then conceived an ideal religion, and, this religion, strange as it might seem, was none other but Islam pure and simple, for the great essentials of Islam were contained in this religion of my mind.

But I had no authority for my religion, no Holy Book, no word of God to tell me if what I thought was correct, and I was not a seer, for though of a religious mind, I had not lived a perfect type of righteous life. I had many faults that I am certain no God-inspired man would have. What could I do? Was I the only one that thought the things in the way that I did?

All this time I kept asking myself "Have you heard all there is to hear of Islam?" "Is all you have heard of Islam true?" Then God's spirit, the spirit that was showing me the right way all the time, CAUSED ME TO HEAR OF A MUSLIM MISSION IN ENGLAND. I got your address, I asked many questions, which you had the kindness to reply and made me what I am and in commemoration of which I have taken the name—"Al-Arefeen"—i.e., the enlightened.

J. AREFEEN ASHWAN.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

TO THE EDITOR,

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW, WORKING.

In your last issue Khwaja Kamal-ud-din commented on Mr. Gandhi's world message and defined evil from his point of view as being misapplication or mishandling of things. But this definition is not exhaustive. A thing might be created for some particular use which may be called good, but as long as it is capable of being used in other ways that are decidedly evil, how can its creator be saved from the responsibility? Unless all possible uses of a thing are conducive to good, we are compelled to identify evil with the name of the Creator.

Yours, etc., etc.,

A. G. LINCOLNS.

[Mr. Lincolns argues on the point, though briefly, on the sound reasoning. God is the Creator and Nourisher of all His creature, His economy sometimes creates one thing which subsists with many. It acts as food for all but in different ways and in different quantities. All its uses therefore are for good, but if one species follows the way of the other in its use, it would be unnatural and do harm. The Providence had to meet the needs of all. So various things were created. But if a person used a thing which was meant for another creature and suffers in consequence he is the creator of wrong and not the maker of the thing. Things disclose their properties when they are used. Fire must burn when it is kindled. But how could the reposer of this quality in the fire be responsible for the harm it does if it occurs through our inadvertency or inordinacy. Again the All-Wise God has created different ways to accomplish different things. They all lead to good, but they will deviate us from it if we choose the wrong course. God, no doubt, has to inform us of the way which is right for us, but no sooner He has done it then the responsibility of doing wrong is ours. The Holy Qur-án sums up the whole case in the following verse :—

“And upon Allah it rests to show the right way, and there are some deviating (ways), and if He please, He would certainly guide you all aright.” (Ch. 16 : 9).

The Book came to show us the right way, but it also warned us against the deviating courses.—ED., *I. R.*]

PRECIOUS GEMS.

Who are the learned? Those who practice what they know.

The knowledge from which no benefit is derived is like a treasure from which no charity is bestowed in the way of the Lord.

MUHAMMAD.

INTRODUCTION TO HOLY QUR-ÁN

THE HOLY QUR-ÁN AND ITS COMMENTARY

INTRODUCTION.

BY KHAWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

(Continued from Vol. XX, page 95.)

CHAPTER III.

OTHER BEAUTIES EXCLUSIVE TO THE QUR-ÁN.

A New Conception of Religion.—Al-Qur-án came with a new conception of Religion. It gave a new meaning to every article of faith. According to it Religion was neither ceremonialism, nor a collection of some moral precepts. It was a code which enabled one to lead a happy life.

Though the Book like other Scriptures makes God and His Worship as one of its chief themes, yet it speaks of Him for the benefit of man who has been declared as His vicegerent on the Earth. We needed some guidance to reach the exalted position, and God himself appeared as our prototype in the Book.¹ He needed no devotion from us. It was conceded that God was transcendental and stood beyond our imagination,² but He was given some such Attributes in the Qur-án as could come within our comprehension and imitation. Some say that the God of the Qur-án possessed human morals. It was therefore a man and not God who pictured Him in the Qur-án. But this contention is absurd on its very face.

¹ 5 : 3.

² 2 : 255, 51 : 47.

