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Islamic Review

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

XI.]

[Nos 1-2

RAMADHĀN-SHAWWĀL, 1351 A.H.
JAN.-FEB., 1933 A.C.

Subscription 10s.

Single Copy

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

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AZEEZ MANZIL, Brandreth Road, Lahore, India.

Office in England :
THE MOSQUE, Woking, Surrey, England.

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

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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

RAMADHÁN-SHAWWÁL 1351 A.H.

VOL. XXI. JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1933 A.C. Nos. 1-2.

SIR C. P. RAY ON ISLAM

Islam is the most democratic of all religions. It is the perfect equalizer of humanity. The moment you embrace Islam, you are raised to a footing of equality with any member. In the mosque, the *Badshah*¹, the *Amir*², the *Faqir*³, the *Bahishti*⁴ and the meanest of coolies⁵ pray side by side. Islam knows nothing about distinctions of colour. Islam has made universal progress from the borders of the Pacific Ocean to those of the Atlantic on account of its liberal policy. Then again within recent times Islam has been making gigantic strides in the Malay Peninsula not on account of the sword or the Koran—these parts have never been under Muslim rule—but because of its catholic and liberal policy.

The Unity.

¹ i.e., King. ² i.e., Rich. ³ i.e., Beggar.
⁴ i.e., Water-carrier. ⁵ i.e., Labourer.

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HEAVENLY INHABITANTS

BY SHAIKH MUSHIR HUSSAIN KIDWAI OF GADIA.

For some time past scientists have been suggesting the possibility of life on the celestial bodies. Mars is supposed to be the most likely place to have living beings on it. At one time it was thought that the Mars is inhabited by very intelligent beings—more clever than we, the earthly human beings. It was guessed that these Martians had dug out gigantic canals for irrigation purposes which could be seen by extra powerful telescopes from our habitat, the earth. Lately this canal theory has been relegated to a doubtful position. In fact now the possibility of life on the planets is considered to be doubtful, but a Muslim can have not the least doubt about it. Of all the Books which are said to have come from God the Holy Qur-án is the only Book which has not only asserted the existence of God, but has proved it by cogent arguments and logic. In Chapter XLII at the end of the section 3 it has said over thirteen centuries ago :—

Wa min ayatihi khalk us samavate wal ardhe wa ma busse fihima min dabbatin.

And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and what he has spread forth in BOTH of them of living beings.

Fihima has been used to leave no doubt that a reference has been made to Living Beings on Both the heavens and the earth.

The Holy Qur-án has not only asserted the existence of life on the heavenly bodies, but it has boldly made it a sign of the existence of the Almighty Creator, and it has referred to it in the same way as it has referred to the life on this earth.

I for one have not the least doubt that there is life on the planets.

HEAVENLY INHABITANTS

There might be birds or reptiles or mammals or all kinds of living beings that are found on this earth. It is possible that the life on the planets above may be quite different in form than what has evolved on earth, but the probability is that there would be some kind of similarity, and all will be bearing the impress of one Almighty Designer and Giver of life (*Al-Mohye*). It is possible, nay it is probable, that if there are intelligent living beings, Guides and Warners must have been sent to them also as they were to men on the earth to show them the Right Way. It is very significant that while speaking of the final Guide on this earth the Divine Author of the Holy Qur-án says :—

Wa ma arsalnaka illa Rahmatan lil-Alamin.

We have not sent thee (O Muhammad) but as a mercy for the **WORLDS**.

The word “ worlds ” has been used in its plural form—*Alamin*.

It has been repeatedly said in the Qur-án :—

Yusabbeho lilLahe ma fis samavate wa ma fil ardhe.

“ Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth declares the glory and praise of Allah.”

On one occasion we find in the Qur-án :—

Wa lilLahe yasjodo ma fissanavate wa ma fil ardhe min dabbatin walmalaikate.

“ All the living beings in heaven and in earth and the angels bow low to Allah.”

It is not only that the Holy Qur-án explicitly asserts that there is life both on the heavenly bodies and this terrestrial body called earth, but it very significantly declares in the first verse mentioned in this article :—

Ma howa ala jame him iza yashao Qadir

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The whole verse thus means : “ And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and what He has spread forth in BOTH of them of the living beings, and when He pleases He is All-powerful to GATHER them together.” The last part hints at the possibilities of inter-communication between the living beings on the planets.

