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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

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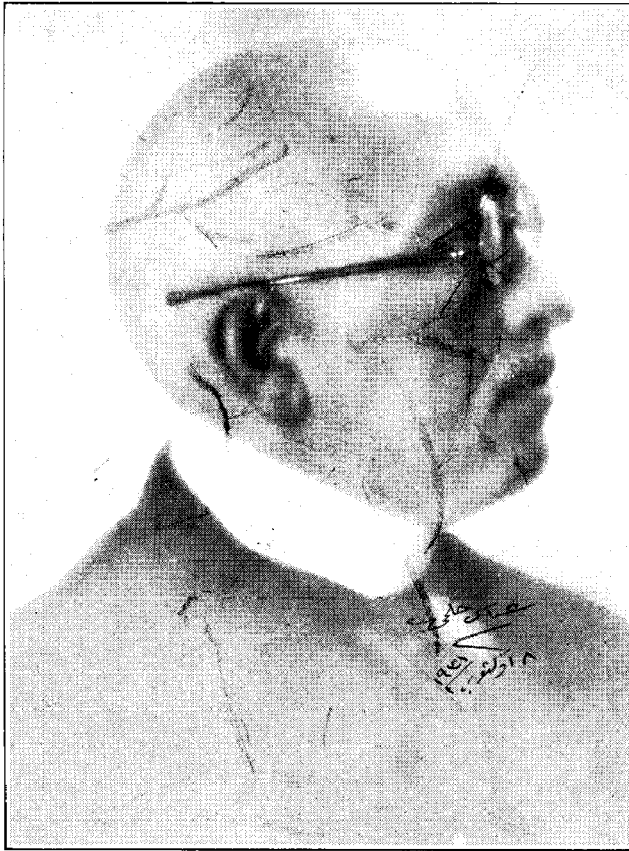
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His Highness 'Abbās Hilmi II, 23 years Khedive of Egypt, accompanied by his Private Secretary, Muhammad 'Azmy Effendi, in order to acquaint himself with our organisation and work, paid a visit to the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking. He stayed for more than two hours, said his prayers in the Mosque and at the request of the Imam honoured the staff of the Woking Muslim Mission by condescending to take tea with them.

His Highness expressed his appreciation of the work of our organisation and showed a keen interest in the literature produced by us. He incidentally remarked that the Woking Muslim Mission deserved the special attention and support of every true Muslim, because while all other kinds of organisations within Islam only supplied its life-blood, this one gave a forward impetus to the cause of that religion.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
شَهِدَ وَفِي عَلَى رَسُولِ الْكَرِيمِ

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WORSHIP AND SACRIFICIALISM.

BY K. KUDOS.

The instinct of adoration has been placed in our nature for higher ends ; but it misses its object when it becomes confined to bowing down and prostration. There are three instincts in us which work together, and are sure to produce the best of results if conscientiously followed. We are naturally attracted by things which please us in some way, and by the possession of such things the passion ripens into love for them and assumes the form of worship when accompanied by certain gesticulations and words of praise for the thing we adore. We then are led to imitate them. These three instincts—love, worship and imitation—will bring our latent faculties to perfection if we can only find the best morality for their development. Unfortunately, however, our lower instincts obscure our judgment, and their requirements are apt to become in the long run the object of our adoration. Fear and hope play a great part in this process, for it is they in reality that clothe our own low desires in a divine garb. Sometimes certain

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elements in Nature are taken by us as the source of our profit or loss, and fear and hope goads us to place them on the altar of Divinity. Various fetishes are given the same exalted position, but it has been our low desires which have always predominated in our choice of gods. We find them in the deities of ancient Greece and India. These divinities are the creatures of our own imagination, we see that they take pleasure in those things which usually delight our physical senses. Places of worship are elaborately and profusely adorned. There is music and singing, incense, with the perfume of the smoke arising from the burning of sweet spices, all this to please Divine taste, which is also supposed to love the blood of sacrifices, especially when the sacrifice is burnt. Thus the real object of worship becomes lost, and one of the noble instincts in us grossly abused.

Men of wisdom and virtue arose from time to time to show mankind where it had erred and to divert this noble instinct to its right use. These men declared themselves to be the Messengers of the Lord, and whatever may be the value of their claim, history establishes the following facts concerning them :—

- (1) They appeared at times when men were at the verge of destruction.
- (2) They spoke of a Being Who was the Creator, Nourisher and Sustainer of the world.
- (3) They preached obedience to that Being and made such obedience the religion of the people.
- (4) They encountered bitter opposition.
- (5) Those who listened to them prospered ; while their opponents suffered adversity.

These are the patent facts borne out by history everywhere, and the reasons for them are obvious. If the whole

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universe has had a Creator, and its maintenance follows certain Laws made by Him, obedience to those Laws must ensure happiness and comfort. The Creator ought to be the object of our love, and consequently of our worship and emulation. Man is sociable by nature. He must live in some form of society, and needs some basic principles by which various individuals may be welded together so as to constitute such a society. The Messengers framed laws which made the worship of the Deity the central figure of their creed. But the baser instincts of human nature could not fail to manifest themselves even in such a simple thing as worship. Temples and shrines were again decked out. Singing, music and the burning of incense once more took their places as acts of devotion.

The Mosaic dispensation furnishes us with the best illustration of this. None can deny the greatness of Moses. He is the supreme nationalist, the liberator of his people from their Egyptian bondage. He is a law-giver and a nation-builder. He finds his people as slaves and serfs and makes of them a nation of soldiers—possessors of kingdoms and empires. He appears as a Messenger from the Lord, and on the liberation of his people he gives them ten simple Commandments that are the real basis of all legislation. He bids them worship the Lord, and, for that purpose makes a simple tabernacle :

An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me.... And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.¹

At the command of the Lord, Moses goes to Mount Sinai, and there he spends forty days and forty nights, fasting, while God speaks to him as man to man. God orders him to accept from the Children of Israel offerings of "gold and silver and brass," of "blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen and goat's hair, of ram's skins and badger's skin

¹ Exodus. 21 : 24—25.

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and shittim wood, of oil, spices for anointing, oil and sweet incense," and of various other things. These things are to be lavishly used in constructing an ark with a crown of gold round about it, with rings and corners and staves all overlaid with beaten gold. A "mercy seat" of pure gold is also made, having two cherubims of gold at the two ends thereof. The "mercy seat" is to be placed upon the ark, and in the ark is to be deposited the testimony given by the Lord. This is the place, as it is said, to meet the Lord.

We read also, besides the ark, of a table made of pure gold with a crown of gold round about it. On the table we find dishes, spoons, bowls and the like. On the table is shewn bread placed there, as if placed before the Lord. Then again, there are candlesticks of pure gold with shafts, branches, bowls, knops and flowers. There are lamps, tongs, snuff dishes, curtain coverings, veils, boards with their sockets of silver, bars, pans, shovels, basins and flesh-hooks. In fact, it is amazing to consider the wealth which has been lavishly expended in building the House of God, with the best of taste. Even the garments of gold, blue, purple and scarlet and fine linen are specified for the priest. In fact, some ten chapters in a revealed Book like the Exodus, have been devoted to the details of these decorations.

In Leviticus we read of various offerings—burnt offerings, meat offerings, sin offerings, trespass offerings, consecration and sacrifice of peace. These offerings consist of the killing of various creatures from the bull to the turtle dove, a portion of them to be burnt, their blood to be sprinkled and a portion of them to be eaten by the priests and others. And all this at the Commandment of the Lord. What a misconception of Revelation? Could not God be adored without these sacred absurdities? Could we give Him for a tabernacle a better house than that which

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has its canopy of the heavens decked with stars for its lamps? Could odour of sweetened oil and other spices—the things necessary in Jewish worship—vie with the fascinating odours and scents from Nature's own flowers? I was dumb-founded when I read of these things in the third or fourth Revelation of Moses; and I should have lost all respect for Moses, had not the Qur-án come to my rescue. If, on the one hand, the Holy Book speaks highly of Moses as a prophet, it also speaks repeatedly of the corruption which the followers of Moses caused in the Holy Scriptures.¹

Ordinary common sense would compel us to believe all that the Qur-án says concerning Jewish interpolations. If it is stated in the Exodus² in the clearest terms that in building the altar of God no tool should be used, that things must be used in their natural condition and all at the commandment of the Lord, how is it possible that the same Deity should be the Author of this book which give us the elaborate tabernacle details?³ No wonder the spirit of worship became dead and ritualism took its place. Exodus and Leviticus are not only responsible for ceremonialism but also for sacrificialism. We read of various kinds of offerings to expiate sin. These consisted in the killing of various beasts and birds, differing in their value according to the nature of the sin or the worldly position of the sinner. It has also been repeatedly said, especially in Leviticus, that these offerings act as an atonement for sin and pacify the Divine Anger. The ancient sacrifices were bound, in time, to ripen into human sacrifices, and we come upon a long sacrificial vista, running through generation after generation. National calamities, it was believed, could be averted by extensive sacrifices. Taboos came into vogue. Young men were fed and fattened for the purpose of sacrifice in the primitive days of civilization. The victim was slain to please the Lord, when the high priest would drive a stone

¹ 2 : 79, 4 : 46, 5 : 30, 41.

² Exodus. 20 : 24—25.

³ *Ibid.* 2 : 25—36.

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knife into his breast and say, looking up to the heavens, "God, to-day, we have made this sacrifice to please Thee." These taboos became hallowed in the course of time, and the mere touch of them was deemed meritorious and able to wash away sin. Hindu India believed in such a miraculous touch before the advent of the British Raj. Widows were burned with their husbands as *satti*. The touch of the *satti* was the great thing. This belief also produced a number of Christs in the olden days before the Son of Mary. The Mediterranean Sea was a species of lake surrounded by some dozen of countries, each country with its own Christ as its God.¹ All these Christs were born of virgin's womb. They entered into the world at the first hour of the 25th day of December, and history anticipated word for word all that we read in the Church story of Jesus Christ, which is, in fact, a replica of the story of a pagan God. These stories gave their religion to the Mediterranean countries. I here set down the names of the virgin-born Christs who were worshipped as Sons of God. All of them are accompanied by the same story. They are Mithra, Baal, Adonis, Bacchus, Horus, Osiris, Apollo and Quetzacoatl. When the Early Fathers saw that the religion of Jesus was neither acceptable to their own people, nor applicable to the heathen world, they applied this story to Jesus. On the one side, the Christian sword destroyed every pagan cult; on the other, everything that was believed of these pagan Christs was incorporated in the story of Jesus.

Thus, in my opinion, all that I read in the Exodus and Leviticus has been responsible for ceremonialism and sacrificialism in the Hebrew and Christian Churches. The ennobling principle that should work under the name of worship thus became extinct, and true Divine worship assumed the garb of fetishism.

¹ The sources of Christianity by Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din.

ISLAM AND LIBRARY MOVEMENT

BY A. HAMEED HASAN, B.A., LL.B. (ALIG.).