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The Holy Names mentioned in the Qur-án cover Attributes like generosity, compassion, intellect and others as worked in Nature long before man ever came into existence. It could not therefore be a man who could fashion the Qur-ánic God by himself, but it was the Almighty who made him after His own image, and revealed to him His such characters, so that he may follow Him and act as His Vicegerent.¹

The Book gives God three special features that would make up human character. Firstly, God is the God of virtue. Everything in the universe is not without its evil side. The same may be said of these Attributes in their abstract form. Love, compassion and power, for instance, have got their use and abuse. The Qur-án, therefore, calls these Divine Attributes as Excellent Names of God. It suggests that these Attributes when spoken as of God should be taken in their good sense and not in the wrong one. Some people think that it would be inconsistent with the Omnipotence of the Lord if He should be deemed to be incapable of committing a wrong. The idea gave rise to peculiar Attributes of God with all their absurdities in ancient India. It revolted the Budhistic sense of decency and led some of them either to disbelieve totally in God or in His Attributes. They took Him as an impersonal God. The Qur-án, however, remedied this defect. The Book secondly describes God as the God of Law. With all His Omnipotence He has been represented in the Qur-án as the first observant of His own Law. All the Holy Names in the Qur-án are the source of various laws which work in Nature. The Holy Book wants man to follow his Lord in this respect. For this reason it names² Islam as His religion, which means Obedience to Law. God in the third place has been described by the Book as the God of actions who remains

¹ 2 : 256.

² 78 : 8.

INTRODUCTION TO HOLY QUR-ÂN

busy¹ all the time. He neither feels tired² nor needs any rest. He wants man to do the same. He no doubt has created the night³ for his rest, but only to refresh him for further exertion.

This conception naturally gives a new import to Muslim devotion. The Qur-ân speaks of five methods of Divine worship named as the five pillars of Islam :— Formula of faith, prayers, fasting, alms-giving and pilgrimage to Mecca. The first and the last three consist of such actions as are necessary for the elevation and general good of human race. The second kind of worship, popularly called prayer, consists no doubt of some formalities, but they in themselves are of no consequence. They index our mental attitude and remind us of our submission to God. Physical prostration and bending stand for the same⁴ towards the Lord. Muslims also recite few sacred words in the prayer, but they all remind them of their daily duties. Praise and thanksgiving is a part of Muslim worship, but both have got special meanings. *Hamd* the equivalent of praise in the Qur-ânic text also means submission, which in reality is the true praise. *Shukar* which in the Qur-ân stands for thanksgiving means the bringing of a thing to its proper use. According to the Qur-ân lip-gratitudes are of no avail. Real thanksgiving lies in using various gifts of God in the right way. The Qur-ân promises increase of Divine blessing if we properly utilise those already given. This is thanksgiving in Islam.

Prayer in general does not mean begging more favours from God. The Muslims have been ordered to pray to their God for showing them the right path, to achieve the thing they wish to possess. Firstly, they have to make all possible exertions at their command for obtaining the object and then to pray to the Lord to show them some efficacious means to accomplish it.

¹ 2 : 238.

² 1 : 1.

³ 14 : 7, 31 : 12.

⁴ 2 : 186.

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The Qur-án also teaches certain beliefs, but they are all consistent with reason and can be translated into good actions. The Book never mentions such beliefs that have no practical bearing on our life or demand mutilation of intelligence for their acceptance.

Comprehensiveness of the Holy Qur-án.—This conception of religion needed a Book that should bring all that man required within its scope. The whole world is the scene of human activities, and contains things beyond our comprehension, although they have been created exclusively for our use. Besides, we alone, out of the whole creation, have special tastes and appetites for them. To make, however, the things in nature purposive a special and skilled knowledge is necessary. The Qur-án declares that the world was full of beauty and utility. It invites our attention to them and opens new avenues for our activities. If the Qur-án had not given these directions and made it clear then the Divine design in creating things would have remained unaccomplished.

Modern Civilization no doubt engages us in various pursuits, but it was only after the Muslims, who had first been inspired by the Holy Qur-án, had pointed out the true line of action that anything practical was rendered possible? That is why we find that the things in Nature had not been utilised until the advent of Islam.