So if it pleases God men on the earth may some day be able to send messages to their fellow beings in the Mars. Under Divine inspiration they may be able even to invent means to come together. What splendid possibilities !

It is a great pity indeed that Muslims after a great rush for developing science engaged themselves only in polemics and in controversies over trivial matters. The Alims or Mullahs or Hojas confined their learning to the details of rituals and ceremonies. The nation which had produced hundreds and thousands of prominent scientists in almost all the branches of science has not produced a single first class scientist for centuries. There is no religious book which has encouraged more the study of sciences (*hikmat*) than the Holy Qur-án. It itself contains many scientific truths. It is only a few years since the attention of certain European scientists has been drawn to the possibility of life on certain planets other than the earth. But over thirteen centuries ago Muslims were informed that life does exist in heavenly bodies, and further that it is possible, if man exerts himself to win the pleasure of God, that he may bring the living beings of the heavenly bodies and this earth together. So the Muslim scientists had been urged first of all and given much better and longer opportunity to invent means of communication or intercourse between the living beings of this earth and other earths (planets). Alas ! they have neglected their opportunity. It is said

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that one of their saints—Ibne Arabi—did travel by spiritual power over certain far-off planets, but what was wanted was the invention of some material means of interplanetary communication. If the Muslims had continued to cultivate *Hikmat*, which the Qur-án says is the best gift of *Al-Hakim*—the Great Scientist—to man, he would within the last centuries might have succeeded by the help of God in establishing interplanetary intercourse or communication. Alas! Muslims neglected the matter altogether. Let them take it up now more seriously than the others.

MUSLIM CONTRIBUTION TO CHEMISTRY

BY DR. D. H. PEACOCK.

[The following is a report of an interesting lecture on the above subject delivered by Dr. D. H. Peacock at the Muslim Students Society, Rangoon. We print it with the hope that it will not only be found interesting but will also inspire Muslims to re-enter the field of Science.—ED., I. R.]

When, in the 7th century, Arab Muslim conquerors overran Syria and Egypt they found in those places flourishing schools of chemistry. The destruction of part of the library of Alexandria by fire did not suggest that the attitude of the newcomers will be at all sympathetic toward learning, but a change, which we may perhaps call an improvement, soon took place and both in Egypt and in Syria the conquerors re-established flourishing schools. After the conquest of North Africa and Spain institutions of learning were set up in those countries; and to the schools and universities of Cordova, Granada, Seville and other cities of Spain, scholars from all Europe hastened to study medicine, mathematics and optics. The reputation of these Universities stood high until the middle of the Middle Ages, and they kept alive in Europe the tradition of Greek learning when it had almost completely died out elsewhere.

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The culture to which the Arabs found themselves heirs was derived mainly from Greek sources and, as far as the natural science were concerned, almost entirely from Aristotle whose opinions were promulgated with little change until the 17th century. He held that there were four elements, air, earth, fire and water, from which all other substances were derived. These four elements were themselves made from one single substance, the so-called prime matter. The occurrence and genesis of metals and minerals was explained in the following way. The action of the sun on dry ground was said to produce a "smoky exhalation" which consisted of minute particles of water in process of being transmuted to air. If these exhalations were imprisoned in the earth they gave rise to metals and minerals, the latter arising mainly from the "smoky exhalation."

While the metals arose from the "moist" or "vaporous exhalation" each exhalation was assumed to contain some of the other, and metals and minerals were therefore regarded as containing all four elements, their proportions depending upon the nature of the metal or mineral.

This theory of the constitution of matter was not entirely devoid of experimental foundation; was not, for example, a completely unreasonable deduction that substances which burn contain the element of fire or that substances which vaporise on being heated are converted into the element of air. One of the chief sources of error was the belief that two substances in combination would each contribute to the new compound their own peculiar properties. No clear distinction was drawn between chemical construction and the process of mixing, or between physical change and chemical change. There is every excuse for this confusion because it still exists, although not to the same extent as formerly.

MUSLIM CONTRIBUTION TO CHEMISTRY

The chemistry of the Greeks and of their immediate successors was almost entirely concerned with the quantitative examinations of substances, the quantitative side of chemical processes being given little attention. The problem which occupied the attention of nearly all the chemists of the days was the problem of the transmutation of base metals into gold. Believing as they did, that all metals were made up of the four elements the success of their endeavours depended only in mixing these four elements in the correct proportions. To assist them in their work they used the principle to which attention has already been drawn, namely, that substances contribute to a new compound their own peculiar properties. To make gold, therefore, it was necessary to select and mix in correct proportions substances which possessed the properties of yellowness, heaviness, malleability and fusibility.

