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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

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I read the book "THE IDEAL PROPHET" and it certainly cleared up many points regarding which I was in grave doubt—such as the Islamic teaching concerning the position of women, the love of one's fellowmen, and a number of other things, all of which seem to have been deliberately misrepresented to us here in Christian lands.

I feel that God has guided me in the right way by causing me to enquire into the religion of His Prophet Muhammad. I am no more a Christian. I hold that there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His Prophet ; I am a Muslim from now on.

Praying that Allah may bless you and your Mission always, on account of the good you are doing to the English-speaking world in leading them to His ways.

B. ARIFEEN ASHMAN.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
شَهِدَهُ وَنَبِيٌّ عَلَى رُسُلِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

RAJAB 1351 A.H.

VOL. XX.

NOVEMBER, 1932 A.C.

No. 11.

A GLIMPSE OF THE PROPHET'S LIFE.

BY SHAIKH MUSHIR HUSSAIN KIDWAI OF GADIA.

It is impossible to do even partial justice, in a short time, to the life history of a man absolutely unique in the history of mankind. We know of no other man who can rival the orphan child of Amina in any of the multifarious aspects of human life. There is not another man known to the world who has attracted so much, and continuously for such a long time, the love and devotion of such a large number of his fellow beings in all ages and in all countries. MUHAMMAD was an orphan, then a child of the desert, then the citizen of the first city in Arabia, in which capacity he became known to his fellow countrymen as *Al Amin*, the trusty, then a hermit in a cave and a dreamer, then a preacher of the unity of God and a universal prophet, soldier, commander-in-chief of a citizen army of selfless volunteers devoted to the service of God and His creatures and to the uplift of humanity, a statesman, the head of the most democratic and socialistic commonwealth, the most

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marvellous organiser, legislator and leader. There is no other man so many minute details of whose life have been chronicled by such a large number of men of different races and countries. How can anyone narrate the life history of such a superman, doing justice to the various phases of his life in a few minutes or hours or even days? I will, therefore, describe only a few phases of the work of this unique and miraculous man of God, which, I am sure, will appeal to persons of every creed and race.

First of all I will ask you to ponder over Muhammad's conception of God as revealed to him by God himself. Muhammad's conception of God is scientific; it is rational and, at the same time, it is most sublime. Gibbon says:

The creed of Muhammad is free from suspicion or ambiguity, and the Qur-án is glorious testimony to the unity of God. The Prophet of Mecca rejected the worship of idols and men, of stars and planets, on the rational principle that whatever is corruptible must decay and perish, that whatever is born must die, that whatever rises must set. In the Author of the universe his rational enthusiasm confessed and adored an Infinite and Eternal Being, without form or place, without issue or similitude, present to our secret thoughts, existing by the necessity of his own nature, and deriving from himself all moral and intellectual perfection. These sublime truthsare defined with metaphysical precision by the interpreters of the Qur-án. A philosophic theist might subscribe to the popular creed of the Muhammadans.

In this scientific age what can be more valuable and appreciable than a rational conception of God—a God not racial or tribal or anthromorphic or in any way limited or in any way inferior to any created thing in the whole world. Muhammad's conception of God was not only rational and sublime, but also beneficial to man to the utmost in his mental and moral and even in his social development. The Attributes of God as conceived by Muhammad were such that, when sincerely believed in,

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they changed the very nature of men who, formerly could be but poorly distinguished from the rest of the animal creation. Through his conception of God Muhammad changed the wicked and vice-steeped camel-drivers of Arabia, who occupied themselves in cutting each other's throat, without any conception of moral or social laws, or noble or grand aspirations, into men of angelic piety, saintly veracity and heroic courage, kind and gentle even to the brute creation, founders of a great many sciences and arts, pioneers in civilisation and culture, creators of magnificent empires, builders of great works of public utility and gorgeous palaces, organisers of marvellous institutions and the greatest benefactors of the whole human race. Anybody who studies the Attributes of God as given in the Qur-án can understand the basic means by which Muhammad brought about the miraculous revolution.

Another act of universal beneficence performed by Muhammad was the creation of an insatiable thirst for knowledge and learning, thus enabling man not only to unravel many scientific mysteries but also placing him in a position to understand his true place in the economy of the world. Knowledge and learning were no longer to be the monopoly of priests or Brahmins. The book of nature as well as books written by men were to be open to all—men as well as women, rich as well as poor—with the result that there was no subject in which Muslims did not acquire expert knowledge. Their men of letters wrote on history, geography, pure and mixed mathematics, sciences, arts, physics, metaphysics, medicine, chemistry, sociology, botany, geology, natural history, numismatics, gems, rural economy, agriculture, chronology, travels, etc., etc., in an age when learning was at a discount, and every kind of scientific education or knowledge was sinful and sometimes attributed to witchcraft.

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Another great gift of Muhammad to mankind was that he made every person responsible in this world as well as in the next for his own actions, and thus cured theology from that sickliness which introduced vicarious punishment and priestly mediation between man and his Maker, which made man look to formalities and rituals instead of good deeds. For years and years a fiery controversy raged in Europe as to whether any person born before Jesus, or after him but not baptised, could ever hope for salvation, even if he had never heard of Jesus, and it was finally decided that none could be saved but through Christ. Whole ages of mankind were thus doomed to eternal damnation for no fault of theirs. On the other hand, Muhammad declared that not an atom of good would be lost, that every man, woman and child would get the full benefit of whatever good he or she did, and that every child was born innocent and remained sinless until it had reached the age of discretion and responsibility. There is no greater charter of liberty of conscience than that contained in the following two verses of the Qur-án—the very last and final testament sent by God to man :—

Innallazina amanu wal-lazina hadu wan-nasara was-sabaina man amana billahi wal-yaumilakhira wa amila salihan fa lahum ajrahum inda Rabbihim wa la khaufun alaihim wa la hum yahzanun.

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

And : *La ikraha fiddin.*—There is no compulsion in religion.

The Prophet laid the greatest stress upon good deeds, and it was the most unique characteristic of that great and successful Reformer, and perhaps the basis of his success, that he always practised what he preached. It so happened that the daughter of a Christian, named Hatim, famous for his generosity and good deeds, was brought before the Prophet as a prisoner of war. The Prophet treated her with the greatest respect since she was the daughter of such a good man and released not only her but all the prisoners of her tribe at her request without

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any ransom. The name of the Christian Hatim is a household word in the family of every Muslim and in Muslim literature up to the present day as is that of the Zoroastrian Nausherwan, King of Persia, famous for his justice. Islam and its Prophet have always recognised merit in any one no matter what his colour, race or creed. With them such things do not count, for is not the whole human race one family (*kanan-naso ummatun wahidatun*)?

The spirit of religious tolerance could not be carried to a greater extent than that to which the Great Teacher carried it. He declared that there were no people to whom a warner and a guide had not been sent by God and that *every one of them without exception should be recognised and treated with equal respect*. "Do not make any distinction between any of the messengers of God," is an oft-repeated injunction in the Holy Qur-án.