Man himself is the universe in miniature. His mind stands co-related with everything in the world. There is nothing in it which cannot be utilised by him if his mind is properly cultivated. We have to explore our own mind and work out its capabilities before we can put the things of Nature to their proper use. But our mind remained a barren land until the Qur-án was revealed.

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Again our nature has got various aspects, spiritual, physical, moral, social, economic, and so forth. They all have to be developed. Ethics, poetry, art and cultivation of various other sciences all come within the scope of human mind and contribute to our pleasure. Our mind is just like a cultivable land that could be converted into a prosperous garden with various avenues and orchard with trees full of fruits and flowers. The Qur-án has compared our nature with such a garden in the story of Adam.¹ A Book from God like the Qur-án should also invite our attention to such mental cultivation. It should also look to our aesthetic tastes.

Like animals our consciousness is a collection of passions, but they, in human frame, are capable of being sublimated into high morality and spirituality. A Book from God should provide for all of them. It is not right to crush them, for fear that they may also lead to evil. Divine guidance should come to control them and divert them to virtue. It should bring every human instinct under its salubrious teaching. In fact a Book from God cannot be complete unless its teachings take account of everything in the universe including human nature. The Book of Islam meets this demand, though we find other Divine scriptures wanting in this respect. They must have brought all the required knowledge, but time played a havoc with their purity.

Universal Book.—Al-Qur-án is the Book that came to preach a cosmopolitan religion. Every Book before it was sent to a particular country. They worshipped a tribal god and slammed the door of light in the face of all other nations. Previous teachers have been very strict in this respect. The Jewish Patriarchs plumed themselves on being the people chosen for His message and for this reason they proudly called themselves Sons of God.

¹ 25: 1.

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If the old Hindus would dub all others "Rakhshas" and "Malechh"—the race of devils—Jesus would call the Gentiles and other non-Israelites dogs and swines. He would not even throw them the children's food. Islam came, on the other hand, with a universal dispensation. It took the whole world as its diocese, and preached its truths to the whole human race. It preached universalism. It declared that all mankind belong to the same¹ family and are one race. The Holy Qur-án demolished all artificial barriers which separated one nation from another. It welded black and white into one harmonious whole, and established universal brotherhood throughout the whole world. The world is on its way to Universalism, but it has much to learn from the Qur-án before the colour and country prejudice is eradicated and the poor negro is no more lynched by the civilized white. The Christian Church may pray to "Our Father which art in Heaven" at the top of its voice, but its followers in the West do not regard those in the East as the sons of the same Father, though they belong to the same faith. Islam is the only Religion that gives precepts as well as example for true Universalism and the fraternity of the whole human race. It lays down principles that compel stiff-necked people to respect others as their equals.

All Religions from God.—For example the Book says that all religions came from the same divine source. No religion can claim to bring a universal dispensation unless it believes in the universal Divine Dispensation of God in religious matters from the beginning. If all of us are His creatures, He will not be guilty of partiality in sending His light to all people. As Universal Father, He cannot choose any race for His special blessings to the exclusion of others. On the other hand, every nation on Earth claims to have its own creed and faith as sent to it by God. A religion with a universal message is

¹ 10 : 19.

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therefore bound to have regard for others' faiths. They may have deviated from the original path. The Book in their hands might have lost its purity ; but to say that other nations had no guidance from God amounts to an insult to Universal Providence. It is absurd, it is unnatural. Moreover, the whole world will never gather under one universal flag. It has never done so up to now, nor will it ever do so in the future. There ought to be some *via media* between the jarring elements in the world of religion that may create a good understanding and prevent them from disturbing universal peace.