By the beginning of the 17th century there were three important centres of chemical science. At Alexandria Zozimus, the author in the 13th century of a chemical Encyclopedia, had effected a very useful synthesis of Greek and Egyptian knowledge. The fanaticism which led to the murder of Hypatia discouraged, but did not bring to an end the activities of the students at the Alexandria schools. Another centre was in Persia, where the Syrians driven from their country by the persecutions of Justinian had found a congenial home under the protection of the Sassanide kings. The 3rd centre was in Syria in the Monophysite monasteries. The celebrated Greek fire was one of the discoveries of the Syrian Alchemists.

The Muslim conquerors soon added to these centres of intellectual activity. Besides the schools in Spain, to which attention has already been drawn, academies were set up elsewhere and munificently supported by the governments of the time. In the 8th century the Abbaside Caliphs

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founded the famous academy of Baghdad where were translated the works of the mathematicians Euclid, Archimedes and Appollonius ; of the astronomer Ptolemy ; of the naturalists Hippocrates, Dissiondes and others. Besides these translations commentaries on these and related works were there produced. These translations were generally in Syrian until about the 11th century when Arabic translations were made. The apparatus sketched in these Syriac manuscripts often bears a striking resemblance to that used at the present day.

In these Muslim centres of learning, Greek culture was kept alive at a time when outside Byzantium it had no abiding place in the non-Muslim world. Here in these centres lived and worked a famous series of Muslim scholars. The name Algebra reminds us that to the Arabs we owe the beginnings of this branch of Mathematics, and to many other branches of science they made important contributions. We shall consider only some of those who were famous as chemists.

Of the Arab chemists one of the earliest and most well-known was Geber or Jabir Ibn Hayyan. He was born at Tus in Persia in 722 and belonged to the South Arabian tribe of Azd. His father was a druggist who, soon after the birth of Jabir, was executed for his intrigues on behalf of the Abbasides. Jabir was then sent to Arabia to be educated. After the Abbasides had assumed the Caliphate, Jabir came to Baghdad and held a position of some importance at the court of Haroun al Rashid where he was an intimate of the powerful Bermeicide family. When that family fell into disgrace, Jabir fled to Kufa in Mesopotamia where he died about 800. He was the author of a considerable number of works, and his fame was so great that a number of books of a later date were attributed to him by their now unknown authors. It is, therefore, somewhat difficult to be sure of the exact extent of Jabir's

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knowledge of chemistry. He subscribed to the Aristotelian view that metals were made up of a smoky principle resembling sulphur and a vaporous principle resembling mercury. The conversions of most metals on being strongly heated into silvery liquids resembling mercury was regarded as evidence in favour of this view of the constitution of metals. It is remarkable that although he held this opinion, Jabir himself gave a very clear and accurate account of the preparations of Cinnabar by heating mercury and sulphur. The substances known to Jabir include potash and soda, saltpetre, sal ammoniac, alum, sulphate of iron, borax, nitric acid, silver nitrate and aqua regia. He prepared nitric acid by heating a mixture of sulphate of iron, saltpetre and alum and although the process is wasteful, it would certainly give nitric acid ; this seems to be the first account of the preparation of this important substance. He also described the purification of common salt by heating the crude substance, dissolving it in water, filtering evaporation to produce crystallisation and final heating to dry the product. Filtration was usually carried out by a strip of cloth to act as siphon by capillary action from a vessel containing the liquid to be filtered to one at a lower level. Jabir was familiar with the process of reduction and describes the preparation of lead from litharge :—

Take a pound of litharge and a quarter of a pound of soda and powder them well. Then mix them together and make them into a paste with oil, and heat in a vessel with a hole in the bottom, placed over another vessel. The metal will descend into the lower one pure and white.

Jabir was well aware of the importance of experimental work in chemistry. In one place he says :—

The first essential is that thou shouldst perform practical work and conduct experiments. For he who performs not practical work nor conducts experiments will never attain to the least degree of mastery. But thou, O my son, do not experiment so that thou mayest acquire knowledge.