To obtain this freedom of conscience the Prophet discountenanced formalities and ritual. Himself a man of action he laid the greatest possible stress upon right actions. The Qur-án emphatically says:—

Lais albirra an tovallu wujuhakum qibalalmashrique wal maghrib wa lakinn albirra man amana billahi wal yaumil akhire wal malaikati wal-kitabe wannabiyyin wa atalmala ala hubbihi zamil-qurba wal-yatama wal-masakin wabnis-sabil wasailina wa firriqab wa aquamas-salate wa atazzakate wal-mufuna bi ahdihim iza ahadu wassabirin fil-basai wad-darrai wa hin-al-bas ulaikal-lazina sadaqu wa ulaika humul muttaqin :

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

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In every religion there were persons who confine salvation to persons of their own religion only and so the Qur-án gives the warning :—

They say : None shall enter paradise except they who are Jews or Christians. This is their fancy. Say : Produce your proof if you speak the truth. Aye whoever resigneth himself to God and doeth that which is right he shall have his reward from his Lord and there is no fear for him nor shall he grieve.

To those persons who slaughtered animals and thought that they had thereby pleased God the Qur-án says that it is not the blood or the flesh of animals which is acceptable to the Merciful God but their own self-sacrifice and pity.

Yet another act of universal good done by Muhammad (may he always triumph) was that he firmly and practically established the essential oneness of mankind. He demolished for ever, at least among his own followers, all the shibboleths of caste, creed, colour, class and country. He revolutionised the very basis of man's social and political institutions, and anticipated by centuries, not merely in words but in practice, not only Rousseau and Marx, but also the most modern socialist reformer, Lenin himself in all that was really good in their social and political systems. Professor Lake says :—

It is a singular fact that, whilst the rest of the world was sunk in serfdom, Islam practised Liberty, Fraternity and Equality. The Great Teacher has beautifully said :—“ All God's creatures are his family, and he is the most beloved of God who tries to do most good to God's creatures.

Up to this day there is no better international gathering than that at Mecca, held annually at the time of the pilgrimage for the last thirteen and a half centuries. On this occasion thousands of men and women of all sorts and conditions, princes and peasants, artisans and labourers, masters and servants, from different countries, of different

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races and colours, all wearing the same simple unsewn garment, bare-headed and bare-footed, assemble at one central place and annually demonstrate in a remarkable and impressive manner the brotherhood among Muslims and their equality before God and man. This festival permanently establishes the oneness of mankind.

Lastly, for this discourse I will mention the universal good the Great Prophet did by his interdiction of the use of the poison of alcohol. Through him and him alone millions and millions of men have been saved for generations during the last fourteen centuries from that degrading but ultra attractive poison invented by man himself. Considering what is happening in America in enforcing the law of Prohibition was it not miraculous how Muhammad by only moral force and one word stopped the use of intoxicants all the world over for generation after generation among hundreds of million of his true followers.

Muhammad's life history cannot be better described than by repeating the few words in which God Himself has given the reason for creating the Prophet :—*Wa ma arsalnaka illa Rahmatun lil Alamin*—We never sent thee but as a Mercy for the Worlds. For every one who was weak or needed help the great orphan of Bibi Amina proved himself indeed the greatest of mercies. Muhammad was a real mercy for all the orphans, the troubled wayfarers, the helpless debtors, all the poor, all the bondsmen, workers and labourers. He was a mercy for the female sex which was then treated all over the world by every religion, by every social system and by all people as a mere chattel.

Let us all now say most sincerely and fervently :—
May peace and triumph be for Muhammad and all his followers and admirers. *Amen !*

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THE MUSLIM POPULATION OF THE WORLD

The population of Muslims in India according to the latest census is 77,743,928 ; that is to say, since the last census they have increased by about nine millions, an increase of about 12 per cent. The total population of India has increased by 10 per cent. during the same time. What is very striking in the population of Muslims in India thus shown is, that both in Bengal and the Punjab, where the Hindus are in the minority, Muslims have increased by about two or three millions respectively and the Hindus have decreased by a few lakhs ; and in provinces where the Hindus preponderate, the Muslims show a very negligible increase. In some of the provinces, like Ajmere-Marwar and Bombay Presidency, they even show a decrease. This is evident from a comparison of the following figures :—

		1921.	1931.
Ajmere-Marwar	..	101,776	97,133
Bombay Presidency	..	4,660,828	4,457,133

As regards the Bombay Presidency, *the Gazette of India* itself has warned that the figures should not be taken to be exact for they are incomplete in the case of certain parts of that Presidency. But what about Ajmere and Marwar ? There have been loud complaints from several places to the effect that the returns had somehow been tampered with ; and innumerable Muslims have been recorded as Hindus. It ought, therefore, to form the subject of an enquiry by the Indian Government whether or not our Hindu compatriots have been carried away by the excessive zeal for the new-fangled idea of Hindu nationalism. It may be noted here, that Burma, which is almost free from a bias of this kind, shows a normal and natural increase in the Muslim population. In 1921, the Burmese Muslims were 500,592. In the present census they are 606,841—an increase of over one lakh or about 20 per cent., it being, perhaps, the greatest

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increase compared to the figures of Indian provinces. The conclusion is irresistible. Wherever the Hindus were entrusted with the task of enumeration, they wilfully changed the figures in their favour. An illustration of this will be found in the population of Coorg. In 1921, the population of Coorg was somewhere about 13,000. In the present census it is almost the same. There seems to be no apparent cause which may have contributed to make the population of Muslims of Coorg to be stationary ; for all over India their number has increased by about ten per cent. There is evidently more than meets the eye responsible for this anomaly. We are almost sure that if the incorrect figures were scrutinized, the Muslim population will be found much more than it appears on paper.

The Muslim census reflects one painful truth. The increase is mainly due to the natural causes of multiplication by birth and not to assimilation by propaganda. The Christian Missionary still holds the palm in the field of conversion. The present Christian population of India, including Europeans and Eurasians is about six millions, that is to say, three times the number recorded in 1901. We know very well that Christianity cannot stand before Islam for Islam stands for rationalism. The Christian missionaries are never in the habit of appealing to the reason of people in India. The money of the multi-millionaires of America and Europe which is poured in India and brings bread to the mouth of nearly every convert to Christianity, may not be the main factor in the progress of Christianity, but the fact remains that Christianity with this progress will one day add to the complication of the problem of the national struggle of India ; for, let it be said to our shame, that so far it has been the Hindus who have made any tangible effort to liberate India. Both the Christians and Muslims have remained passive to the national struggle, the former unreasonably, the latter

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hiding their inertness under an indefinable patriotism of an extra-territorial kind. One of the greatest achievements of Muslims in India in the last century, if it is an achievement at all, is to cultivate a separate nationalism, culture, language and tradition, and the result is that Islam in India is now almost a non-missionary national religion, very much the same as Judaism is in Europe. They studiously avoid any semblance of Hindu nationality, disdain to read the language of their own mother, and in this struggle, an unnatural one, have nearly become the most ignorant and dangerous fanatics. In these days they are more apt to be furious on a Hindu who happens to criticize Islam, than to show any anxiety, or try to explain to him the beauties of their faith. This deplorable mentality of the community is the natural outcome of a very narrow interpretation put upon the catholicity of Islam, by our so-called *Ulemas*, who condemn everything they do not like or cannot understand. Thus, small wonder that Islam instead of winning the opinion of the liberal-minded Hindu, is being hated and disliked by him, thanks to these doctors of our religion.