This *via media* Gospel, then, came to the world through the Qur-ân, which declared that no nation on God's earth had been left without light from¹ Above. If equality in man is the basic principle of the democracy so much desired by all, how can we believe in it, if we do not believe in the universal revelation? All nations, says the Qur-ân, have had their prophets from God, but their followers became divided among themselves ; they quarrelled with one another and forsook the right course which was given simultaneously and on almost identical lines to all the units of the human race. This wholesome teaching should go far to kill the spirit of religious hostility latent in us. A Muslim, under this teaching of the Qur-ân, believes in the Divine origin of every great religion of the world. He has been ordered to make no² distinction between the various prophets of the world, and to pay equal allegiance to all of them. If we cannot live without some religion, nor all of us come together under the same flag (and difference in religion has hitherto created discord and disturbance everywhere), the Qur-ânic gospel is clearly needed. It alone can preserve harmony and peace under these circumstances. Sons of the same father live separately from each other, they may

¹ 35 : 24.

² 2 : 136.

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become immersed in their respective lives, but they are not always antagonistic to each other. We do need some principle of fraternity which we may observe in the religious sphere, and this has been given to us by the last Book. Under its teachings we must regard all Teachers of Religion as our own fathers, and members of different religions as our brethren under one universal dispensation. We may differ from each other in some of our doctrines, but as long as we look on the various Teachers as equally entitled to our respect, and believe that they taught one and the same truth originally, there is every possibility of reconciliation among men. If we hold that our brethren of the other faiths have only made some departure from the old truth, we may amicably compare our respective briefs in the matter of belief, and come to a right conclusion. We may work together for some common belief, and join with each other on a common platform. Those who believe in God should unite their forces and present a solid front against atheism, the arch-enemy of all religions; and this unity of purpose would, as the Holy Book teaches, tend to a further coalition.

It is a truism that all religions have drunk from the Divine Fountain, since everyone is, as it were, entitled to guidance from God. All Divine Messengers brought and preached the same truth. But the fact did not occur to any prophet before Islam, and I may safely say that Muhammad has a *supreme claim to prophethood for preaching*, if only for preaching this single truth. God had to raise up some one to proclaim this gospel of universal peace, and the blessed duty fell on the shoulders of the Arab Prophet.

Broad-mindedness in the Qur-án.—In fact no Civilization, Religion or Philosophy before Islam ever struck such a noble note of liberal-mindedness as did the Qur-án in giving the message of Universalism to the whole human

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race. It was revealed at a time when it was needed the most for the world was standing at the threshold of bringing its various units into contact with one another. All races were coming in closer touch, and a gospel of general unification was needed. The Qur-án proclaimed it, and it was so successful in its Mission that within a decade it could boldly assert to a nucleus of few thousand Muslims at Medina:—

“And remember the favour of Allah unto you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts. So by His favour you became brethren ; and you were on the pit of fire when He saved you therefrom.” (3 : 102).

The verse eloquently pictures the condition of Arabia of those days, but within a quarter of a century after this announcement the Qur-án was able to expel the demon of hatred and antagonism from its frontiers.

Then it carried its message of universal peace to the other corners of the world and, within a few centuries, successfully established universal brotherhood in the large portion of the globe. But this progress was retarded about one thousand years after by the appearance of the so-called European Civilization. If the Muslim Civilization was based on the Qur-ánic principle, to wit—‘ only those will survive in the world who profit others,’ (13 : 17) its rival propounded a new principle, *i.e.*, the survival of the fittest, which entailed a keen struggle for existence and self-determination. This principle would no doubt have proved useful to the society had it been adopted in the right way. But unfortunately it was interpreted to mean that the life and strength of a nation depended on the weakness and death of the other, and thus the maxim of self-determination was coupled in the West with self-assertiveness. All these principles began to revolve on the pivot of selfishness of a most sordid nature. It was sure to breed hatred and enmity of the type which has now overtaken the whole world. Not only one nation has