Continued from Vol. XX, page 155.

Caliph Māmūn augmented and enlarged this library during his reign. Māmūn's mother was a Persian lady, and as such Māmūn patronized the Persian language and literature. Māmūn collected for his royal library the most valuable materials dealing with the Arab poetry and arts of the Days of Ignorance. Book-binding was well-known in those days, and books bound by the famous Ibn Abil Harīsh of this era are still found in the libraries of Europe. With the fall of Baghdad the zeal of the Muslim for learning received a severe set-back in Mesopotamia, but even so hundreds of these valuable works were saved from the depredations of Halākū and were made available to scholars. Abū Asībah got hold of these works and preserved them.

After Māmūn's demise the citizens of Baghdad were animated with the love for books. Several Viziers and Amirs as well as Ulemas now owned valuable libraries, and paid fabulous prices for old manuscripts and books. Fātih bin Khākān, the Vizier of Mutawakkil-Bi'l-lāh, founded a grand library "of which 'Alī bin Yahya was the librarian. It was looked upon as unparalleled." Muhammad bin 'Abd-u'l-Malik Ziyārat, the Vizier of the Caliph Wāsiq-Bi'l-lah, used to spend ten thousand rupees per month on getting books copied and translated. Ibn Nadīm writes in his *Kitab-u'l-Fihrist*: "When Wāqidi died, he left six hundred Qintārs of books—one being equivalent to two men's weight—although he had sold a portion of his library before his death for two thousand sovereigns."—*Rasa'il* (page 27).

Love for books increased very rapidly. Libraries came into existence at important centres in all Muslim countries in the fourth century of the Hijra. Shibli in his *Rasa'il* has mentioned some of the most famous libraries.

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The biggest library of the day was the Muslim Library in Spain founded by Hakam Mustanзар. The description and account of this library, as given by the historian Ibn Khaldūn, baffles one's imagination. Shiblī on page 27 says :

Hakam was a famous Khalifa of the Umayyad dynasty who ruled in Spain. His empire was extensive and well-regulated. He was a scholar with a wide outlook and was so very fond of collecting books that even the tribute paid to his kingdom did not suffice for the purpose. Hundreds of his emissaries and merchants were deputed by him to search for and collect rare good books, both old and new, in Spain, Egypt, Syria, Baghdad, Persia and Khorasan.

When Abu-'l-Faraj Isfahānī finished his work *Kitabu'l-Aghani* Hakam sent his special emissary (page 28) to the author with a request that a copy should reach his library (in Spain) before it was published in Asia. Accordingly this book was purchased for four thousand rupees and first included in Hakam's Library. A copy of Kāzī Abū Bakr Ahrīs' work was also similarly procured. It is stated that this library contained four lakhs of books. Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn-u'l-Ibar (who prepared the catalogue), devoted 880 pages to a list of books of poetry and ode. Hakam, in addition to his love for rare books, was also very particular about the accuracy, authenticity and the get-up. He had collected for this purpose the most famous and skilful calligraphists, examiners and book-binders, and paid them very high salaries. Historians have stated that several of these books were perused by Hakam who wrote useful annotations on the margins. He wrote at the beginning of each book the name, parentage, birth and death of the author and similar important comments. Hakam died in 336 Hijra. Although later a disruption overtook the Muslim Empire of Baghdad, the libraries rather flourished more than ever. The movement became very popular.

ISLAM AND LIBRARY MOVEMENT

The Bukhārā Library, founded by Nūh bin Mansūr, the Sultan of Bukhārā, was unparalleled in the whole of the then known world. Ibn Khallikān writes that this matchless library contained books on all the different branches of art and science. Many of these books were rare. They cannot be traced to any other library. Avicenna writing of this library, says: "I have not seen elsewhere all such books on philosophy and other subjects as here and others also might have the same experience" (*Rasa'il*, page 29).

Adad-u'd-Daula Library of Shirāz was another renowned library. One of its features was that it contained all books written from the advent of the Holy Prophet of Arabia up to the founder's time. Bashārī is responsible for bringing this unique library to the notice of the world. He says :

This grand library was located in one of the palatial buildings of Adad-u'd-Daula. The building was very long and extensive, and contained several big rooms stocked with hundreds of high almirahs kept by the side of the walls. These almirahs are three yards broad and of man's height. There was a fine carving on the almirahs. There are separate rooms for books on each religion and for each art and science. There are separate lists of books for each room. *Wakil* (agent), *Khazānehī* (cashier) and accountant are employed to manage and administer this library. No person can enter this library unless accompanied by a member of the Library Establishment—(*Rasa'il* page 29).

Saif-u'd-Daula's Library was the popular rendezvous of the scholars of the day. Saif-u'd-Daula was a highly accomplished man. Hakim Abu Nasr Fārābī was a stipendiary of his court. "Books on literature found in his library were not to be found elsewhere."

The Cairo Library equalled and to some extent surpassed the Spanish Library. Maqrizi describes this library graphically. It possessed the globe of the world prepared by Batlimus (Ptolemy). It also possessed another globe of the world prepared by Abu'l-Hasan Sūfī for Sultan Adad-u'd-Daula and purchased for fifteen thousand rupees.

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Love of books and libraries was not the monopoly of the Muslim rulers and sovereigns. It became the popular hobby of the learned and the rich. The Muslims searched for the old and rare books and secured them wherever they could be had even at fabulous prices. Libraries sprang up not only in Muslim Spain and Egypt, but also in Persia, Iraq, Syria, Khorasan and in India.

It was in the fourth century of the Hijra that public libraries became the order of the day. Amir Sabūr bin Ardashir was probably the first Muslim who founded a public library. In 382 H. he founded a library called Dār-u'l-'u'lūm at Baghdad, which was thrown open to the public. In 395 Hijra, Hakam bin 'Amr-i'l-lah erected a grand public library in Egypt. This library had a very large endowment to meet the salaries of the staff employed in the library. It was open to the public throughout the day.

The fifth Hijra century witnessed the rapid advance of learning and the speedy establishment of a large number of public libraries. Big mosques were the seminaries of public instruction and repositories of useful books. At this time Madrassahs and libraries became useful appendages of mosques. Nizām-u'l-Mulk founded the Nizāmiyyah University at Baghdad. It is the same Nizam-u'l-Mulk who was a class-mate of Omar Khayyām and Hasan bin Sabbah. It would ever redound to the memory of Nizam-u'l-Mulk who promulgated a royal edict that wherever a distinguished savant was available, a Madrassah and a library should be built for him (Zubdat-un-Nasr Tarikh-i-Saljūq, European Edn., page 57). Shibli comments on page 36 of his *Rasa'il* :

Thus thousands of Madrassahs and libraries came into existence. Their existence was the order of the day. Even mosques were now used as libraries, and the traces of this may yet be seen in Constantinople where all big mosques have large libraries.

ISLAM AND LIBRARY MOVEMENT

All the important books on the life of Zoroaster and his disciples and on the Hindu religion were available in the Muslim libraries.

It is most deplorable that most of the books of these libraries are not now in the hands of Muslims and have slowly passed into European hands. With the fall of Muslim Empires, new smaller Muslim States came into existence which either indulged in internecine warfare or fell victims to foreign oppression, in the course of which almost all the literary treasures, collected and stocked by Muslims in Muslim States, passed away from their hands. The famous Fatimide library was entirely lost owing to the carelessness of Sultan Ghāzī Salāh-u'd-Din (*Rasa'il*, page 40). Ibn Sura, a broker, made a fortune by selling them very cheap. The raids of the Tatars devastated the Muslim lands and their libraries suffered greatly at their hands. The historian Katābī while writing of the scholar Tūsī says that the observatory built by Halākū Khan contained a very grand library to which some books, looted from Baghdad and Syria, numbering more than 4 lakhs, were transferred—(*Rasa'il*, page 41).

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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN AND ITS COMMENTARY

INTRODUCTION.

BY KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

(Continued from Vol. XX, page 177.)

CHAPTER V.

OUR EVOLUTIONARY JOURNEY.

The Origin of Man.—We are on the journey of Evolution, and in our travels have passed through various worlds of progress. In each world there are several stages where we are furnished with new equipment for the next. We may, or may not, complete the progress that we should have made in any particular world, but no sooner does our equipment become worn out, and is no longer serviceable, than we have to leave it and enter into the new world. In other words, we are given a new body at every stage. On our departure from a world we leave that world's body behind us, and on entering into a new world we are given a new body. The termination of any one of these stages of existence means death. But the same death is a necessary gate through which we pass into the coming world.

The Holy Book traces our origin to the region of stars,¹ which in the hours of darkness shed light which pierces its way through the earth and makes it pregnant with its contents. Water also comes down from the clouds and penetrating the earth,² helps to produce and nurture trees and cattles,³ which in their turn supply us with food

¹ 86 : 1—3.

² 23 : 18.

³ 23 : 19.

INTRODUCTION TO HOLY QUR-ÁN

containing all the constituents of protoplasm. Thus sperma is created, which when located in the womb of a woman passes through various embryonic stages,¹ where it receives bones and flesh for further progress. On their completion something new is born which the Holy Qur-án calls *Nafs*. This is no other than our spirit, an assemblage of passions of which the chief characteristic is consciousness. Thus we come into this world and our aim in this earthly sojourn is to reach the stage of soul. The spirit must pass through several stages of progress, but its course is interrupted when its equipment is no longer serviceable, and this means death. We naturally leave the body here, but the life is continuous. The spirit makes further progress. If at the time of death it has become ripened into the soul, then it enters into the world of further progress which, in religious terminology, is called Heaven.² But if has not completed its course, then it will have to begin the journey from the very stage in which it was at the time of its departure from this planet.

There is one great difference which distinguishes the two journeys—the past and the future. We possess a material body, with or without consciousness, in all our past stages. Consciousness originates in the womb. Subsequently matter and consciousness travel together. Then follows death and the spirit is separated from the body. But there is always a marked pause at the termination of each world. The progressive agency seems to suspend all its activities for a time, and then sets forth on the new journey. So also in our own journey there occurs a great departure after death. Matter is finished with. There is no further progress for it. The further journey is the journey of the spirit, with consciousness, so there must be the longest possible pause wherein the spirit will remain absolutely inactive. This stage has been termed

¹ 23 : 14.

² 89 : 30.

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*Barzakh*¹ the period between death and resurrection. The spirit is placed in what the Holy Qur-án calls *Ajdas*,² the plural of *Jadas*, which means a state of being cut off. The spirit has become cut off from the body, and so the latter cut off from further progress.

Divine economy has been pleased to give all spirits simultaneous start in the coming journey—that of the spirit unencumbered by flesh. It must await the time when every spirit has left the earth. A kind of swoon overtakes all those who leave the earth, and this continues until the spirits rise again at their resurrection. They will rise from their resting places, as if awakened out of sleep which will appear to them as if it had been for a portion of a day.³ But coming events cast their shadows before. We shall see Heaven and Hell, as in a dream. This without doubt will be the commencement of the further journey. But the spirits will have to start, each from the stage in which it was when death overtook it.