The question that we should now ask ourselves is whether or not we are going to show in the next census that Islam in India, as elsewhere, is a world-wide missionary religion, acceptable to and practicable for the sage and the savage alike.

I find there are interesting statistics reproduced from some French magazine in the *Islamic Review* of September 1931. I have my serious doubts about the figures given therein of the Muslim population of Russia and China. No one can ascertain the present position of religion in Bolshevik Russia. It has abolished religion altogether. To enumerate the Russian population by religion is taboo, so much so that the very idea is ridiculous and unthinkable.

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I wonder how the learned compiler obtained the statistics of Islam in Russia at all. Any census in Russia must be based on racial divisions and no other. But a remark or two may be found useful on the strength of the Muslims in Russia. I know that in a couple of towns in Siberia, the Muslim population is more than that shown for the whole of Russia and Siberia. The population of Muslims in Russia in 1905 was 21 millions. Even if we ignore all increase by propaganda—for since then most of the inhabitants on the frontiers of Mongolia and Siberia have become converted to Islam—the natural increase should by now carry the figure to somewhere near 35 millions, which is now the estimate of the Zazan Seminary, presided over by the Chief Mufti of Russia.

In the same way, the Muslim population of China is much underrated. During the recent disastrous floods in the central provinces of China, in an appeal issued by the Chinese residents of India, it was pointed out that out of seven lakhs of Chinese who lost their lives in the floods, nearly one lakh were Muslims. It is possible that this figure was put merely to emphasize on the Indian Muslims the desirability of contributing to the Relief Fund concerned. But I have been in touch with authorities in China, as well as Indians in China having first-hand knowledge of Chinese conditions, and they unanimously agree that the Muslim population in the Chinese Republic could not be less than fifty millions. Only one of the Muslim races in China, *viz.*, the Chinese Tungan which is found from Kansu to Manchuria, number more than thirty millions. Even the Chinese itinerant traders in India, many of whom are Muslims, ridicule the statement that the Muslims in China are such a small minority. Indeed, for this false impression, so prevalent among Europeans, Marshall Broomhall should be held responsible, as he was originally responsible for the wrong estimate. And it is

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curious that every one who has anything to say about Chinese Muslims invariably copies him blindly, quite forgetting that even his modest calculation is a matter of more than two decades ago.

As a rough estimate of the Muslim population of the world, I should like to submit the following —

				<i>Millions.</i>
Chinese Republic	..	..	..	50
Soviet Republics	..	..	..	35
Dutch East Indies	..	..	..	45
Indian Empire	..	..	..	80
Islamic Countries	..	..	..	95
Afghanistan	..	..	..	10
Persia	..	..	..	17
Turkey	..	..	..	14
Iraq	..	..	..	4
Syria and Palestine	..	..	..	6
Nejd and the Hedjaz	..	..	..	5
Yemen	..	..	..	3
Oman	..	..	..	2
Egypt	..	..	..	14
Barbary States	..	..	..	20
Africa	..	..	..	50
Siam, Japan and French Indo-China	..	..	..	2
Phillipines, Ceylon, Madagascar with other				
islands of Indian Ocean	..	..	..	2
Europe, including the Balkans	..	..	..	3
America and Australia	..	..	..	1
				<hr/>
			Total	363
				<hr/>

SYED MAQBOOL AHMAD.

THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

AND ITS COMMENTARY

INTRODUCTION

BY KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

(Continued from Vol. XX, page 336.)

CHAPTER VI.

RIDDLES OF LIFE : KISMET

We are often beset with what may be called the riddles of life. We are in a maze but have no notion how we are to get out of it. We want knowledge because the very consciousness of ignorance serves to increase our ignorance. We are sometimes comfortably off and enjoying life, when some sudden and unforeseen mishap upsets all our calculations and changes our prospects completely. These abnormal events, for such they seem to be, need a proper explanation as to their why and wherefore in order to put us on our guard and set us on the true path of happiness. Science is of very little assistance to us for the purpose. It seems to favour Fatalism which is about the worst thing possible. It renders us helpless, and at the same time weakens our sense of responsibility. Men of Science hold that since everything in the material world runs on pre-ordained lines, events being already pre-ordained, therefore it must be the same with human affairs. In short, if we need a light to guide us out of the complexities of life, it is here. We must have a clear view of the case. It is not only a matter of religion ; it is a most important factor in all mundane affairs, and no system of theology prior to the coming of Islam has had a word to say on the subject. The Qur-ân is the only book that enlightens us. It shows us a clear way and saves us from groping in the dark. Evil often comes to us as if it

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were an uninvited and most unwelcome guest. Knowledge from God should enable us to deal with it when it comes, for no man-contrived system of philosophy has ever succeeded in evolving a satisfactory solution of the problem. Some refer to Kismet—an Arabic word used by Orientalists to convey the idea of predestination—though its literal meaning is “division” or “distribution.” It is thought that good and evil are pre-arranged entities, and that they have already been allotted by the Lord amongst the people of the world. No effort, therefore, on their part can change their course, while they act as playthings in the hands of Fate. No Prophet of God ever taught a tenet so dastardly as this—which could relieve men of all responsibility for their actions. We, however, find a similar doctrine in the Church creed, but it is none of Jesus’ teaching. Since the days of Saint Athanasius the doctrine of predestination has been laid down in all Christian creeds as an article of faith. It has taken a practical shape in every Christian home at the birth of babies still-born, or who die before they can be baptised. The poor souls are believed to be condemned by the Lord to eternal perdition, and must be buried in unconsecrated ground. This division of Mankind into “the saved” and “the unsaved” smacks strongly of predestination.

The Qur-án gives us a sailing direction, as it were, by the aid of which we may steer a safe course through the troubled waters. First of all, we have been warned that we are under the governance of the Law. All laws are unchangeable and admit of no infringement. Their breach is sin, which entails unavoidable penalty. We must therefore respect the laws if we wish to keep ourselves immune from trouble. In this connection, The Book makes special mention of certain laws, which regulate our lives. These we must always keep before our eyes if we are to avoid disappointment and disaster.

INTRODUCTION TO HOLY QUR-ÁN

The laws of Causation and Requitall work together under certain circumstances. But any confusion of ideas with regard to them opens the door to an infinity of trouble. We must know that events occur under a course prescribed by God, and that everything has got its cause, as a result of which it inevitably appears. Similarly no action remains without its requital under Divine Decree. God has, therefore, been described as the cause of all things. We create circumstances, that develop under Divine Ordinance, to produce a result. We touch the cord and the instrument begins to sound automatically in accordance with His laws. By way of illustration, I may refer to the law at work in the vegetable kingdom. God made them to bring things to fruition wherever or by whomsoever they are grown. In this way God is the producer of the harvest, but its *first* cause is the person who planted the seed. If we sow wild oats they will produce an evil harvest under His laws, but we shall have to reap the crop which we have sown.