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arisen against the other, but all are ready to cut each other's throat ; even people, though they may belong to the same country, are at daggers drawn with each other if they chance to belong to different persuasion. Antagonism rules the whole world. If it owed its existence to ignorance in ancient times, Western culture is responsible for it in modern times. The last Great War proved that it was culture, and not religion, that played havoc with humanity and worked out an unparalleled devastation and vandalism in the world. But the end is not yet in sight. The Western nations are standing, to quote the Qur-án, on the brink of fire, and a bigger conflagration may overtake the world at any moment. The same belligerent spirit has taken root even in the subject races in the form of civil disobedience. The peace of the world has become ruthlessly disturbed by European Civilization only within two hundred years. Even its best advocates are now tired of its baneful effects. Their aversion to it has appeared in the form of Russian Civilization. But no State compulsion could produce any healthy result for long unless human hearts become purged of all narrow-mindedness and gave birth to a largeness of soul in their dealings with others. We undoubtedly differ from each other in creed, class and colour. But we have now been brought together, we cannot pursue the policy of aggressors, nor can we afford to efface others from the surface of the earth. The policy has been tried by stronger nations, but it has hopelessly failed.

We do need a creed of life like that preached in the Qur-án that teaches us to worship the Lord of all nations who maintains and nourishes every one without any partiality and in pursuance we should do the same. As already mentioned, Arabia presented the worst example of tribal animosity at the advent of Islam, but the world all over is breathing the same malicious spirit. Islam

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brought the real panacea to remedy the poison. Had not the world been dazzled with the pomp and grandeur of the Western culture which for a time eclipsed Islam, the world till now had been freed of all racial prejudices. It, however, has now become undeceived, and will, it is hoped, grow wiser enough to see the realities.

All people may not come under one flag as I said, but the critical situation can be saved if we all exhibit that liberal-mindedness which we find in the pages of the Holy Qur-ân. Let the savants and sages of different persuasions study the following tenets of the Book and see for themselves if they would not find the needed haven of salvation in these troubled waters if the world cultivated Qur-ânic spirit.

I have already spoken of some of the broadest tenets that would crush down all exclusiveness. But I repeat them briefly in the series of many other similar precepts that make universalism a reality. The Book declares that the whole humanity is a single nation.¹ They are members of God's family, and if they assume different names after the countries of their origin it is only for purposes² of identification. It does not give them any distinction. The Book brushes aside all such distinctions as being accidental and makes virtue³ the only sign of greatness, and declares that it is not exclusive to any one, but is open to all. The Book came at the right time,⁴ when human race, like in these days, was divided into cults and creeds. It declared that all religions in their origin came from the same⁵ Divine source.⁶ God sent His messengers⁷ to guide every class. They all came from Him⁸ but the people differed from each other afterwards.⁹ The Book strongly condemned the practice of making distinction between a prophet and a prophet,¹⁰

¹ 10 : 20.

⁴ 2 : 118, 4 : 170.

⁷ 35 : 24.

² 49 : 13.

⁵ 2 : 213.

⁸ 16 : 63.

¹⁰ 2 : 285.

³ *Ibid.*

⁶ 16 : 36.

⁹ 23 : 52, 53.

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and asked the Muslims to follow also that which had been revealed before them.¹ They had to accept all the prophets of every country.²

There is a great diversity in some of the tenets of different faiths, but the Book declares that they all agree in the principles of guidance, and the Prophet³ was ordered to follow them. If people differed in ritualistic part of their faith it was not of much consequence.⁴ It was given to suit different temperament under different local conditions.⁵ People should vie⁶ with each other in good actions. No other Book has brought the truth to its followers in such clear words⁷ as the Qur-án did in the following verse :—

“It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflict—these are they who are true (to themselves), and these are they who guard (against evil).” (2 : 177).

The Qur-án not only prohibits speaking ill of others' deities,⁷ but it admits goodness⁸ in other faiths. It does not establish any new⁹ faith, but comes rather to confirm¹⁰ the old truths, and invites other people to observe their respective good tenets.¹¹ It repeatedly preaches that belief in God and obedience to Him is the¹² only one eternal faith. It invites others to observe the same and shun differences.¹³

¹ 4 : 136.

² 5 : 48.

³ 4 : 163, 42 : 13.

⁴ 6 : 90.

⁵ 2 : 177.

⁶ 5 : 46, 3 : 3.

⁷ 22 : 67.

⁸ 6 : 109.