Psychologists differ as to the origin of the soul and its nature, some holding that it comes from another sphere and joins itself to the body, where it becomes a prisoner of the flesh. But the Holy Qur-án describes it as an evolved form of consciousness, which is itself only a child of the body. Human consciousness, when it is cleansed of its low nature and equipped with true spirituality, becomes, under Divine Inspiration, the Soul. The Lord breathed⁴ His Spirit into man when the materials of the body in its embryonic condition became properly arranged. He did the same in the case of Jesus, when he was in Mary's womb. The Spirit of the Lord is not confined like a prisoner within the walls of the body, but has been endowed with our physical nature as the wherewithal for its future growth. The Holy Qur-án often speaks of coming events as having already happened, more especially

¹ 23 : 100.

² 36 : 51.

³ 79 : 46.

⁴ 15 : 29, 30 : 27.

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in the case of such potentialities as are, in the knowledge of God, certain of actualization on some future occasion. The Divine Spirit was breathed into us in order that we might receive homage from the angels, which will come to pass when the Divine Flame so kindled in us becomes fully ablaze. Yet the Holy Qur-án mentions it as already accomplished. This, in fact, is our future goal. We need a religion that will enable us to claim this predestined honour. It may or may not be ours in this life, but it will be within our reach when our time is come to leave the world. We cannot afford to kill the body as the sickly theologies in pre-Islamic days were wont to teach, since it would be a suicidal act on our part, involving an attempt to kill the Divine Spirit within us. What we need is something to train our physical "urges" to help, and not retard, the growth of the Spirit.

In the animal frame, matter reaches its final development, but its further progress is solely concerned with consciousness, which in its initial stage consists of various passions and emotions. In the animal kingdom there is hardly any right of ownership. Animals, in fact, possess nothing of that individual consciousness which, in the human mind creates the idea of *mine and thine*. Animals claim everything they need, as if it were their own, while the human mind is capable of making a distinction between *mine and thine*. But since we have risen from the animal state we have in us the animal instinct of usurping others' rights. Most of us verge on the border of animality and worship the same spirit, which is the initial stage of the human 'self.' Had this spirit been left unchecked, as in the case of a baby who claims everything he sees as his own, we should all of us, by this time, have been in a condition of sheer chaos. But the Great Designer does not leave us here. He has given us a goal that is very

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far off. We have been sent into the world to prepare ourselves for the journey that lies before us. It is for us to mould anew the newly arisen Spirit into Soul before we leave the earth. For this reason we have to pass through seven stages that are thus styled by the Holy Book :—

*Nafs Ammara*¹ (the Commanding Spirit).—This is but another name for the animal spirit. The word *Nafs*, which I translate here as *Spirit*, literally means the human 'self,'—another name for human consciousness which has nothing material in its composition, but is purely a spirit. It is unruly in its demands at this stage of development. It must have everything its own way, compelling us to submit to its promptings, and for this reason it has been called the Commanding Spirit. Nevertheless, it becomes tamed under the usages of society or the ordinances of revelation and begins to have glimmerings of the distinction between right and wrong.

Nafs Mulhimah.—The spirit is called *Nafs Mulhimah*² only when it becomes inspired and begins to differentiate between right and wrong. This new knowledge forms the basis of further development. No sooner is consciousness born in us than it should be placed before that spirit for its further advancement. The Sacred Book feels this necessity. It accordingly makes mention of seven things at the same place where it deals with the birth of consciousness ; which means that the newly-born thing has to assume these features before it becomes the soul. We have also to pass through the intervening stages, yet these seven features mentioned in the Holy Qur-án must remain ever before us as our guiding principle, in whichever condition of spirit we may be. These stages are :—

1. Belief in the truth. The Holy Qur-án calls it *Iman*. Our every action arises from certain convictions

¹ 12 ; 53.

² 91 : 8.

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which are the mainsprings of our deeds whether right or wrong. Hence the Holy Qur-án lays down the necessity for making certain truths our belief. The believers, so the Book says, are the only persons who become 'successful' in life.

2. Lowliness in our prayers.
3. Abstention from vanity, levity and absurdity.
4. Aiming at purification and sharing our properties with others. The word used in the text is *zakat* which gives both the ideas. They are in fact co-related to each other.
5. Continence, that is to say, purity in sexual relations.
6. Keeping of trusts and covenants.
7. Putting into practice the requirements of Muslim prayer.

All of us may not have an opportunity to acquaint ourselves with the Qur-ánic injunctions, but public opinion and the other requirements of society demand from us the observance of these things. Something within accuses us if we go against them. It censures us whenever we think of violating another's right. This inner voice is termed conscience in common phraseology, but in the Holy Qur-án it is described as the *Chiding Spirit* (*Nafs Lawwama*) and it is the third evolutionary stage of our spirit's growth. The moment we possess the knowledge of right and wrong a sort of struggle starts between the Commanding Spirit and the Chiding Spirit. The former commands usurpation and misappropriation, while the latter speaks of justice and equity, in the light of the above knowledge. Unfortunately, most of us stand on the verge of animality and worship the Commanding Spirit. Nay, such are more dangerous to human society than the animals. We have to deal with the spirit in such

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a way that it yields to the voice of the Accusing or Chiding Spirit.¹ Then the time is at hand when the struggle between the two will end. The voice of the uncontrollable spirit would be hushed up for ever and the Chiding Spirit would achieve full victory. We shall shun evil and virtue shall rule every nook and corner of our hearts. The spirit² will then be at rest, and thus we will reach the fourth stage of our evolutionary travel. A fire from above descends upon the heart ; it burns out the whole of our physical nature and consumes every prestige of evil inclination that is therein, and we become reconciled to our Lord.³ He also is pleased with us. Here we pass on to the fifth and sixth stages of our growth. His will becomes the rule of our life, and we are like lifeless machines in His hands. Then the soul is refined and the final stage is reached. All temptations disappear utterly. We feel as though we are living for others, their happiness becomes the object of our life. We are active only to supply others' needs. We take infinite pains and face all the hardships of existence, but for the service of others. In fact, we do all that we used to do before, but, whereas formerly we were self-centred in our motives, now it is the benefit of others which induces us to face the trials of life. We walk humbly with the Lord, and most willingly adopt all His ways to maintain and nourish His other creatures. When we reflect His colour as *Rabbu-'l'Alamin* "The Nourisher and Maintainer of All" we enter into His Heaven like a faithful servant, and become at one with Him.⁴ This is the true Holy Communion when the Divine Blood, to use the metaphor, runs into our veins. We lose our entity and merge in Him, and the soul becomes

¹ Islamic prayer has been introduced mainly for our elevation. The Holy Qur-án makes the Lord God as our prototype. We have to call him with his characteristics (7:180). The first thing we recite in the prayer is that our Lord is free from all defects and impurities. Then we speak of his possessing all that is good and it is for us to seek to emulate him in this. In ch. 29. v. 45., we find the same thing said of prayer.

² 89 : 27

³ 89 : 28

⁴ 9 : 40

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mature. This is the final stage of our growth. Here our journey comes to an end. A Light from within shines forth and guides us to the realms of our Lord¹ that we may walk therein.

There is another salient feature observable in people who are nearing the conditions when the soul is born. Under the first three aforesaid conditions of the Spirit we act for ourselves. Our own happiness and comfort inspire all our activities. But when the Spirit has attained its rest, we act as trustees for others² taking the remainder of the world as our beneficiary. Man, of the whole creation, possesses two distinguishing features in his capacity for earning. Unlike other animals, he thinks for the morrow and can store up something against a rainy day. Secondly, he can earn more than he needs. Though all of us possess these two qualities, yet they bear a different significance to people of advanced spirituality. Such consider that these instincts were given to them for the benefit of others. They will accept only a pittance from their labour while the surplus must go to others. They become oblivious of their own needs and go against their own desires. Their life is, as it were, a tyranny over their own "self."

We know very little of the soul,³ only that some thing becomes created in us at a certain stage of spiritual development, as an agent of God to rule on His behalf. Formerly, we used to obey the spirit in us, but now we obey the soul directly.

We do nothing unless we are ordered to do so, and for all our activities we look to Him. It is the same Divine Spirit which was breathed into us, when in the womb, but is now full-grown and worthy of receiving homage from God's angels. I am not speaking of fiction, but of

¹ 57 : 12

² 83 : 72

³ 17 : 8

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reality. Though men of such souls are very rare, but they have not yet entirely disappeared from the earth.

Our knowledge is very superficial. There are many things of which we know very little. For example, consciousness, life and electricity are each a mystery to us. Matter engenders them, but they are absolutely different from matter, and the soul may be classed under the same category. The Holy Qur-án rightly says that we are given very little knowledge.

The Return of the Soul.—If continuity of life is a scientific truth, the soul thus evolved cannot remain on earth after its separation from the body, for Soul is after all another name for human consciousness, purged absolutely of all physical elements. It is a spirit, without earthly link or tendency. It must rise upwards to other regions according to its capacity. The soul of the Holy Prophet remained only forty days on the earth, according to the traditions. Jesus,¹ Elijah, called Idris² in the Holy Qur-án, and other prophets also rose after death from the terrestrial to the higher spheres.

The soul emanates from the Divine Light. This is precisely what science tells us to-day. It traces our beginnings back to light, which passes through various phases till it assumes that of human consciousness. Our body consists of all the concomitants of the progressive agency, electrons being among them. The human soul may embody itself in any of these substances, according to its capacity and fitness for the return journey to Light. We read of the Holy Prophet that on the night of his Ascension he rode to heaven on *Burraq*, a body, composed of electrons, according to the literal meaning of the word. We are also told that our movements in heaven will be so swift that we shall reach the place, however

¹ 3: 54

² 19: 57

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distant it be, the moment we think of it ; and this is readily imaginable if our soul has assumed the attributes of these substances.

But such an electric movement pertains to the Soul only, and not to the physical body whose very nature keeps the Soul anchored to the earth. Carnal passions are only a rarefied form of the earthly nature, and a spirit cannot therefore ascend unless it be free of them. Such freedom alone gives it a start for the upward journey, especially when it seeks to retrace¹ its steps along the same route by which it travelled hither in the first instance. But there is one distinction. On our outward journey to the present state we had passed through various regions without knowing it. We reached the earth with no consciousness in us. It appeared in our frame to partake in a measure of our physical nature. But when consciousness becomes purified of material things it rises, heavenward in the form of a soul. It passes again through the same regions, but it carries with it this time two new capacities, one articulation and the other consciousness, in its purified form, that is to say, the soul. We have to return to the Divine Light from which we came.