We often commit wrong under the impression that we shall evade detection or escape the consequences. We have, therefore, been clearly told in the Holy Qur-án that we are under the eye of a Supervisor Who reads all that is hidden even in the innermost recesses of our hearts and knows everything that is concealed.¹ As to the consequences, we are warned that these must inevitably ensue under the working of the laws concerned. The truth is perhaps best expressed by the principle that God brings forth good and evil consequences as they arise under His laws. And in this respect three things have been told us.

That all responsibility lies on our shoulders. Thus says the Qur-án :

Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty beyond the extent of his ability ; for it is (the benefit of) what it has earned, and upon it (the evil of) what it has wrought.²

¹ 2 : 284

² 2 : 286.

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Again—Whoever goes aright, for his own soul does he go aright, and whoever goes astray, to his detriment only does he go astray.¹

It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you, and if you again return (to disobedience) We too will return to punishment.²

Surely, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition.³

That no one will bear our burden. The incidence of our action will fall on us.⁴

That no one will intercede with the Lord on our behalf but under His previous and special permission.⁵

The Law of Measure.—Divine Economy has created very few things, but has put them to many uses. These work under different measures and in different ways to serve different purposes. But if we change the measures and ways which have been fixed by the Divine Law harm must result. These measures, in themselves, are not conducive to any evil, but the harm is engendered when we do not apply them as they should be applied. These measures and ways have been called in the Qur-án the “Bounds of God,” and he who trespasses against them is punished as an evil-doer.⁶ We, therefore, have been exhorted to acquire knowledge of these bounds. We are never punished unless we are given that knowledge beforehand.⁷ The Book recommends the following three ways by which it may be acquired :—

(a) The first way is through observation. We have been given all possible means of information ; we possess various senses and we have been advised to use them.⁸

(b) We must not behave like animals in the use of our eyes and ears, but we must make intelligent deductions and inferences from the knowledge we receive, otherwise through our ignorance we shall court disaster.⁹

¹ 17 : 15.

⁴ 17 : 15.

⁷ 17 : 15.

² 17 : 8.

⁵ 2 : 255.

⁸ 77 : 23.

³ 13 : 11.

⁶ 5 : 87.

⁹ 7 : 179.

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(c) But there are things which call for minute observation which is not within everyman's capacity ; and consequences, moreover, are very slow in coming especially in the case of moral delinquencies. This delayed action leads us to disregard moral laws. Sometimes we remain unaware of their very existence. Revelation from God, therefore, comes to enlighten us on these things.¹

Vicissitudes of life occur for our instruction and often come in the guise of hardship, leaving an indelible impression on the tablet of our mind to be our guide for the future.

Whenever we go against the knowledge thus gained we are straightway punished ;² but since our actions are judged by the All-Knowing Lord, He knows the extent of the knowledge we have received, and judges us accordingly. He makes every concession on this score, for punishment never comes unless we have received guidance beforehand and have ignored it. But we cannot plead ignorance before Him, as He knows all that is manifest or hidden. But He is not a judge Who is out to administer the extreme penalties of the Law in every case. In judging between two parties, He acts as justice demands, but in dealing with other wrongs He is not so strict as an average judge. For this reason the Book styles Him as "the Owner of Requitals." He may award punishment to an offender or He may remit it, but He never makes an arbitrary use of His discretion. The three redeeming factors which invite His forgiveness are our forgetfulness, our mistakes and our inability to meet the requirements of the case. If some wrong is done under circumstances which are beyond the control of the doer he is not punished. Every case is decided on its own merits and God deals graciously with cases which deserve His consideration.³ Punishment is seldom external. Sometimes it takes such a form as venereal diseases, that punish

¹ 14 : 1.

² 6 : 131-133.

³ 2 : 284.

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from within, the man who vitiates his blood through misconduct. The punishment of the Lord is of the same nature. He does not take delight in seeing us punished.¹ He has given us various gifts, but if we abuse them the very fact in itself becomes punishment. The Qur-án calls it a thing acquired.² We read of Divine discretion in the matter of punishment and forgiveness, but it works only in cases where our actions deserve some punishment. It never comes undeservedly, but when a punishable wrong is committed, He may exercise His discretion of forgiveness. But if the remission of punishment would only confirm the offender in wrong-doing, the law will take its course. As long as he finds any redeeming feature in our conduct His mercy outweighs His anger; but when men are surrounded with sin and crime on all sides, punishment becomes inevitable and is meted out in proportion to the measure of the evil done. Good actions receive plentiful rewards, but misdeeds invite corresponding punishment.

Free will is the best gift granted to us by the Lord. No other creature in the world besides man has been endowed with freedom of action. Other creatures work as machines. But the Lord has given to Man, His vice-gerent, the power of discretion. He wants us to be as sound in our judgment as He is Himself. Every latitude has been given us to perfect the exercise of the gift, and it is His wish that we should always take the right course but not under compulsion. We needed three things and we have them.

(a) *True Knowledge of Things*.—We have been given all necessary information, and have also been told how to acquire it so that it may guide us in the exercise of right judgment.

(b) Nothing should come in our way to interfere with our judgment. We are, therefore, allowed to pursue the

¹ 4 : 147.

² 6 : 70.

INTRODUCTION TO HOLY QUR-ÁN

course which we choose for ourselves. Equal facilities are given to the righteous and the wicked in this respect, and the Book speaks of it in the following words :—

All do We aid—these as well as those—out of the bounty of your Lord and the bounty of your Lord is not confined.¹

Everything has been left to our choice. Whatever course we elect to adopt we find no one to check it. All things come to us if we exert ourselves, whether we make a right use of them or not. Men enjoy all the amenities of life which makes them forgetful of the actual situation. They commit sin after sin as if unnoticed, until the Law of Recompense moves and they are brought to naught.

(c) *Chastisement*.—This is most essential as a disciplinary measure. We should be punished and should suffer the evil consequences of wrong judgment, otherwise we shall not realize the effects of wrong discretion. If it be God's will that we should cultivate soundness of judgment, He will chasten us.²

Guidance and Misguidance.—Misconception of this principle has given rise to various false notions. Had it been left to the wishes of the Lord, He would have put all of us on the right path, but in that case we should have been mere automatons. To start with He sets us all on the right path,³ and then leaves us to our discretion. We abuse it often and come near destruction, and in this connection the Qur-án speaks of the Divine discretion that is used always to our benefit.⁴ He may practise it to correct us or He may leave us to our own desires according to our past conduct.⁵ If He sees that we respect words of guidance we receive,⁶ He helps us ; but if He finds that we do not seek it, He leaves us to misguidance.⁷ When a person passes it and there is no hope of his reclamation God decrees him to be misguided in which case no one can put him on the right path. This fact has been disclosed to us as a warning, but it is often taken as a piece of fatalism. This is what the Qur-án says plainly, but it has been misread by many.

¹ 17 : 20.

² 6 : 42.

³ 6 : 53.

⁴ 5 : 40 ; 6 : 39.

⁵ 5 : 39.

⁶ 5 : 80.

⁷ 8 : 23 ; 10 : 27.