⁹ 5 : 68.

¹⁰ 2 : 148.

¹¹ 35 : 32.

¹² 30 : 30.

¹³ 30 : 32.

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How boldly it asserts :—

“ Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve.” (2 : 62)

It lays down here another dictum and wipes out the evil of religious differences. It gives a gospel of universal salvation to every one of any persuasion so long as he observes the three principles mentioned in the above passage. They are the basic doctrines of the religion technically called Islam.

Though the verse has been breathing the noblest spirit of unity for the last thirteen hundred years yet ignorance and prejudice blame the Qur-ân for narrow-minded teachings. God is the source of all good actions, and our belief in the Hereafter can only actuate them. Hence the two beliefs are a necessary adjunct of good action. Can any one with his belief in the existence of God take exception to such a religion ?

In order to uproot every prejudice the God of the Qur-ân was pleased to give this faith the name of Islam¹—obedience to Divine Laws. Like Christians, Budhists or Hindus He would not name it after any country or person, as it would excite racial prejudices. The Book would not concern with any name, people may be Christians² or Jews by birth, but it did not count much in the eye of the Lord. He would call His votaries as Muslims³—those who submit to His Laws. Could a more appropriate name be given to a good citizen who respects good laws because they are laws of God ! The following verse needs special consideration :—

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

¹ 5 : 3.

² 2 : 113

³ 22 : 78

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“Say : Do you dispute with us about Allah, and He is our Lord and your Lord, and we shall have our deeds, and you shall have your deeds and we are sincere to Him. ” (2 : 138 & 139).

This is the gospel of universal peace. If good actions are the only salt of life how can any one take exception to it ? It shows a largeness of soul not found anywhere else except in Islam.

As to difference of tenets the Book forbids us against forcing our beliefs on others, we must preach them in a graceful manner and resort to reasoning in order to decide their respective merits. This principle if accepted will banish the whole trouble from mankind on the score of religion.

Arabic, the language of Religion.—The Book was couched in a language that is still living, and it remained proof against every change, while other languages in the world have been transformed completely. Words have lost their original shape and meaning, and either new meanings have been given to them or they have become generalized.

I may safely remark that no one of the languages of the world, excepting that of the Hedjaz, is spoken now in the form in which it existed at the time of the Holy Prophet. Even if other sacred Books had come to us in their original purity, we could hardly give to their teachings the precise meaning which attached to them in the days of their Revelation. In short, we cannot read the mind of their teachers on account of the change of language. But the Qur-án was given to us in a language which is still living and has remained unchanged and is unchangeable, and for this reason its message can be understood even

1, 2. The Qur-án, on the contrary, calls Abraham and Joseph as truthful by nature 91 : 41, 12 : 46.

3. 21 : 72. 6 : 85—87.

4. See chapter on Cosmogony of the Qur-án.

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to-day as conveying the same exact purport, expressed at the time of its first delivery. Arabic can, therefore, claim to be the only language for a Religion from God, since it does not change with the centuries.

Every religion speaks of certain verities, but the words used to signify them do not express the concept intended to be conveyed. "Good and Evil," for example, are the chief themes in every religion, but the words used for them do not in themselves express the whole idea. I have spoken on the subject in the pages of the Qur-ánic philosophy of good and evil. I remarked that nothing in itself is either good or bad. If one form of use makes it beneficial, the other form of its use makes it pernicious. We have to *choose* the former and reject the latter. The Arabic words for them are eloquent enough to say. "*Khair*," the equivalent of 'good,' literally means things elected, while '*Sharr*,' the word for 'evil,' means anything to be rejected.

Richness of meaning.—Again, almost all the words in the Arabic language possess such a wealth of meaning as cannot be found in any other tongue,—a fact which renders valuable service to religion in explaining its truths. The words used in the Qur-án are too eloquent to need any commentary on its tenets. For example, I refer to sin. Every religion gives some particular significance to it, but the word it uses to convey the particular idea is seldom adequate like Arabic word. All words like *Junah*, *Ism*, '*Isyan*,' '*Adwan*,' etc., used in the Qur-án to convey sin literally mean leaving one's original position and turning aside from it. Righteousness, as it were, has appointed a certain place wherein we must remain, and when we quit it we commit sin. But when we return to it, we repent. No repentance is acceptable unless we return to righteousness as the Qur-án says.¹ The word

¹ 3 : 88, 4 : 16, 18.