But most of us bid farewell to this world when we are still at the stage of the animal spirit ; to which we bow down and whose dictates we obey, and it is only the force of public opinion which keeps us within reasonable bounds. Thus public opinion creates conscience in us in its most primitive form. Its voice is very weak, and we do not attempt to listen to it unless we are afraid of being detected. The great virtue of the present day civilized society lies in the people's efforts to conceal their wrongs from others. For example, sexual purity has been respected from the earliest days, but though public opinion has become notoriously weak on this point, yet it would

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nevertheless censure any conduct that would affect the rights of those who stand in matrimonial relations to each other. Various means have been devised to hush up and conceal what has been done amiss.—Birth control is one, which is playing havoc on our social relations. The centres of civilization are simply repeating the practice of Pompey's day. Wickedness has become rampant though in a most refined form. Learning and culture have been prostituted to give a polish even to our vilest deeds. In short, well nigh all of us leave this world when the animal spirit in us is still at its height and we indulge in all kinds of evil. In other words, we have not been able to release ourselves from the clutches of the Commanding Spirit. We may, and doubtless do, understand the difference between right and wrong, and to this extent our Spirit has reached its second stage of evolution. But, alas, we remain only standing at the threshold of the third stage when death removes us from the scene. We, no doubt, have entered the province of the Chiding Spirit, but we take no heed to its warnings. We gag it, and turn our backs on its protests. We may die in this state of carelessness, but the Chiding Spirit must one day rise, and then it will appear with a vengeance indeed. This will occur at our resurrection¹ because we must leave our body behind and with it its appendage—the Spirit in its first form.

Day of Resurrection.—We shall therefore have to rise again, since we have not passed the stage of the Commanding Spirit, though we did possess a rudimentary knowledge of right and wrong. Our resurrection will bring us face to face at once with the advance of the mind in the form of the Chiding Spirit.¹ And then another trouble awaits us. Here we can avoid the detection of wrongdoing, because wrongdoing is mostly under cover of the body, but there all our efforts to conceal evil will be of

¹ 75: 1, 2.

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no avail, and our inner self will stand forth naked in the sight of all.¹ All that has been done clandestinely will stand forth as an open secret. Thus the pangs caused by the Chiding Spirit will increase exceedingly. It will be a terrible day, subjecting us to unimaginable pains and torments. Our perceptions will grow more intense, our physical nature weak, and our remorse and sense of shame will reach a fearful pitch. We shall suffer torments in their most acute form on the day when we will be stripped of all our physical parts. This awful day has been called by the Holy Qur-án the Day of Resurrection. The sacred books have not entered on any campaign of terror, as the Church says, if they appeal us by their message concerning the Last Day. Its pains cannot be exaggerated, and I deliberately aver that the very words of the Scriptures themselves have failed to convey a hundredth part of the agonies that we shall have to experience on that Day. It is not an inconceivable thing. We can understand it if we only visualize the Chiding Spirit at its zenith and every moral and spiritual wrong in us revealed. Just as the body of a patient suffering from a venereal disease bears sometimes palpable marks of the scourge, it will be no surprising thing to find our various organs bearing witness to the wrongs we have done in this life.² The agonies of the time will be simply unbearable, and we shall naturally long either for return³ to our past life in order to do better, or to have some purgatorial treatment that may relieve us of the torment. But the Beneficent Lord has anticipated our needs⁴ and His Providence has created for us a hospital⁵ in the form of Hell; because we, being on the course of evolution, cannot go back. Hell, in fact, though an evil resort, is the best suited for our progress in the spiritual world. Had we left the world with the Chiding Spirit perfected and the voice of

¹ 69 : 18, 86 : 9.

² 36 : 65.

³ 6 : 27.

⁴ 11 : 119.

⁵ 57 : 15.

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conscience heard in every way there could have been neither Resurrection nor Hell. We would have been like angels¹: our souls freed from all earthly passions and none to be reclaimed by the Hell. But since we could not avail ourselves of our opportunities in this life for the required evolution, and abused all the blessings² of God which He gave us for this purpose, we must descend into Hell, as a matter of certainty to make up the deficiency at the cost of frightful torments. Hell, for this reason, has been called in the Holy Qur-án a mother or a friend. It will take us in her lap, like a mother³ who brings her child willingly to a surgical operation to free his body from the wounds from which he is suffering, though the operation will be a most painful one.

(To be continued.)

TURKEY AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

BY MAAS J. MAJID.

All eyes of the Muslim world are to-day focussed on the startling events taking place in Turkey. The reforms effected by Mustafa Kemal Pasha seem to have shaken to its foundation the old order of things. And the fact that age-long customs and practices which have received, rightly or wrongly, the sanctity of religion have been brushed aside, and that all services in mosques are to be conducted in the Turkish language and not in Arabic, and that only Turkish translations of the Qur-án are to be used, give rise to questions which are of paramount importance to Muslims all the world over.

Is Nationalism antagonistic to Islam? Is praying in one's own language more meritorious and more acceptable to God than praying in another language, even though that other language may be "the queen of languages" and the

¹ 102 : 8.

² 101 : 9.

³ 57 : 15.

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medium in which the Holy Book was revealed ? Is the wearing of a western head-gear instead of the Fez or an eastern cap or Turban an indication that one has strayed away from Islam ? Is the freedom now enjoyed by Turkish women contrary to Islamic injunctions ? Or has Islam lost its pristine character by extraneous elements being introduced into it that such radical reforms as are taking place in Turkey are necessary to remove the dross from the pure gold ? These are some of the questions that now await decisive answers from the Muslim world ; and on the answers depend to a great extent the future course of Islam.

In venturing to answer these questions, notice must be taken of the man whose doings have given rise to them. By his efforts alone, on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire now sits enthroned a republic. By his efforts alone, " the sick man of Europe " who might have been dead and buried is to-day full of vim and vigour, and a power not to be despised. That Mustafa Kemal is the saviour and maker of Modern Turkey is beyond dispute. That his imperial genius and keen intellectual foresight have liberated his country from the fetters of religious fanatics which still largely trammel other Muslim countries is easily discernible. That his sincerity of purpose and love for the land of his birth are above reproach is evident : and that his chief aim is not merely to restore to Turkey her ancient fame, but to raise her far above the imitations, counterfeits, or parodies, which have been set up in the last century throughout the civilised world, is no surmise. One, therefore, is constrained to conclude that his reforms, however drastic or startling they may seem, are the outcome of a sincere devotion to his country. They are bound to have their echoes and reverberations in other parts of the Muslim world, pregnant as they are with immense possibilities.

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Whether Mustafa Kemal is as ardent and as sincere a Mussalman as he is a nationalist, each one must decide for himself. The judgment as to the wisdom of his statesmanship must be left to future historians to record. But one feels that the vision he has of the Turkey of his own making is not a mere Utopian dream ; it has in it the substance of practical reality which—receiving spiritual sustenance from an Islam shorn of priest-ridden doctrines promises to blossom forth in all strength and beauty. No permanence can ever be the lot of any system of reforms unless spiritual force is behind it ; and in the background of the reforms in Turkey there looms faintly but nonetheless surely a powerful spiritual force.

To state that the ultimate triumph of Kemal Pasha's reforms will also be the triumph of pure, unadulterated, Islam may seem a paradox : it may even evoke a fusillade of adverse criticism from some quarters. But one wonders whether, like every other religion, Islam too in its passage through the centuries has gathered a large amount of foreign elements which make it lag behind in the race of progress, so much so that it has now to be put through a course of purification. Mustafa Kemal seems to have taken upon himself this task. If this surmise is correct, a prediction may be hazarded that the Islam of the future will be the pure Islam as taught by the Holy Prophet and understood by his followers as meant to be understood by the Holy Prophet—thanks to the efforts of this Turkish master mind.

“ Race consciousness or instinct, in all its degrees—incipient, imperfect and specific—is an essential part of nature's evolutionary machinery,” writes Sir Arthur Keith in his article on “ The Dawn of National Life. ”

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“Throughout the long twilight of the world,” he continues, “hormones and race instinct have been silently shaping the destinies of mankind. These evolutionary forces have been inherited in all their pristine force by the population of Modern Europe. It is the strength of this inheritance that can explain best the burning questions of Nationality.” It is no wonder then that “the strength of this inheritance” has fired Turkey with an enthusiasm and a spirit which in the beginning shewed only a cautious movement in adagio and andante, but presently an acceleration towards the allegro and vivace of startling reforms in the crescendo of highly galvanised national life. National consciousness is the warp and woof of Kemal’s reforms, but will it clash with the best interests of Islam? Let future historians answer.

Turkey stood a few years back at the parting of the ways. She had to choose between what seemed to her a priest-infested, inelastic Islam, which was cribbed, cabined, and confined, and an Islam, pure and simple, fit for all ages and all climes. Her choice was promptly made, and the die was cast. To-day, entirely freeing herself from priest-ridden doctrines, dogmas and customs, she pursues a path of national self-respect, national glory, and national power. Will that path be also the path to Islamic self-respect, Islamic glory, and Islamic power? Will Turkey restore to the Muslim World the palmy days of Islam? Will she resuscitate to life its vanished splendour and beauty of a by-gone day? Will her manhood produce an Antar, a Hamza, or an Ali? Will her womanhood produce a Zat-ul-Hemma, a Fakhr-un-nissa, an Ummul-Fazl? When the history of Modern Turkey is written many of these questions will have been answered. But, be the answers what they may, the historian will have to pay unstinted tribute to the singleness of devotion, the sincerity of

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purpose of the man who even in his boyhood was pained at the dire plight of his country and felt in his heart the yearning cry of the Persian Mystic who sang :—

Ah ! love, could thou and I with fate conspire
To change this sorry scheme of things entire,
Would we not shatter it to bits and then
Remould it closer to our hearts' desire.

Into bits he has shattered it ; to his heart's desire he is moulding it ; but whether the Turkey of his heart's desire will be the Turkey of the Muslim World's desire does not seem easy to answer just now. But many will follow whither the master spirit leads. Let the rest, in keeping with Edmund Burke's wise counsel, " understand it according to their measure, and venerate where they are not able presently to comprehend."

NOTES.

A Bishop's Attitude Towards Islam.

The diffusion of knowledge and literature about Islam in the Western countries, in the course of the last two decades, has wrought a tremendous change in the minds of the Western people. We have already commented on this aspect in these pages. Recently but another proof of this change of attitude towards Islam was given in an article in the *Evening Standard* of London in which a Service held in a Church in Knightsbridge was described at some length. According to that report the officiating priest was no other than the Right Reverend Bishop Fredrick James. In his sermon he discussed different creeds and remarked that it did not seem to matter much which one believed. For religion, he said, was largely a question of birth—most Christians were Christians simply because they happened to be born this side of Suez, that was all. Born on the other side, they would probably have been Muslims. Homage, he urged, was due to all religions. As to Jesus, he said, he could not believe

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that any man so perfect, as he was alleged to be, ever existed. Much that Jesus said was erroneous, nevertheless he was a great teacher. The Bishop closed his sermon by referring to Islam and observed that in several respects it was better than Christianity.