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In conclusion I would refer to the laws of light and darkness working in Nature, which I think will explain the whole problem. The Sun is the source of all light, but if we close the windows of our room, it will become dark, and if we choose to remain in it for a considerable time our eyesight will suffer. The misfortune occurs to us under the working of the Divine Laws, but we ourselves are the real cause. In order to emphasize the case the Qur-án says that God works out mishaps. The Book first speaks of the various evil courses adopted by sinners and then says :—

Their parable is like the parable of one who kindled a fire but when it had illumined all around him *Allah* took away their light and left them in utter darkness—they do not see.¹

The Prophet in the words of the Qur-án kindles the fire to expel the darkness from his neighbourhood, but there are people who would not care to listen to his words, and depart from him. They will reach the place where they will find no light. Words of advice fall on them as though on deaf ears. Thus they become dumb and deaf and blind for the purposes of guidance. It should not be forgotten that this stage of sinfulness comes only to man after a life of iniquity and unrighteousness. Whenever the Qur-án speaks of this condition, it refers only to those who sin consistently over a long period and become case-hardened ; and here I will mention a few cases in point—sins which are apt to take hold of our lives.

(1) Breach of covenant (5 : 13) ; (2) Lying and hypocrisy (5 : 41) ; (3) Injustice (5 : 51) ; (4) Rejection of Divine Communications (6 : 39) ; (5) Pride (7 : 40) ; (6) Transgression (7 : 162) ; (7) Want of observation, like animals (7 : 179) ; (8) Forsaking of God (9 : 67) ; (9) Exceeding Limits (10 : 74) ; (10) Immoderation in religious law (5 : 77) ; (11) Following low desires (6 : 56) ; (12) Acting against the will of the Lord (4 : 168) ; (13) Disregarding punishment if it comes (6 : 43).

¹ 2 : 17.

(To be continued).

CORRESPONDENCE

STOCKHOLM.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

From your letter to our brother Mousoff Küller I learnt that you would like to hear from me as to why I became a Muslim.

To begin with, never did I believe in the doctrines of the Christian Church ; and last summer it was when doing my military training at Jonkoping that I met Mr. Küller, who was a fresh arrival from France. We became friends, and I followed him on his visit to France in the beginning of this year, where he took me to see the Mosque at Paris. He also explained the simplicity and the beauty of Islam. Thus I learnt that there really does exist a religion which corresponds with my own very thoughts. This is what led me to become a Muslim.

I am now at Stockholm with Mr. Küller to help him in his work at the dental laboratory.

THE IMAM,

The Mosque, Woking.

Yours very truly,

S. T. TAHAR KARLESON.

LONGMONT, COLORADO.

THE IMAM,

The Mosque, Woking.

DEAR SIR,

Recently a copy of " Islam and Civilization " by the Khwaja Kamal-ud-din came into my hands through the agency of the local library.

I was greatly impressed by the book, inasmuch as our own notions of Islam here are much confused and distorted by ministers, teachers and other prejudiced persons to whom all beliefs other than their own seem sacrilegious and whose own knowledge of Islam is most vague and greatly supplemented by imagination.

After reading and studying this book, I am possessed by a desire to learn more, but that seems impossible here, where books on the subject are non-existent and popular feeling is against even Catholicism in this Protestant town. However, I wonder if you would be so kind as to tell me where I could procure an English translation of the Qur-án and its probable cost.

Yours sincerely,

BERTON STRICKLAND.

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MASS., U. S. A.

THE EDITOR,

The Islamic Review, Woking.

DEAR SIR,

I am very anxious to get a copy of the "Sources of Christianity" by Khwaja Kamal-ud-din, but I noticed that on the back of *The Islamic Review* that title is missing. Is there any chance of getting a copy? I hope there is. I have read "Islam and Civilization" which I obtained from our Public Library here in Laurence, and I was much impressed by it.

Thank you for the copy of the Magazine.

Very truly yours,

ENAH J. ORFF.

TWICKENHAM, MIDDLESEX.

THE IMAM,

The Mosque, Woking.

DEAR SIR,

The writer has recently read two or three copies of the *Islamic Review* and has found the subject matter very interesting.

Also, quite recently, I have commenced a study of George Sale's translation of the Qur-án in order that I may understand something of the teachings of Muhammad.

I notice under the heading of the last page of the Review, an invitation to write you for further details of anything which is not covered in the brief account printed, and that must be my excuse for trespassing on your valuable time.

I am in agreement with the seven articles of Faith in Islam, but these are stated so briefly that they do not convey an answer, either affirming or nugatory, to a question which is concerning the minds of many people to-day, i.e., communication between discarnate and incarnate beings, a subject in which I am much interested. I would be extremely obliged if you would be so kind as to let me have the Islamic point of view on this matter.

I might add that I am open-minded and very desirous of receiving the Light of Revelation from whatever source it may come.

Yours very truly,

ALFRED E. CARR.

ISLAM AND THE PRESENT GENERATION

LEEDS.

DEAR MR. LOVEGROVE,¹

There can be no greater pleasure than to write and thank you for the two most interesting books which you very kindly gave me on the Islamic study during my stay in London. Please accept my apologies for not writing you any earlier.

The more I read these books the better I like them. In my opinion what Islam really needs is explanation—explanation of its laws and maxims.

Islamic religion is one of the most realistic, most scientific and most modern of all religions.

Most modern because of its flexibility, by which it can be applied successfully at any time and at any age. Other religions from my point of view are rigid. They lack the elasticity of Islam, and it is based on moderation.

The task that you have taken on your shoulders of explaining Islam is most noble of all professions, and I wish you every success in your noble work.

With kindest regards believe me I am a humble worker in the cause of Islam.

Very sincerely yours,
(Miss) A. BROOKE.

ISLAM AND THE PRESENT GENERATION IN EUROPE.

BY OMAR ROLF EHRENFELS.

(Translated from the German by Dr. Zaki Bey).

[Baron Ehrenfels, an Austrian nobleman, embraced Islam about two years ago. His life's ambition is to build a Mosque in Vienna, the capital of Austria. He has already founded a society which is working for the cause of Islam. This article shows, in a remarkable manner, his grasp and reading of the spirit of Islam and its teachings, as also how Islam alone can satisfy the soul yearnings of the present day Europe.—*Ed. I. R.*].

I.

A comparison of modern European thought in special regard to the characteristics of Islam.

A study of *Islam* reveals to us three fundamental aspects :—

(a) *The spiritual teachings of Islam* which were expounded by the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

¹ Mr. Habibullah Lovegrove is the Secretary of the British Muslim Society.—*Ed. I. R.*

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- (b) *The cult religious form of Islam* which the Holy Prophet Muhammad first instituted and which, in the course of time, has undergone only very slight modifications.
- (c) *The social form, the type of culture and civilization* of Islam, and how much of these has been inspired and actuated by its teachings and religious customs. Nations which embraced Islam, although they effected changes in various outward manifestations of Islam, have always been influenced by Islamic customs and the Islamic type of civilization.

As to the teachings of Islam, we find they contain, because of the presence of a very clear acceptance of all the Prophets of Allah in them, the most far-reaching measure of love for, and understanding of, all other expressions of the Divine Mind.