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used in the Qur-án for repentance is *taubah*, which literally means 'return.' Similarly, every Qur-ánic doctrine becomes clear to us when we study the word used for it in the text ; while in the case of other scriptures, we have to sit at the feet of commentators and theologians, who give us their own conception of the various things taught in their respective religions.

Revealed nature of the Qur-ánic Language.—These observations lead me to say a few words about the revealed nature of the language of Hedjaz—the language in which the last Book of God was sent down. The final Revelation could not possibly be expressed in a language of human creation. A finite mind could not make words sufficiently wide in their connotations to convey an Infinite Mind. The language of Hedjaz may or may not be a revealed one, but it cannot be denied that it is the proper vehicle to convey the message coming from the Divine Mind. We may safely assert that the said language possesses all the characteristics that are commonly found in things in nature. Thus things in nature are unchangeable in their make. They are extraordinarily rich in their inherent qualities which meet all our needs. So is the case with the Qur-ánic words in their significations. I have discussed this subject when dealing with the word "*Rabb*."

Philosophy in Qur-ánic words.—But the thing that is most significant in the language and which goes a long way to prove it to be a revealed one, is the philosophy in its component words. Every word contains in it a reason for which it has been selected and does convey a particular idea. The subject is very interesting, and needs a lengthy discussion which the space here does not allow. I have written a book in vernacular entitled "*Umm-ul-Alsana*," the mother of languages. I have given in that book various words to explain the above

¹ See *Islamic Review*, Vol. XX, pp. 38—40.

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mentioned beauty. Here I would give only one or two words to substantiate my remarks.

Men or women are as ancient as humanity. There ought to be words to convey these ideas at the very inception of our society. Like all other languages Arabic has got two words "*Rajul*" and "*Nisa*" conveying the idea of man and woman. The two words are deep in their significance. Here I would refer to such meanings as are very characteristic in their nature. Men by nature are meant for hard work in life. They have to expose themselves to work which is not meant for females, because the former alone can stand it. For reasons of health we must keep the vital heat within our system. We need some non-conducting material over our body. On the other hand, if the requirements of man demand hardness of constitution in him, the comeliness and beauty, the necessary assets of a female, requires on the contrary softness of body. Keeping these in view, Divine Economy granted hairy body to men and gave enough of fat to female system, because both materials are the best of non-conductors. Besides, hairy body would have affected female beauty while fat makes body soft. It is admitted that nothing is more non-conducting than hairs. Hairs on body are a visible phenomenon observable by every naked eye, but no one ere long knew that the female body did possess a fatty coat next to their skin. It is for this reason that women are less sensitive to cold than men. These are recent discoveries, but the language of Hedjaz has chosen two words given above that do convey these truths. If the word "*Rajul*" means hard as well as *hairy*, the word "*Nisá*" equivalent of woman means soft and *fatty*. The said words do belong to the most initial society. I may say that they are the first words after mother and father that must be formulated for the respective purposes. How can an incipient mind in his natural

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condition could coin such words so rich and eloquent in their meanings to be discovered afterwards. The words must come from the All-knowing Mind. The said two words do signify other meanings which give various characteristic of men and women. My book "Umm-ul-Alsana" gives dozens of other words as illustration of the principle. It is surprising to find some special philosophy or significance hidden in some words. For instance, "Khifa" and "Khaut" come from the same consonants with a change of vowels, one means something concealed and the other means fear. The cause of fear is always the concealed nature of the things feared of. The two co-relative ideas have been expressed by the same consonants with the change of vowels.

These things, besides many other things which the language of Hedjaz possesses, show that the language must have come from God.