The Bishop has given expression to a truth which very few will deny. Indeed, for Christians, Islam alone is the haven for the morrow.

The use of Intoxicating Liquor.

Our attitude on the use of intoxicants is quite plain. The Holy Qur-án denounces them as the "works of the devil." The Western people are gradually being forced to admit the truth underlying this dictum, but there is still a section of people which believe in the occasional use of intoxicants and describe all Prohibition laws as unjust and un-Christian. It is to them that we address ourselves. Are not these very un-Christian laws which are producing wholesome effects all round in countries where prohibition is being strictly enforced? On the other hand we find appalling conditions obtaining in countries where intoxicants are used freely. Take France for example. The population is daily decreasing. A semi-official enquiry was set up to find out why it was that more people were dying in France every year than were born. They found that while there were several causes, yet the greatest cause of all was wine-drinking. The report said :

Wine-drinking causes a man to lose his natural affections and forget his obligations as a son or a husband or a father. It causes him to be inefficient in his work and leads him to steal and rob and become an habitual law-breaker. Not only this, but wine-drinking is the prime cause of many serious diseases, such as paralysis, inflammation of the stomach, liver and kidneys, tuberculosis, pneumonia, insanity, and also causes a diseased condition of the blood-vessels.

Not only is wine-drinking a cause of these diseases, but it is known by physicians that when those who do not drink wine contract these diseases, there is hope of cure; but for a wine-drinker, there is very little hope of recovery. From the report given above it is evident that wine-drinking can only harm the body; it cannot benefit it.

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Gladstone, a former Prime Minister of England, said : " The combined harm of the three great scourges—war, famine and pestilence—--is not as terrible as that of wine-drinking."

Alcohol is Poison and not Food.

Alcohol is not a product found in nature. It is a product of decomposition and is a powerful poison. It does not require very much pure alcohol to kill a man almost instantly. To prove it is not difficult. If an earth-worm or a fish is placed in a vessel containing water mixed with alcohol, in proportion of hundred to one, it will quickly die. The white of an egg if dropped into alcohol will instantly curdle and become tough and white—just the same as it were dropped into boiling water or on a hot iron.¹

When it is recalled that the stomach, heart, liver, kidneys and muscles are made of the same kind of material as the white of an egg, it is evident that alcohol must affect them in much the same way. Besides alcohol is not a food, for it enters the alimentary canal and is not digested or changed in any way ; when it enters the blood it is still alcohol. Alcohol shrivels up any part of the body with which it comes into contact, and does not impart strength to the body. Moreover, when the stomach is healthy and ordinary food is eaten, the stomach receives it; but when alcohol is drunk for the first time, the stomach usually vomits it up. The stomach recognises alcohol as an enemy, and so tries to get rid of it as quickly as possible. Foods cause the body to grow ; but alcohol stops or rather retards growth. Children who are given wine to drink, do not attain to the bodily stature they would have reached had they not used wine.

¹ Health and Longevity by Dr. Selmon.

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Athletes and those who are training to compete in any feats of strength and endurance, abstain entirely from the use of alcohol for alcohol weakens the muscles. The reason many think that a drink of wine increases the strength is that the wine benumbs the brain so that one is self-deceived as to his strength after drinking wine.

Influence of Alcohol on the Mind.

A man who drinks alcohol, wrongly believes that it helps him to think. It is true that for the first ten or more minutes, after a small quantity is drunk, the mind seems to be more active and thoughts flow freely ; but they are confused and incoherent, because a man who ordinarily is upright in conduct and discreet in word and act, after drinking freely of alcohol, manifests an entirely different disposition. The man of few words now becomes talkative, and loses all sense of the fitness of words, and often uses obscene language and commits acts that are beyond the bounds of reason and propriety. After the first few minutes, the one who has drunk freely of alcohol begins to have a heavy feeling in the head. He becomes quiet, and desires to lie down and sleep. This is due to the alcohol stupefying his brain.

Man is endowed with a conscience that enables him to distinguish between right and wrong. The influence of alcohol is to destroy this power. Almost all the crimes that men commit, that lead to imprisonment, such as fighting, murder, rape, etc., are committed while they are under the influence of alcohol.

Alcohol-Drinking Causes Disease.

The man who drinks a small quantity of alcohol daily may not think that he is being harmed very much ; but if he could look inside of his liver, kidneys, lungs, stomach and blood-vessels, he would see that all of these organs

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are being gradually injured. Normally the body has the power to destroy disease—germs that may chance to find entrance. Alcohol destroys this power of resisting disease, and so injures the organs of the body that the drinker easily contracts pneumonia, consumption, Bright's disease, cholera, plague or dysentery. In fact, the alcohol-drinker easily contracts any disease ; and when he becomes sick, he has far less chance of recovery than the one who uses none.

The evil influence and harmfulness of alcohol drinking is not only manifest in the one who drinks, but it is transmitted to his offspring. In asylums for the care of feeble-minded children, it is found that about 60 out of every 100 such children are the offspring of parents who drink alcohol.

Is Alcohol a Useful Medicine ?

Until recent years, physicians, as a rule, gave alcohol to the sick, thinking it would help in curing disease ; but to-day physicians use very little alcohol as an internal medicine. It is now known that alcohol does not cure disease ; on the contrary, it aggravates most diseases. Practically the only place and the only way in which alcohol can serve as a useful, is to rub it on the skin in the cure of certain diseases. The newspapers frequently contain glowing advertisements of some brand of wine that aids digestion and energises the system. Such advertisements are gross misrepresentations. The safe rule for a sick person to follow is to avoid using any kind of intoxicating liquor.

The “ Un-Christian Law. ”

They ask you about intoxicants and games of chance. Say : In both of them there is a great sin and means of profit for men and their sin is greater than their profit. And they ask you as to what they should spend. Say : What you can spare. Thus does Allah make clear to you the communications, that you may ponder.—The Holy Qur-án, ii : 219.

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O you who believe ! intoxicants and games of chance and (sacrificing to) stones set up and (dividing by) arrows are only an uncleanness, the devil's work ; shun it therefore that you may be successful. The devil only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. Will you then desist ?—The Holy Qur-ân, v. 90-91.

CORRESPONDENCE

LOS ANGELES,
CALIFORNIA.

THE IMAM,

The Mosque, Woking.

DEAR BROTHER,

AS-SALAMO-ALAIKUM,—Since my last letter to you I was fortunate in obtaining a copy of "The Ideal Prophet" by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. I have never read a book which I found so interesting, so enlightening, and which has accorded me a peace of mind which I have not known for years. I am now reading it for the second time. I read at least two or three Surahs in the Glorious Koran every day. I wish it were possible for me to attend the Mosque at Woking and to learn more of Islam. What a pleasure it must be to come in contact with a man like Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. May Allah grant him a long and happy life so that he might continue in the good work in which he is engaged. And to you, my dear friend, the help you have given me is indeed deeply appreciated.

If the world was ever in need of Islam, it is to-day. I am happy, very happy, to follow the "Light" brought to this world by that great torch-bearer, the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Islam means much to me. It is indeed a rational faith.

The prayer book which you so kindly sent to me was received a few minutes ago, after I had started this letter. I am deeply grateful to you for your kindness, and extend my sincerest thank, for the same. I assure you that it will be put to constant use.

May the peace of Allah abide with you.

Your brother,
HARRY E. HEINKEL.

CORRESPONDENCE

CORNHILL,
DEVON.

THE IMAM,
The Mosque, Woking.

DEAR BROTHER,

Thank you very much indeed for your kind letter and the literature enclosed.

I am returning the declaration form duly filled in. I would be very grateful if you would teach me the usual prayers.

Since writing to you I have met with an accident, and I shall be very lucky if I am able to do much walking at all! At one time I should have raged against my fate, but now I can submit to the will of God with patience, knowing that He will not send me a punishment greater than I can bear.

I am glad to be a Muslim—the laws of the Blessed Qur-án seem to be very clear and straightforward; especially do I admire the laws relating to women, which seem to be the kindest and fairest ever made for our much maligned sex!

Yours sincerely,
DOROTHY EADY.

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IF EUROPE HAD BEEN MUSLIMISED

BY VASUDEO B. MEHTA.

It is interesting to speculate how certain countries and continents would have evolved if certain events in their history had ended differently from what they actually did. If Darius or Xerxes had succeeded in conquering Greece, there would have been no Greek civilization of the type with which we are familiar. If Greece had not been conquered by Rome and the Turks had not taken Constantinople, Greek civilization would probably have remained unknown to Europe till comparatively recent times, and certainly would not have influenced Western civilization to the extent that it has. And that means that Western civilization would in many respects have been fundamentally different from what it is to-day.

History, as written up till now, is full of prejudices, mainly racial and religious. The average Westerner is, therefore, brought up to think that the defeat of the Saracens at Tours (or Poitiers, as some people call it) by Charles Martel in 732 was a good thing for Europe. But Anatole France, who was above most human prejudices, did not think so. In his *La Vie en Fleur*, he says :

The most tragic event in history is that of the battle of Poitiers, when the science, the art, and the civilization of Arabia fell back before the barbarism of the Franks.

Had the Arabs won that battle, they would most probably have conquered the whole of Europe, and Islam would have become the religion of its inhabitants. It is impossible in a short article like this to describe all the changes that would have taken place in Western life and thought had the Europeans embraced Islam in the eighth century. I shall, therefore, confine myself here to only a few aspects of life, in which, by embracing Islam, Western people would have been better off than what they are or have been under Christianity.

If Western people had been Muslims, they would have been saved from the far from easy task of trying to

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prove to themselves, and to the rest of the world, that the doctrine of Christian Trinity in no way clashes with the idea of the unity of God. For Islam is sternly monotheistic and teaches in the clearest words the Oneness of God. "There is no God but one God," taught Muhammad. And the Prophet of Arabia did not pretend to be anything more than a human being himself. In chapter 18, verse 110 of the Qur-án, we read, "I am only a mortal like you." And on account of this emphatic declaration of his, the Muslims have never deified and worshipped him, thus creating a second God.

Western people would have had a truly holy book to inspire and guide them. The New Testament is not one, because it is not an authentic record of Christ's teachings. It was not even written during the lifetime of Jesus, but from fifty to a hundred years after his death. The four Gospels differ materially from each other. As a matter of fact there is no evidence to show that Christ wanted his teachings to be embodied in a book. He was content with the Old Testament. The very existence of Christ is doubtful, since all the Gospels differ from each other about his life. No one knows for certain whether he was born at Bethlehem or Nazareth, and where he was and what he did between his fourteenth and twenty-eighth year.

It is different with Muhammad and the Qur-án. Muhammad was a historical character, and his teachings are embodied in the Qur-án. The Qur-án was dictated by him to his scribes. There is no other version of Muhammad's teachings except the Qur-án.