Its second aspect, *i.e.*, the religious form of Islam, offers us, because of the absence of an organised priesthood wielding political power, an illustration of a church which limited itself to soul influence. Both these characteristics have always been quite exclusive to Islam, and as characteristics of a true religion have been sought after in the West by all true believers in God. Nevertheless, Islam has not till now obtained any degree of general appreciation in Europe, barring a few distinguished exceptions such as Kaiser Friedrich III, Emperor of Germany, Cusanus, Archbishop of Cologne, Goethe, Napoleon I, and others who held Islam in high esteem. But they were, to all intents and purposes, isolated admirers of Islam in their times.

The underlying cause as to why the true value of Islam has not yet been clearly appreciated by Europeans lies in the peculiar qualities of Islamic culture and its outward forms of civilization which have been evolved by the peoples of Islam.

ISLAM AND THE PRESENT GENERATION

The forms of culture and civilization of these peoples have been wrongly thought by Europeans to be something primitive and even malicious or devilish. Political provocations and national Chauvinism have produced this unfortunate tendency, and even after making allowances for all the manufactured lies, a good deal does really still persist. I shall endeavour in the following pages to discuss the causes of this misunderstanding.

To the old Europe, the Islamic matrimonial law seemed vicious ; Islamic customs, ways of dress and furniture, art and architecture, with the practice of sitting and praying on the ground, and other Islamic devotional customs, seemed primitive and half-wild. However, many European minds in the past have been struck by the harmony which exists in Islam, between theory and practice, between ideals and their realizations. But even to these admiring critics it never occurred that they should apply their negative criticism to denouncing the European angle of vision.

Thus, it has remained a task for the younger European generation to get a clear conception of Islam. It has, in fact, already started to grasp this conception. It has seen the great débâcle of Western civilization during the Great War, and it has rightly asked if it was at all just to recognize only one ideal of culture, and follow it neglecting all other cultures. It is immaterial if this ideal be the exaggerated intellectuality of the Gothic man or the exaggerated capabilities of the practical man. What the younger generation seeks is synthesis, harmony, agreement between volition and action, between ideal and object. We do not want materialism which is nothing less than an overstraining in one direction. What we want is reality in all our efforts for spiritualizing all that is material.

It is in the requirements of the younger generation that there is discernible a distinctive feature that might

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dispel the misconceptions in recognizing the value of Islam ; namely, a clear misunderstanding of the essential weakness and imperfection of man ; but also an absolute faith in his ability to reach higher standards of life—this is not only typical of the ideals of the present generation but also of the type of culture and civilization evolved by Islam.

The laws governing the man in Islam do not concern themselves only with the extreme case of an inaccessible goal, for instance, “ the Gothic man must be free of all desires of the flesh ” or “ the technical man must name unlimited amounts of gold as his own ; ” they also include all the cases ; they render it possible for the imperfect man in his own way to follow the best path in order to attain or realize higher spiritual laws. The man in Islam tries also to make upright men of the brethren who are incapable of realizing the highest ideal of their time. The man in Islam does not make either hypocritical Tartuffes or “ repentent sinners ” or “ contrite sheep ” out of the imperfect representatives of the ideals of their times. It is because of the inclusion of the average man in the higher harmony of religion that we can explain the peculiar features of Islamic civilization.

The Roman Catholics, in their exaggerated ideals, force their followers to lead the life of angels, but they, mere human beings, fail to realize this extraordinarily high standard, and become hypocrites. Thus the Europeans are not only extremely insincere, they also deny every ideal, every belief in God and in the life after death. Islam, in contrast to this, affords the possibilities of realizing spiritual laws within the reach of man in everyday life. In Islam such hypocrisy does not exist. On the contrary, we find in it a slow but successful evolution. I will now proceed to illustrate my ideas by examples.

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In the first place, we shall consider the Islamic matrimonial law. This is more tolerant than the European law, but its tolerance does not encourage, as wrongly thought by Europeans, the custom of love-making as practised in Europe. The Islamic law, as a matter of fact, not only in word, but also in practice, encourages monogamy and life-long fidelity among its peoples. This it achieves because of its ability to show a course of action to a particular type of men who, though few in number, are incapable, by nature of leading a monogamous life. It shows them how to accomplish in a humanly beautiful and socially harmless manner the remarriage of a woman who has ceased to love her husband, or how a husband can realize for the whole of his life, true love for more than one wife in upright honesty. Islam, unlike Europe, does not recognize only one type of man and does not force others to be guilty of hypocrisy, or condemn them as sinners. What it does is to take notice of the manifold manifestations of human life. This may appear to a European as unideal ; but the fact remains that it is through this that Islam has got rid of that cynical materialism and untruth in love which has given rise to hypocrisy and to a discrepancy between reality and outward appearance.

The Islamic matrimonial laws indicate the way to live in a worthy manner with more than one wife ; they permit a woman to be divorced, if unhappy with her husband, and to marry again when she is likely to become happier in her second marriage. Thus these laws do not force several types of human beings to appear different from what they really are. A man who is unable to lead a monogamous life can adopt polygamy. In this way, no hidden, malicious and discordant action is encouraged. Whereas in Europe, the prohibition of polygamy must obviously encourage secret relations with dire results. Thus, Islam holds ideals and facts in harmony.

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Let us now take the second example, namely, Islamic art. In Islam, it is forbidden to reproduce, in the way of art, such things as portraits, statues or representations of the saints or their lives. Therefore, art in Islam concentrates upon the building of objects which are necessary for everyday existence, among which are mosques which are essential for daily spiritual life. A harmony is thus established between religious symbols and artistic products which is not realized in other cultures. Europe interpreted the lack of images of saints in Islam as being a sign of non-spirituality, but in fact, this is just what really protects the religion of Islam from profanation of spiritual symbols by inartistic misrepresentations of saints, thus aggravating the horrible mistake which sometimes makes such things objects of prayer. It is possible to express religious symbols through subjective pictures without any fear of the desecration to which figurate art is exposed.

Another example is afforded by the demeanour, dress, domestic furniture and in habits and customs of the man in Islam. These seemed to the old European generation uncultivated and were deemed uncivilized because of the constant contact of the Muslims during prayers, intellectual work and even meals with the earth which is his home in this life, common to all human beings throughout life. But in point of fact, this connection with the earth has brought with it a high culture and a cleanliness of the earth. The Islamic culture recognizes that man as long as he lives in this world cannot deny that he is "a creation of the earth." The Muslim is more modest than the European who ignores his connection with the earth by neglecting and despising what comes from the "earth." The Muslim is humble towards the earth which he ennobles by coming down to it. The result is a harmonious conception of mosques, of the whole of the house in artistic beauty. In contrast to this, we find in Europe, in the

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Middle Ages, works of art which attempt to deny the body. We find, on the other hand, in the modern school of Naturalism, artists who think of the earth or the material body as the only reality, and deny spiritual reality altogether. But in Islam neither of these two extremes obtains, both are united in one harmonious whole.

Now, let us discuss the third aspect, *i.e.*, the *Social Structure*.