The finality of the Divine Message.—If the Revelation from the Almighty came to set man on the right path, it cannot vary in its teachings if it comes again. It may come piecemeal, according to the receptivity of the people to whom it is addressed, but it must reiterate its truths, and one day, the final message will come. If there cannot be more than one straight line between two points, the Revelation that claims to point out the straight¹ path for human guidance, can also claim to be final. The last Book did not come to contradict former Revelations, but to confirm² them. It preached the same religion as that given to Noah³ and the rest of the prophets. But the Book's task was to complete⁴ it, and herein lies its finality. The ways of God are admittedly infinite, and our knowledge of them can never be complete. It will remain on its increase. But the right way of contemplating them could be shown once and for all. If knowledge

¹ 2: 5.

² 5: 48.

³ 4: 163.

⁴ 5: 3.

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is the only water of life, and God the fountain thereof, the sooner the way to the fountain is shown to humanity the better. So it was from the beginning. I would even go so far as to say that if the former Revelations had remained in their original form and could claim authenticity, the last Book of God would have been of a different character. But almost all the former Books have either disappeared or have suffered from human tampering. The Divine Will had to be announced once and for all at the advent of the Holy Prophet, and that announcement was final and free from corruption or interpolation. This appeals to me as a clinching argument against the attitude of other religions when they hesitate in accepting the Qur-án as a message from the Lord. If the Revelation that came from God to their ancestors had lost its genuine character, a further Revelation must come to us ; we have the same claim to Divine guidance as our forefathers had ; either the source of knowledge should keep the old message in the form in which He gave it in the olden days or He must send a new one. Such is His method always. The whole of Nature bears conclusive testimony to this truth. Whenever¹ anything necessary for our growth in the universe disappears or is lost, Providence renews it at once, and if He is always observing this principle for our physical subsistence, He will surely do the same for our spiritual nourishment, seeing that the soul is infinitely more valuable than the body. If bygone generations were given some knowledge for guidance from God, we have the same claim to His Providence. There would have come another Book from God for us if the Holy Qur-án had gone the way of the former Books.

It is also very interesting to note that the Qur-án appeared at a time when the world was in dire need of Divine guidance, and every nation looked at the moment for the appearance of the Prophet ; seeing that all the old

¹ 2 : 106.

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religions had lost their influence by reason of the corruption that had crept into their pristine teaching. The prophetic eye of the former Messengers foresaw that their teachings would suffer in purity, and that coming generations of their followers would naturally need some new Revelation from Above. So all the Sacred Teachers spoke of the coming Messenger. No one among them declared that his message was the last. If Moses prophesied that God would raise up another prophet after him with fiery law in his hands, we¹ cannot look for the fulfilment of the prophecy in the person of Jesus, since he brought no new laws, nor did he depart from the old code in any way. He himself was looking for the Spirit² of Truth, who was to come to give the whole Truth. Ignorance or prejudice would endeavour to discover the fulfilment of the words of Jesus in the so-called appearance of the Holy Ghost at the Day of Pentecost, when the Miracle³ of the Tongues occurred. But it is not conclusive. Jesus admittedly could not himself give the whole⁴ truth. He looked for one who was to come to do so. The Church that passes under his name cannot claim to do the same, as she has failed to add even a scrap of knowledge to that which the world possessed at the departure of the Nazarene. Moreover, the promised Prophet was to bring the fiery law to complete the old one, as Jesus hoped, but the official Church has totally dispensed with it. The Bible has also prophesied that God would arise from Sinai and appear at Seir, but would shine fully at Mount Paran.⁵ If Sinai and Seir refer to the Mosaic and Nazarene dispensations, Mount Paran is not found in any other country except Arabia, Mecca being located in its valley. But the Bible is not the only Scripture that speaks of the coming Prophet. Almost all other great Prophets of God, including Krishna and Buddha have joyously referred to the illustrious advent of the last great Prophet.

¹ Deut. 18 : 18.

² St. John 1 : 16—17, 16 : 7.

³ Acts 2 : 1—3.

⁴ St. John 16 : 12—13.

⁵ Deut. 33 : 3.

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