Unlike the Bible, there is very little in the Qur-án which science can attack. Islam does not teach, like Christianity, that God created the Universe in six days and took rest on the seventh. It teaches that God created

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the Universe in six periods. And, of course, He took no rest after creating it, because, not being a mortal, he needed no rest. Friday with the Muslims is a day of congregational prayers, that is, a day on which all the Muslims are expected to go to the mosque to pray. But it is not a day of enforced rest. For, after the prayers are over, a Muslim can do his usual work or enjoy himself as on other days of the week. Had, therefore, Great Britain been a Muslim country, the British Government would not have been obliged to discuss whether cinemas and other places of public amusement should or should not be kept open on Sundays (or Fridays).

The position of European women would have been better under Islam than it has been under Christianity. It is a mistake to think that women are obliged to wear a veil in Islam. Nowhere in the Qur-án is there an injunction to that effect. Women are enjoined to be modest, cover certain parts of their body (which do not include the face) and do nothing which might attract the attention of men. The Arab women did not wear a veil in the days of the Prophet or immediately after. Muhammad's own wife, Ayesha, fought in battles, and his daughter, Fatima, took part in discussions with men with uncovered faces. It was only after the Arabs had conquered Persia that the Arab women, in imitation of the more civilized Persian women, began to wear the veil.

Muhammad respected marriage and enjoined his followers to marry. Before he began to preach, an Arab could marry as many wives as he liked, but he restricted the number to four. Even four wives a Muslim should not marry unless he feels certain that he can treat all of them equally well. Says the Qur-án: "If you feel that you will not do justice between them, then marry only one." "All the wives of a Muslim have equal rights, social as well as legal, and their children share equally in their father's property after his death."

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A Muslim woman can share in her father's property along with her brothers. After she comes of age she cannot be married without her consent. An ante-nuptial settlement has to be made on her by her husband. She remains a *femme-sole* after her marriage, as before, and so her property cannot be touched by her husband without her consent. She can sue her debtors in open court in her own name and not under cover of her husband's name.

The Arabian Prophet also exhorted his followers to educate their wives and daughters. And in the great days of the Arab Empire education was fairly common among Muslim women. Baghdad and Cordova could boast of women poets, thinkers and scholars.

Contrast this with the state of women in Christianity and Christian Europe. Christ said nothing in favour of marriage, and so his followers exalted the monastic ideal. Both St. Paul and St. Peter disliked women, and St. Augustine put the virgin above the married woman. It has been said that the position of women in Europe was improved by Mariolatry and the influence of Teutonic chivalry. But this is not easy to prove. For at the time the worship of Mary became common in Europe, the Christian Church had placed woman under a ban. Father after Father wrote against woman's "evil tendencies," her "inconceivable malignity." Tertullian called her "the Devil's Gateway," "the Deserter of the Divine Law," and "the destroyer of God's image—man." St. Chrysostom called her "a painted evil" and Saint Bernard said: "her face is like a burning wind and her voice is like the hissing of snakes." She could not go to public feasts and banquets. She had to remain in seclusion and apply herself to spinning and cooking. Education was denied to her. The influence of Teutonic chivalry also did very little to improve her position. Indeed so little respect had man for woman in those days in Europe

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that Charlemagne, the greatest hero of Teutonic chivalry, is on an occasion said to have slapped his sister with his fist for daring to argue with him about something that he had asked her to do. Women were subject to violence and ill-treatment all over Europe in those days. What little tenderness and courtesy were shown to them was due to the influence of Arab chivalry which passed from Spain to Provence and from there to other parts of Europe. The progress of women in the West has not been due to any help from Religion but in spite of it. And that explains perhaps why moral and spiritual ideals interest the so-called "progressive" Western woman the least.

So far as polygamy or rather polygyny is concerned, it was practised in Europe till the time of Justinian. He forbade it, but it continued to be practised all the same. Out of the many wives of a Christian, none except the first had any rights. And the children of all the wives, except the first, were treated as bastards. Morganatic marriages were also common among royalty, aristocracy and even clergy till almost the nineteenth century. That these morganatic marriages are not unknown in Europe even to-day the case of King Carol of Roumania and Madame Lupescu plainly shows.

If polygamy of the Muslim type had been practised in Europe, European society on the whole would have been healthier than it is. It would have solved the problem of surplus women, for all the surplus women would have been married. And if they had been married, they would not have been obliged to become the unmarried wives of married men, and, consequently, there would have been no shame or degradation for them or their children. And that in its turn would have prevented the question of equal moral standards for both sexes being raised,—a question of the utmost importance to the existence of the

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family system. Women also would not have degraded themselves and their sex by trying to ape men in language, manners and vices. Nor would the question of economic competition between the sexes have arisen, or at least taken its present serious form.

The lot of slaves would have been much better in a Muslim Europe than it was in Christian Europe. Slavery existed in Europe at the time when Christianity began to spread there. But it allowed it to remain as it was, because Jesus Christ had not protested against it or inculcated any principles for the amelioration of the lot of slaves. Slaves in Europe were mere chattels. As late as the latter half of the nineteenth century, the white American master could not marry his negro slave woman nor legitimize his offspring by her. Western slaves could never hope to be free, much less rise high in life. They were often worked to death, and had to put on special dresses. Muhammad also found the institution of slavery existing in Arabia at the time when he began to preach his religion. But he was not satisfied with it. He, therefore, exhorted his followers to free their slaves, and encouraged the slaves themselves to purchase their freedom by the wages of their services. He forbade masters to exact from their slaves more work than was just and proper, and made it a rule that slaves should be dressed like their masters and mistresses. If a man made love to his female slave, that female slave *ipso facto* became his legitimate wife and her offspring by him shared in his property after his death, along with the children by his other wife or wives. In Islam slaves could not only hope to be free, but rise high in life. Zaid, the negro slave of Muhammad, was given the command of an army. A slave—Kutb-u'd-Din—ascended the throne of Delhi and founded the Slave dynasty of India. Slaves, like the Janissaries of Turkey and the Mamelukes

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of Egypt, became all powerful in their respective countries and made and unmade sultans.

Had Islam been adopted by the Europeans, science and learning would have been cultivated with the help of religion. And that would have precluded the tragic duel between science and religion which has been going on in the West for the last sixty years. The Prophet of Arabia inculcated the love of knowledge among his followers by saying :

Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish between what is forbidden and what is not : knowledge lightens the way to heaven.

Seek knowledge from everywhere—even unto China.

To listen to the words of the learned and to instil into heart the lessons of science is better than religious exercises.

It is well known that in accordance with the teachings of their religion, the Caliphs of Baghdad and Cordova, and the Sultans of other Muslim countries encouraged the love of learning among their subjects in the great days of Islam.

In the Christian Europe of that time the public libraries of the ancients were closed, and learning was branded as magic or punished as treason. The Church denounced the rational faculty of men calling it the greatest enemy of devotion. The history of the persecution of free thought and scientific research by the Christian Church is too well known to need any repetition here. Roger, Bacon, Grossaetete, Abelard, and many other pioneers of the rationalist movement in Europe had therefore to go to Muslim Cordova for their studies.

It is not contended that no evils would have crept into European society if the Europeans had embraced Islam. For no human society can hope to remain free from evils for any length of time. All that is contended is that those evils would not have been of the type from which the West has suffered or is still suffering. Nor need they have

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been of the same type as those from which the Islamic East has suffered or is still suffering. For the evils from which a people suffer are generally the result of their character and previous history. And since the character of Western people and their previous history are different from those of the Islamic people of the East, the evils from which they would have suffered would have been different from those from which the Muslim nations of the East have suffered.

THE MESSAGE OF THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD TO EUROPE.

BY DR. H. MARCUS, PH.D.

A Muslim, whose destiny had led him to Europe, and who had spent many years in one of the capitals of Europe, asked an old friend of mine, a European and a Christian, to spend the evening with him on the occasion of the Birthday of the Holy Prophet. For years both had lived in close friendship with one another, and often discussed the serious problems of life together.

Never, however, had they touched on problems so fundamental as those which claimed their attention that evening, and it was the Muslim who started the discussion. He said that he had been engaged that day in the study of the holy scriptures of Islam—the Qur-án and the Sayings of the Prophet (peace be with him!)—and that, as a consequence, in spite of these hard times, was possessed of a deep tranquillity and serene confidence in life, for Islam means perfect agreement with the will of God, which is fate. His friend, the Christian, however, sat beside him, down-hearted, and full of care and sorrows, and these not all ascribable to his own personal anxieties.

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“We Europeans,” he said, “have at present to go through a crisis, the like of which our Continent has never seen, and it would be a great mistake to suppose that this crisis is only a passing phase of political and domestic economy. On the contrary, we all know that it is for us Europeans at once a crisis in our views both of life and religion. It seems to me that it has begun with religious faith and must end with disturbed credit—that is to say, with shattered faith in mankind.

“How many millions of Europeans have just now lost their old line of direction and are looking about anxiously for a new source of guidance among the ruins of their erstwhile beliefs? Where do they find it? I fear that all their searching has been in vain. There is, however, an old saying: *Ex Oriente Lux* (“The light of revelation is from the East”), and there are, more especially at the present time, many people throughout the Western countries who are looking to the East for the satisfaction of their religious hunger. Will they find it there?”

The *Muslim*: “At the same time at which the Christian view of life crumbled to pieces in spite of the deep and great truths which it contained, the East began to display a new, hitherto unknown, activity, and this can be observed particularly among the Muslims. Learned and pious Muslims, devoted men, who do not permit their faith to be shaken by the dangerous atmosphere of Europe, are travelling to all countries of the West. These Muslims know, that the child-like human being is every whit as pious as the wise man: the one is so still and the other has become so again. Irreligion can only spread among those who have lost the child-like belief and are not yet wise.”

The *Christian*: “If you say that nowadays many Muslims go to Europe, why, they always used to, but only for the purpose of studying European science and methods.”

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The *Muslim* : “ That is quite true ; for in both fields Europe has accomplished very much, and it is quite undeniable that the Muslim youth desires to profit therefrom—but with the necessary caution. He is grateful for being able to learn some of those lessons that Europe has to teach, but it is strange that the Muslims of the present generation not only visit Europe to learn and receive, but also desire to offer Europe something in return. What is it that they wish to offer ? The best they have, namely, those teachings, which helped them 1300 years ago out of a tremendous crisis, and which have helped them since again and again in all their troubles. They think these teachings are too little known in Europe and too often misunderstood, and that Europe could learn a great deal from them. Is it not remarkable that these two movements know nothing of each other : the struggle of the European for new guidance, which makes him listen attentively to the voice of the Orient, and the activity of the Muslim East, which is crowned by the fervent desire to make Islam better known in Europe—that Islam, which is called in the first Sura of the Holy Qur-án, ‘ the religion of the right way ’ ? ”

“ Remarkable, very remarkable, this meeting of the two tendencies, which, without being aware of each other, yet supplement one another,” said the Christian guest.