Here the same law as that of the relation between the earth and body holds good, from a social point of view. The rich people and the intelligentsia of Islamic society have never, as in the West, segregated themselves from the poorer classes, because of racial pride, class or family exclusiveness. They have rather endeavoured through affectionate treatment to include them, incorporate them in their cultural life and aims. Poverty and manual labour are not despised in Islam as they were in Europe in the Middle Ages, but neither are they over-estimated, as in modern materialism, communism, socialism and Bolshevism.

Bolshevism maintains that religion is an opium for the people, stupefying them, because Bolshevism believes only in the earth and materialism. The European of the Middle Ages wished to deny the reality of the earth and the body. But Islam has no room for these two errors ; it unites the lower classes with the representatives of the higher classes in one mode of living. The people as well as the earth and body are well respected in Islam, whereas in Europe there existed at first a suppression of the people by the rich and higher classes, and now a suppression by the people or lower classes, such as the Proletariat in Russia, of the formerly high classes. Thus, it is only in Islam that we find a golden middleway. The real reason why, in Islam, the lower classes are more naturally cultivated than their fellows in Europe is the

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connection existing between them and the more cultured classes ; such a connection is lacking in Europe. Yet in Europe there are now being made a number of attempts at finding a basis of understanding between high and low classes.

We will now deal with the last aspect. We shall compare the Western church architecture with the Islamic, including a consideration of the trend of thought prevailing in the modern generation.

The design of the mosques is influenced by the Islamic customs of prayer. From physical ablutions to prostration before the silent closed door of God and till the opening of the door through meditation into the innermost being of the Ego, every symbolic expression of the Islamic prayer is reflected in the architectural details of a mosque. The spiritual values which are accessible to one who is praying, were absolutely missed by the old generation of European observers in exactly the same way as the teachings represented symbolically in the construction of a mosque : the spiritual existence of man in the next world—the dome should complete the earthly existence of man in this world—the cubic foundation—through the mediation of the two worlds penetrating into each other—the many cornered intermediate structure—and should thus lay the foundation for the Divine will of salvation—the flame symbol of the minaret. The Muslim when he faithfully performs his prayers, feels as if the Divine light is penetrating into his innermost soul. The spiritual interpretation of prayers given by the symbolic powers of the details of a mosque—Mihráb, carpets, fountains, inscriptions, decorations—has been neglected by the old-fashioned European observers, who also ignored the symbolic sense of the Islamic doctrine. The cupola of the mosque symbolizes the eternal soul of man, the intersecting architectural polygonals symbolize the con-

A TOUR THROUGH MUSLIM LANDS

nection between the earthy and heavenly parts of the soul and this connection is evidenced in prayers. Even when seen from outside, a mosque would give the impression of the whole human devotion and through the minarets, a symbolic picture is given of that human longing for God, the minaret being like a flame springing upward from wood. When the old European observers were taken inside a mosque, they admired the beautiful arches, the carpets, stalactite niches, the decorations and inscriptions. But they deplored the absence of the lineal upsoaring of the Gothic vault, they, therefore, described the quietness of a mosque as quietistic. It is true that a mosque does not point to a far-away aim beyond the reach of one's own soul. Here the weight tends rather towards the earth which should be caparisoned as beautifully as "the clouds of longing and faith" surrounding the earth and uniting it. The meaning of this symbol is that God the Almighty can only be found within one's own self, *i.e.*, if it has conquered itself and is living in peace with one's own self, and for this reason, with all the creatures of God. If this be achieved, then is the prayer of the Muslim completed. In other words, he has built within himself a house for the Word of God he has succeeded in realizing Islam.

(To be continued)

A TOUR THROUGH MUSLIM LANDS.

BY SIR ABDUL KARIM GHAZNAVI.

Arabia is a peninsula on the south-west coast of the Asiatic continent: its undefined northern desert, in some places a sea of sand, completes the isolation which has led the Arabs themselves to call the peninsula their island, Jeziret-el-Arab. At one time the present Trans-Jordania, the southern portion of Syria, and the whole of Iraq were

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included within Arabia, the northern portion of Syria being known as Es Sham. The Red Sea coast is fringed by extensive coral reefs dangerous to navigation. The greatest length of the peninsula is about 1,400 miles. Of its total area, roughly of 1,300,000 square miles nearly half is occupied by the Syrian, the Nefud and the Dahana deserts. It is over four times the size of France, or larger than the United States east of the Mississippi River.

The peninsula consists of the following kingdoms, *viz.*, the Hedjaz, the Shammar, Hasa, Nejd, Asir and Yemen. Besides these, there are the semi-independent principality of Koweit, and that of Oman in treaty relation with British India, the British Protectorate of Aden, the so-called trucial coast with its more or less independent tribes, and the Hadramaut with its own tribes. In the absence of any regular census figures, a conservative estimate of the total population would be about 8 to 10 millions.

In the eighteenth century, Nejd was an independent State. It subsequently fell under the Turkish sway. But in 1913, His Majesty Sultan Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the present King, threw off the Turkish yoke and captured the province of Hasa from the Turks. Nejd is the largest kingdom, alone containing over 800,000 square miles of Central Arabia, including the Nefud and the Dahana deserts. In 1921 King Ibn Saud added to his dominions the territories of Shammar over which ruled the Princes of the Rashid family. After the disruption of the Turkish Empire, the Hedjaz was declared an independent kingdom: but in 1925, King Ibn Saud completed the conquest of the Hedjaz and accepted the surrender of the province of Asir and took the title of King of the Hedjaz and Nejd and its dependencies. Thus the Hedjaz, Nejd, Hasa, Shammar and Asir, which form almost the whole of Arabia, are now under the rule of the great personality His Majesty Sultan Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud.

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Mecca, the Capital of Arabia, has stood as the centre of the Islamic world to which thousands of Muslims are drawn annually from the four corners of the globe for making the sacred pilgrimage, or the Hadj. Two other cities sacred to Muslim traditions are Medina, and Quds or Jerusalem, which are also visited by the pilgrims.

The Hadj or pilgrimage is enjoined on every Muslim once in his lifetime, who has the means of defraying the expenses of his journey there and back and providing for the maintenance of his family while he is away. It takes place every year on the ninth of the lunar month of Zil-Hadj of the Muslim calendar, and thus varies every year by about 11 days, and within a certain cycle it traverses all the seasons. Pilgrims can now embark from Calcutta, Bombay or Karachi. Before embarkation they are immunized against small-pox and cholera. Every ship leaving India must pass by an island known as Kamaran, which is the quarantine station for all ships going to Arabia from the south. Time was when the very look of Kamaran was enough to send a shudder through the bones of the pilgrims on board. Formerly a ship used to be detained here from five to seven days. Conditions have since vastly improved and ships are not detained now beyond two days, and those from the port of Calcutta have always passed Kamaran without detention. Now that compulsory immunisation is going to be enforced by an Act in India it is hoped that the detention at Kamaran will be done away with altogether.

The Hadj consists of the following observances :—
(a) Entering upon what is known as the state of *Ihram*, where the king and the beggar are dressed alike, and where only one kind of apparel consisting of two seamless sheets, must be worn, leaving the head uncovered. Thus two large Turkish towels can be used. Pilgrims going by ship from the south must doff their ordinary clothes and don

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their *Ihram* as soon as the ship comes abreast of the mountain peak of Jebel-ya-Lamlim (also called Jebel Ummal-Qura) when nearing Jedda. The state of *Ihram* implies that all profane thoughts must be banished, and the pilgrim must be animated with the highest ideal of love towards his Creator and service to mankind.