“ Yet for a Muslim, quite comprehensible,” replied his Muslim host, “ at least to a deep thinking person. For it is our faith that God always sends His messages of good tidings to mankind at such critical times ; for such messages are then most needful to mankind, and their need opens men’s ears to the words of God. This, possibly, is the meaning of such a great crisis, that it brings us nearer to God and God to us. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be with him !) also came to the Arabs, when the conditions of Arabia were on the brink of catastrophe.”

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“Do you really think that Islam can help us Europeans in our present condition?” asked the Christian.

Thereupon the Muslim said: “I should not like to answer your question with a ‘yes’ or a ‘no’, but rather I would try to define the nature of the European crisis clearly, and then we shall picture to ourselves what Islam has to say concerning the different causes of the European malady, and how it would fight against them. We shall then find the answer to your question, perhaps without especially looking for it. Let us begin at the root. You gave me to understand that the European crisis, at the bottom, was one of the view of life, yea, even a religious one: what did you mean by this?”

The *Guest*: “Let us begin with the view of life. I must take into consideration the fact, which is also known to you, that Christianity is the religion of miracles. It is impossible to think of the religion of Christ without these miracles; it loses its whole individuality—if the word is permitted. The great majority of the miracles of Christianity, however, are in direct contrast to the judgment and experience of science, and we live in a scientific age. The soul of the European is therefore divided. His faith and his knowledge go different ways, and he cannot own up to his knowledge without disavowing his faith.

“It is generally known that Christianity has been built up on a dogma, that is to say, on assertions, which deal with a miracle. There is, for instance, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, which, however, is against the laws of nature. There is the dogma of the Trinity of God, which is against the laws of logic and thought. High above both towers the assertion that Christ was the Son of God. This is against the experience of natural science as well as against logical thinking.

“In contrast to these dogmas, natural science teaches us that all earthly events happen according to the clearly

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defined laws of Nature, which are the expression of God's eternal will. These laws are such as can never be suspended in favour of a miracle, not even in favour of those dogmas which Christianity teaches. You will now see, that a European must ever find himself in conflict either with his faith or with his knowledge. It is science to which Europe owes its whole prosperity, but its religion, Christianity, is altogether unscientific, seeing that it believes in dogma and denies the authority of the laws of Nature. The root of Europe's hegemony lies, in addition to this, in the application of science to life, a process from which Christianity is averse, since it teaches flight from worldly things and estrangement from life.

“ This process is, indeed, one of those gigantic powers, which are, like the powers of Nature, in themselves neither good nor bad. It may, therefore, be used for the benefit of humanity, but it can also be a curse to it. Moral progress must therefore grow hand in hand with technical progress, and morality must always be strong enough to control technical achievements and turn them to good account ; for technical progress provides mankind also with materials for killing each other. How can Christianity develop a code of morals capable of guiding so tremendous a power to do good, if it is its principle to turn away from earthly things ? A part of the present world-crisis lies in the fact, that the application of science to life has, in consequence of the collapse of the Christian religion, loosen the reins of morality. Science ought, therefore, looking at it from a moral standpoint, to sell only so many labour-saving machines as it can bring out new inventions for employing human labour. Let us, however, go back to our starting-point, the conflict between faith and science, in which is included the conflict between morality and the application of science to life. The same conflict surely exists, with the same acuteness, in Islam.”

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The *Muslim* : “ You are mistaken, my friend. Before I say any more about it, I would observe that we Muslims show the greatest esteem for the Prophet Christ (peace be with him !), but we do not identify him with modern Christianity ; and my argument is, therefore, not intended against his only person if I reply. This is the first and principal merit which I ascribe to Islam as compared with Christianity, for Islam does not recognize any conflict between faith and science, it puts the human intellect and not miracles in the centre of the system of religious teaching. Islam, therefore, does not acknowledge a single sentence which science or logic would have to contradict, and Islam particularly sees in the laws of Nature themselves eternal miracles of God so that one must say that it is of all religions which have ever been the one which is most friendly to science and, therefore, the most modern. You yourself say that we are living in a scientific age. The Holy Prophet (peace be with him !), places science and research on a very high pedestal. He teaches that “ An hour of research work is better than many hours of praying ” and that “ The ink in the pen of the scientist is more holy than the blood of a martyr ” or “ Go to the furthest parts of the world, even to China, if you are able to gain knowledge thereby.” The Holy Prophet Muhammad could only speak with such eagerness for learning, because Islam does not acknowledge any principle which is not known to any of the other religions. Islam does not confine the revelations of God to those holy promulgations only which the Almighty brought to the ears of mankind by His Prophets, but for Islam Nature itself is a revelation of God and research is nothing else but a reading in this dumb and yet so eloquent second revelation. In this way, however, the research work, which to Christianity has become an enemy of religion, assumes quite a religious aspect in Islam. For the Muslim, therefore, knowledge is surround-

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ed by a radiancy which cannot be surpassed. If God is the light which permeates all things, even the darkest and most distant, with its brilliancy and elucidates them, the importance of the human being lies in the fact that he spiritualizes his human surroundings with his own intelligence (compare the verse in chapter "Light"). Islam, however, takes the argument for its worship of God also from logic and knowledge. It constantly reminds us of the infinitely wise arrangement of creation and sees therein the evidence of God's Almightyness and Infinite Goodness. It reminds us of the eternally regular way of the stars and of the real miracle, that in the universe each individual serves the other and receives services in return. It also never forgets to point out that each individual develops a constantly rising self-perfection by this service to other creatures. Islam emphasizes, therefore, instead of the anti-scientific miracles of the early Christian Era, the eternal miracles of Nature and life itself, in which one does not need to believe blindly, but of whose existence one can convince oneself daily.

"Does not, however, the knowledge that all things have been created for the purpose of serving others, already contain the principle of charity, which forms the pillar of the Muslim morality? For the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him!) teaches as the highest principle of religion 'Love God and His creatures.'"

At these words of his host, the Christian guest jumped up from his seat in astonishment, "I did not know that charity is also the highest principle of Muslim morality? I always thought that Christianity was the only religion which demands charity of mankind, and that for this reason particularly, Christianity was irreplaceable in the world, and that its mission was to convert all people of the globe to its practice."

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The *Muslim* : “ I can also point out a second kind of progress which, if I am right, Islam has made in advance of all former religions. We, Muslims, are not at all astonished that Christianity preaches charity also, and that we are not the first and only ones to profess charity. On the contrary, I, as a Muslim, am of the opinion that all religions must necessarily already contain this principle in some form or other. As a matter of fact, the Jewish Rabbi, Joshua Sirach, taught even so early, ‘ Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’ According to the Muslim conception God has not revealed Himself to humanity only once, but again and again at various times and through various nations. Islam recognizes all great teachers of mankind as prophets (peace be with them !), whether they be called Confucius, Buddha, Moses or Christ. I say, God spoke at different times and to a different nation through the mouth of one of His Prophets ; always when the memory of mankind had become dull, and when the holy teaching of God came into danger of being forgotten by mankind, then the Almighty spoke again through an elect human being to mankind. If God, however, spoke through the mouth of each one of those Prophets, then they ought all to proclaim the same principles and their principles ought all to harmonize with each other ; or the Omniscient would be contradicting Himself in His various proclamations. You see that the circumstance which appears to you as amazing, *viz.*, the conformity of all nations in their supreme rules of life, is to Islam the natural sequence of the unity of God, Who cannot contradict Himself. Islam is the first religion which discovers that we are all closer to each other than we know. That is the new fact about Islam that it does not profess to have set up a single new principle, but that it approves without prejudice all the great truths of mankind, that it even combines them all in itself. Islam is, therefore, the most tolerant religion in existence.

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It is in fact the religion of tolerance. If you wish to convince yourself of the truth of this assertion, then picture to yourself Christianity. For the Christian all human beings, who were born before the birth of Christ, all who did not hear of Christ's teaching, all who grew up in a different faith, are cast out and condemned for all time and eternity, because the real truth was withheld from them. One must make clear to oneself that by far the biggest part of humanity, whether alive or dead, belong to these innocent outcasts, for only a small percentage of all human beings professes the Christian religion. How different is Islam in consequence of its faith that God manifests Himself at all times and to all nations. For Islam, all people of every period were capable of adopting the truth because God proclaimed this truth again and again, and whoever follows the truth is, according to the views of Islam, a Muslim, even if he has never heard anything of Muhammad and his teachings. He only needs to act like a good, sensible, warm-hearted and charitable being, and he acts in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be with him !), and may be regarded as a Muslim. Therefore, all good people of all countries and periods were and are Muslims, and Islam is already a world-religion, because it is the religion of all good people in the whole world, of all good people who ever lived and shall live on this planet."

The *Christian* : " That is a wonderful idea, the union of all good people of the world in one joint faith. Do not, however, get cross, if a doubt occurs to me which I feel I must express. For what purpose was Muhammad necessary, if God had already made Himself known by the mouths of Zoroaster, Buddha, Moses, Christ and many other Prophets ?"

The *Muslim* : " I am glad you have put that question to me. It was my intention at any rate to talk in detail about this very point. For God has not spoken to all

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generations in the same language, but ~~He~~ has, on the contrary, told each nation at each time only as much as corresponded with the mental capacity of their period. God's instructions had, therefore, to be repeated constantly whenever a new civilization broached new problems. God's proclamation, although always the same in its fundamental idea, constantly extended its scope. Notably, in the days of Muhammad there sprang into existence a decisive new era in culture, in my opinion the most striking turning-point in modern history, which resulted from the fact that humanity left the pre-scientific and entered the scientific age, and it became aware of this for the first time in Islam and its culture; that is to say, Muhammad (peace be with him!) stands at the entrance of the modern age to which we also belong, and he has been sent as the Prophet of modern times. It is, therefore, no mere accident that mankind should have matured in his day to such an extent that it could record the holy teachings, which he proclaimed at once, in written characters, and so for the first time, fix, as it were, the word of God completely and without elision so that it should be, thenceforward, free from any possibility of clouding or doubt. Muhammad is, in fact, the first Prophet whose sayings were written down during his lifetime, to be collected immediately after his death ; while, for example, 120 years went by before the teachings of Christ (peace be upon him !) became the subject of literary interpretation, and there do not exist any direct records of Christ's sayings. One may lay down the following, as a general rule, the more remote the millenium, the longer time elapses between the life of the Prophet and the writing down of his teachings, out of which, therefore, there can only arise a deceptive picture of his revelations. For, on the one hand, many sayings of such a Prophet are missing and have been forgotten, and, on the other hand, much is ascribed to him which he never said."

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“We, therefore get, by such a belated collection of his sayings, much less and much more than he really said. And herein lies the singular position among the Prophets of Muhammad. It is a wonderful dispensation of Providence and yet quite comprehensible that he, who was sent to humanity as a guide of the modern, that is to say, the scientific era, at the same time benefits by the advantages of the scientific era—his teachings have been preserved and collected with scientific exactness. These teachings contain the authentic word of God, and because God has proclaimed Himself by the mouth of the Prophet it is possible for the messenger of God to wipe out for ever any cloudiness, which has been caused in the older revelations by the dust of time, and to fill up vacancies which have been occasioned by the inadequate transmission of the sayings of his predecessors. To put it plainly Muhammad (peace be with him !) has been sent definitely to rectify all former revelations of God. He, therefore, recognizes the Holy Prophet Jesus (peace be with him !) at once as what he is, to wit, one of the greatest of the messengers of God ; but he destroys the erroneous belief that he was the Son of God. He considers that the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary is a fairy tale and not even a pretty one ; and at the same time he restores the natural state of affairs by declaring that Joseph was the real father of Christ. All his corrections, however, as shown by these examples, lie in the direction of a scientific judgment and modern ideas, and I should like to draw your attention to the fact that the Qur-án not only corrects facts but also moral motives. What questionable morality does the Old Testament attribute, at the very beginning, to the Almighty by saying that He forbids Adam to eat from the tree of knowledge, only because Adam would in this way become omniscient and could be able to compete with Him, the Lord of the worlds in all-wisdom. A human being may be liable to

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such considerations, but not the sublime Creator of the Universe. Muhammad (peace be with him !) teaches us otherwise. It was *not* the tree of knowledge, but the tree of discord whose fruit God forbade Adam to eat. The interdiction, therefore, was not imposed for the protection of God against mankind but for the good of mankind itself, it being the duty of man to live in harmony with each other. Judge for yourself now how much nearer to us this Qur-anic judgment brings this story of the Bible, how much more modern it appears to us in Muhammad's wording, how much more comprehensible, how much more sensible. In this way, however, Muhammad evolves everywhere moral teachings from the Old Testament stories and turns the untarnished historical facts of the Bible into finger-posts for moral guidance. But I think that we have wandered a little from the actual theme, for we intended to throw light upon the crisis of Europe and determine in what way Islam could help."

The *guest* : " No, we have not wandered from it. We can continue at once from the point where we left off, for I intended to speak of morality and its present situation in Europe. We had already agreed on the love of mankind as the nucleus of morality. The essence of the love of mankind demands, however, that we put it into action ; for what good are the most beautiful sayings to our neighbour if he continues to suffer ? Love of mankind is, however, for us Europeans for the most part only a saying and is seldom translated into action ; for, while our words are full of the love of mankind, as religion demands, our deeds are dictated by selfishness. In this way arises the second terrible disagreement, namely, that the deeds of the European are at complete variance with his words. Europe preaches peace, and engages in terrible wars ; Europe insists that it must carry to other nations the benefits of culture and civilization, but it sucks those nation dry without

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mercy. Europe talks of the economic union of all nations, but each State puts up against the other ever-rising custom barriers. One speaks in Europe of the League of Nations, but each nation desires to get its own special benefits in the council of nations, and that statesman only is considered a patriot, who refuses to sacrifice a single claim of his own nation, and does not even sacrifice anything if an agreement on a large scale among all nations can be arrived at by this sacrifice. The same state of affairs, which exists among the different nations, also exists within each separate nation. One speaks in every country of Europe of the fact that each citizen of the State ought, first and foremost, to be the servant of the State. How far are we from this ideal? On the contrary, the individual citizens, who have the same interests, form groups and parties, and each group and each party, without any consideration for others, upholds its own selfish interests at the expense of the general public.

“One would, however, be making a great mistake if one thought, that we Europeans were content with such a state of affairs; on the contrary, this difference between our sayings and our doings causes us the greatest distress, for this conflict has been at the root of our unbelief, seeing that we cannot put any belief into our own words. Nobody slips more easily into superstition than does the unbeliever, for it is but a step from unbelief to superstition. That is the reason why Europe is to-day so full of false doctrines. Among these, however, there is one view to which one cannot deny the courage of honesty. This view seeks to put an end to the difference between verbal charity and actual selfishness in such a way that the human being should own up unconditionally to his selfishness and say openly that each individual must mind his own business only in this world, and not that of humanity. This is meant for the individual as well as for whole nations.

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What do you think of it ? And what does Islam particularly think about this so-called 'holy egotism,' which desires to eternalize the fight of all against all ?"

The *Muslim* : " I too know this doctrine, and I respect its motives in so far as they have their root in the desire to escape out of the mendacity of the present day civilization. I consider, however, that this doctrine is wrong ; for the truth is not so simple as these good people, who do not wish to approve any longer of anything because they wish to remain truthful, believe it to be. The truth, however, lies in the middle course of a rightly understood selfishness and charity. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be with him !) seems to me to have been the first among the great teachers of mankind to put us on the right way, the middle course, between selfishness and charity, and who has shown us at the same time wherein lie real selfishness and real charity. Herein he appears to me to be generally much more modern and closer to life than any of the former founders of religions, and in particular, more modern than Christianity, which takes a one-sided view of charity and withdraws itself too far from the facts of real life by favouring a high ideal which does not take into consideration the nature of human beings. We ought not, however, to be unjust towards Christianity; for, if we wish to understand it aright, we must remember that the Holy Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him !) suffered death by crucifixion in his early manhood and before he attained power. He did not become the king of the Jews, as he apparently desired, so that he himself could then, as the responsible leader of a nation, put his doctrines to the test ; but he remained all his life in opposition and the opposition is always radical because the simple doctrine without practice always remains a simple theory. If a doctrine, however, really got the upper hand in any part of the world, it transforms itself from theory

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into practice, from mere word into deed, and in doing so purifies and perfects itself. It would be of deep interest to learn how the Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be with him!) would have developed if he had been granted the privilege of a longer life and if the noble, but visionary radicalism of his essentially very true doctrine did not bring about his early death. He may, perhaps, have had to oppose the radical selfishness of his contemporaries, like the Pharisees, an equally radical call to self-denial. It was at any rate assigned to the Holy Prophet Muhammad to be what the Holy Prophet Christ endeavoured to be in vain, namely, the leader of a whole State, so that he could put God's word in a human community into God-moulded deeds, which means at the same time to assist in obtaining for the preaching of charity, its realization in daily life. In this respect, however, we may look upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad as the fulfilment of the mission of Jesus Christ (peace be upon both Prophets!)

“ Because Christianity has remained since its very beginning only word and doctrine, it has that peculiar trait in its character, that for the Christian the principal weight lies in his disposition towards charity, but the charitable disposition does not go hand in hand with the charitable action, and where it does manifest itself in everyday life, that manifestation remains a single beautiful and isolated occurrence. On the other hand, the Christian dispensation is not able and does not try systematically to combat the misfortunes and needs of mankind as Islam has always done. An example of this is the story of the Good Samaritan in the New Testament. This excellent inhabitant of Samaria, who finds a man seriously ill, by the roadside, who puts him at once on his mule and takes him to the nearest hostelry, is worthy of all praise. This good man not only takes him there, but he also pays the inn-keeper for nursing him and promises that he will pay more when

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he returns, if the sick man's expenses should exceed the payment already made. There is no doubt that this deed of the Good Samaritan with its friendly care for a complete stranger, not only for the moment but for the future is an incomparably beautiful one. We all feel that each one of us ought to act like this, and we are grateful to the Good Samaritan for what he did to the poor sick man nearly 2,000 years ago, as if he had done it for ourselves, indeed, he has really done it for us, since we are still able to delight in and draw consolation from his action. But still there remains a chance that a man like the Good Samaritan should happen to be passing by while the sick man lay helplessly by the roadside. What would have happened if this chance had not materialized or if this man with his good heart had not had the means to care as he did for the unhappy wayfarer ? The patient would have died. This deed, therefore, does not yet lead us to the final solution of the problem of the care for the poor, needy and sick, which is rather to be found in Islam. Islam takes the step from the single charitable deed to the organization of charity. In Muhammad's State, which is a state of welfare, the streets are regularly patrolled to ensure the safety of the people and to see that everything is in order, especially also to help the poor, the sick and the tired wanderer. The Prophet of Islam (peace be on him !), does not leave anything to chance ; yea, the Holy Prophet himself, and also the great Omar as the head of the administration of charity used to walk through the streets of Mecca or Medina, to look personally after the poor. Wherever they found poor and sick people or perhaps a mother, sitting with her children beside the dead fire weeping, they themselves did not mind fetching from the the public grain stores a bag of grain to feed the poor hungry creatures. Briefly, Islam created the first State in which the social deed was developed into an organiza-

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tion. By this step which Islam takes, from the charitable feeling to the charitable deed and, on the other hand, from the occasional to the organized deeds, it towers above all former creeds and becomes the direct forerunner of all modern social organizations of charity.

“ The State of Muhammad is, however, not only a forerunner, it also remains the eternal example of that State, the laws and regulations of which have not yet lost contact with the laws of God. What that means, present day Europe, where often enough the powers from below, the powers out of the depths, have sucked at the public life, teaches us, for you yourself say: In Europe the very beneficial procedure of organizing has proceeded on the wrong road; because we no longer organize for the benefit of the whole nation, or for humanity, as the word of God ordains, but for separate groups of the same interests or parties within the nation. Priests and State-officials, land-owners and manufacturers, merchants and manual labourers, clerks and workmen organize themselves. Organized too, are the advocates, medical practitioners, bakers and butchers, in short, a new system of caste has been developed. The basis for such organizations is the collective egoism of each group, and the instigation for joining it is, that promises are made of manifold personal advantages to each member. The leader of such a group himself benefits by his position, and can often only keep it if he procures special benefits for his electors and, over and above that, makes promises to them which he cannot possibly keep. The leader of the group is, therefore, absolutely dependent on the powers below, namely, on those whom he leads, and he goes in fear and trembling lest they drop him, if he does not supply them with sufficient advantages. The political parties, like the groups do not take into consideration the welfare of the whole nation but only that of their group, and special advantages

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for their group can only be obtained at the expense of all the other groups of the population, that is to say, instead of being an instrument of mutual understanding and a just equalization, the organization has become, by reason of the different groups, a tool of selfishness and a source of quarrels everywhere. The group is only in the right so far as it serves the purpose of providing equality of rights to a group, which is being universally oppressed, and takes care that the members of this group are never wronged. The organization of the party ought, however, not to serve the purpose of providing its members with unjustifiable special advantages, for, by doing this, such an organization harms, nay, even undermines the whole, and a group which harms the whole of the populace, is itself sawing through the trunk of the tree on the branches of which it is sitting. The principle of organization, which is full of blessings, has been led into wrong paths in modern Europe and has there caused cancerous growths, for what else does the eternally ravenous and selfish cancerous swelling do, but grow and grow at the expense of the other parts of the body until this latter, and with it the cancerous growth itself, at last dies. Herein lies another reason, and assuredly not the least harmful, for the European crisis.

(To be continued,)

PRECIOUS GEMS

God is not merciful to him who is not so to mankind.

No father has given his child anything better than good manners.

Verily those who exercise patience under trials, and forgive wrongs, are righteous.

Those who earn an honest living are the beloved of God.

MUHAMMAD.

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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 heavens and the earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

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