(b) The pilgrim must remain in *Ihram* until he reaches Mecca where he must make the circuit round the Kaaba seven times. This is called the *Towaf*.

(c) After this ceremony, the pilgrim must walk up and down seven times between two small hillocks called Saafa and Marwa just outside the quadrangle of the Harem Shereef. This ceremony is called the *Sa'y*, and this observance is in commemoration of Abraham's wife Hagar when she went in search of water, to and fro, from one hill top of Saafa to that of Marwa.

(d). The next observance is going in *Ihram* to the plains of Arafat on the ninth day of Zil-Hadj, at any time, between sunrise and sunset. The following day is the Id-uz-Zoha, or the Feast of Sacrifices, when prayers are said in congregation, and the pilgrim offers any animal, such as sheep, goat or camel, as a sacrifice, in commemoration of Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son Ishmael. This concludes the pilgrimage, after which the pilgrim is a Hadji. Hadj, which takes place annually at Mecca, is intended to be a world-conference of Muslims drawn from all quarters of the globe.

The mosque is the place where Muslims gather together to make their united obeisance to the Almighty, and where they seek to learn the lesson of equality, fraternity and the futility of world's vanity. Islam is essentially the religion of the unity of God and the equality of mankind, in which virtue and the service of humanity are the only points of merit. Distinction of colour, race or creed are done away with, and all mankind is regarded as belonging to one

A TOUR THROUGH MUSLIM LANDS

family. In fact, Muslims believe that God has sent His Messengers at all times and to all nations. According to Islam, all peoples of every period were capable of adopting the Truth, because God has proclaimed this truth again and again ; and whoever follows the truth is a Muslim. He only needs acting like a virtuous, good, sensible, warm-hearted and charitable being, and he acts in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him !). Islam means submission to the will of God, and a Muslim is one who so submits. The Prophet 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 a scholar is more holy than the blood of a martyr," or " go to the furthest part of the world, even to China, if you are able to gain knowledge thereby."

The Kaaba or the House of God is nearer to the western end of the quadrangle of the Harem Shereef. It is entirely covered with a thick black drapery, which used to be manufactured at Cairo and came annually from Egypt till 1926, since when it is being made at Mecca itself. In Western countries as well as in America one talks of the Holy Carpet, which makes the Muslim smile, for it is not a carpet at all : it is covering for the Kaaba.

Mecca for 1931 was a refreshing contrast to the Mecca of 1913. Since the advent of the puritan King, peace and security prevail from one end of the Hedjaz to the other. The municipality now functioned ; it has even imported some automobiles fitted with tanks to hold phenyle and water with a contrivance for sprinkling it on the road. The Harem Shereef, which used to be lit with candles and oil lamps, was now fitted with electric lights.

Empress Zubeida, Queen of Caliph Haroun-ar-Rashid, was responsible for constructing an aqueduct for the

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supply of water to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Her waterworks were allowed to fall into decay: but under King Ibn Saud's rule, the old waterworks have been renovated and, in addition, a number of tube-wells have been sunk in various places, with the result that pilgrims have no longer to buy water, and there is an end of water-famines. Electric refrigerating plants have been installed, and ice can now be had.

But perhaps the greatest revolutionary change that has taken place since my last visit is the introduction of motor traction. On the last occasion in 1913, ex-King Hussain was good enough to send a cavalcade to take me from Jedda to Mecca—a distance of 72 kilometres which took me nearly 24 hours in a Shuqduf on the back of a camel. On this occasion, His Majesty sent motor cars which took me to Mecca in two hours. The impenetrable desert, which could only be negotiated with great difficulty with the help of the camel, could now be traversed from end to end by car, which glides across the sands.

At Mina I met a gentleman who looked every inch an Arab, but whose Saxon eyes alone betrayed him. He was no other than Abdullah Philby, late of the Indian Civil Service. Another interesting figure was ex-King Amanullah, who was also a fellow-guest.

(To be continued.)



REVIEW

The Philosophy of Islam : by K.S. Khaja Khan, pp. 120.
Octavo, Rs. 1-4-0. Hogarth Press, Mount Road, Madras.

From the title of the book one would expect a rational discussion of the various doctrines, principles and teachings of Islam. But when from the cover one turns to the contents of the book one discovers that the book should more appreciately have been named "The Mysticism of Islam." For it is that aspect of Islam, rather than its philosophy, which the author has attempted to touch, and one wonders why the learned author could not treat the subject-matter of this book as a part of his previous work "Studies in Tasawwuf."

As a work on *tasawwuf*, the book does not attempt a systematic study of that subject, but rather deals with some of the doctrines and phraseology in vogue among the various schools of Sufis. For all this, however, it is full of very useful information and bespeaks an extensive study on the part of the writer, both of Eastern and Western lore. It must be at once admitted that it makes very interesting and instructive reading, and one cannot but admire the author on the wide range of his studies.

So long as the element of mystery surrounds our earthly life, *tasawwuf* is bound to have an absorbing interest for man. The "Why" and "Wherefore" of this life, as also its "Whence" and "Whither" are questions which possess a tremendous fascination for the mystical element in man. Nevertheless, *tasawwuf* is a dangerous ground to tread, and it should be the privilege of the higher minds alone to explore these metaphysical realms. In the hands of the rank and file it has had a most disastrous effect on the practical life of man. The doctrine of *tawakkal* is one such dangerous doctrine which has served as a doze of opium to the practical life. On page 68, the learned author quotes a Sufi's saying: "Oh devotee, God is Providence. To sustain you is His word.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Why do you take God's work on yourself." In other words, a true Sufi must not work for his living. The result is innumerable pseudo-sufis who live as parasites on society. Such a view is diametrically opposed to the teachings of Islam. The Qur-án emphatically says: "Man shall have naught but what he strives for." And so says the Prophet: "One who earns his bread is a friend of God." The author has done well to remove this dangerous view of *tawakkal* and given the correct conception as put by Maulana Rum in the well-known line:

Bar tawakkal zanu-i-ushtar bibund

"Tie the camel's knee and then leave it to God's care."

It is a pity that a book so interesting should be spoiled by awafully bad topographical mistakes with which it actually bristles.

Y. K.

PRECIOUS GEMS

1. Charity averteth impending calamities.

* * * * *

2. To meet friends cheerfully, and to invite them to a feast, are charitable acts.

* * * * *

3. Who so is able and fit, yet worketh not for himself nor for others, God is not kind to him.

* * * * *

4. O God, keep me from inability and laziness.

* * * * *

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

MUHAMMAD.

WHAT IS ISLAM ?

WHAT IS ISLAM ?

The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teachings. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.

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

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

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

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

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number: belief in (1) Allah; (2) Angels; (3) Books from God; (4) Messengers from God; (5) the Hereafter; (6) the Premeasurement of good and evil; (7) Resurrection after death.

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

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

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number: (1) declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) Prayer; (3) Fasting; (4) Almsgiving; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Mecca.

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ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of All the 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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