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Elsewhere he states that it must be taken as an absolutely rigorous principle that any proposition which is not supported by proofs is nothing more than an assertion which may be true or may be false. It is only when a man brings proofs of his assertion that we say "your proposition is true." Would it be out of place to suggest that this latter statement of Jabir's may be displayed prominently in both houses of the reformed legislature ? Jabir's ten rules for the practice of chemistry are of some interest : (1) the operator should know the reason for performing each operation ; (2) the instructions must be properly understood ; (3) impossible and profitless should be avoided ; (4) time and season must be carefully chosen (a reference to the influence of the stars) ; (5) it is best for the laboratory to be in a secluded place ; (6) the chemist must have trusty friends ; (7) he must also have leisure to conduct his experiments ; (8) and patience and reticence ; (9) and perseverance ; (10) he must not be deceived by appearances into bringing his operations to too hasty conclusions.

In the next century after Jabir lived Rhazes or Razi, Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Zakarraya, who was born in Persia at a town near Teheran in 866 and died in 925. His chief interest was in medicine for he was director of the hospital at Baghdad. He was a skilled experimenter, and attempted at a systematic classification of chemicals into three groups of which the first, the mineral group was sub-divided into six classes. Amongst salts he mentioned common salt and qate conde or sodium carbonate. This last has of course given to chemistry the ~~term~~ alkali, applied to substances which resembles sodium carbonate in their action on acids.

Avicenna or Abu Ali Ibn Sina, who was born near Bokhara in 980, was remarkable for his transmutation of metals. He held that just as it was impossible to convert

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a dog into a horse or a man into a bird, so it was impossible to convert silver into gold or copper into silver. He agreed that copper could be stained white to resemble silver and silver stained to resemble gold, and described methods of doing this, but regarded the change, quite correctly, as merely superficial.

The last great Muslim chemist is Jildaki who died in 1361. He was an experimenter of a high order ; he was familiar with the use of nitric acid to separate gold and silver and more remarkable still, appeared to recognise that “ substances do not react except by definite weights.” From his time onwards the pursuit of chemistry was carried on in the West. The Saracen rulers of the Muslim State proved less devoted to learning than their Arab predecessors and the Muslim colleges decayed. Their work was not lost however. In 1144 Robert of Chester translated into Latin from Arabic the composition of Alchemy which helped to make the study of alchemy fashionable in Europe.

The achievement of the Muslim chemists had been of great value. They kept alive the tradition of the experimental method as a means of gaining knowledge and testing conclusions, and they greatly added to our knowledge of practical chemistry and its applications. That they did not progress further is no reason for surprise. They had around them no nation which could spur them on to further intellectual efforts, and intellectual laziness is the most insidious of vices. Moreover, the time was not ripe. It was not until Newton had shown a new way of attacking the problems of natural science that chemistry was able to develop an useful and secure theoretical foundation.

The contributions of the Muslim chemists one thousand years ago were of value, but what of the present generation ? What encouragement is given by generous Muslim donors to young Muslim students who wish to

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make the study of chemistry their life work ?It behoves those Muslims who are proud of the achievements of their forefathers to see that those who wish to carry on the high tradition of devotion to learning are given the leisure and opportunity to do so, and to see that chemical research is supported here now as it was in the days of Haroun al Rashid.

THE GREAT REVOLUTION

By K. KUDOS.

The present Revolution though sudden and far-reaching in its consequences, is only the completion of that inaugurated by Islam thirteen and a half centuries ago. Islam introduced radical changes into every department of human activity and human thought, nay it changed the very conception of religion, bringing, as it did, within its scope everything of any importance in life. It created a strong sense of monotheism,—in itself, no doubt, an ancient institution, but destined, nevertheless, to cause many a revolution in other branches of human society. It introduced democracy and the equality of mankind. It raised the status of women, and laid down principles, which were, in the long run, to abolish slavery. It sanctified labour and spoke strongly against usury—the root cause of capitalism and aristocracy. It made Nature subordinate to Man, and exposed the errors which had, aforetime, induced men to worship Nature in the guise of gods and goddesses. It encouraged new learning which reduced every component of the universe to the service of man, thus opening the door to material progress and giving an impetus to science, a thing unknown before Islam. Ignorance fought with Islam for the maintenance of old institutions, and though most of the reformations were accomplished within three centuries of the delivery of the Prophet's message, the fight continued until the

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beginning of the present century when these reformatations were brought to perfection. Events had begun to follow each other with greater rapidity, and in the beginning of the twentieth century they were strung as close as beads of a rosary. So it had been prophesied by the Holy Prophet Muhammad when he predicted a time which would bring Islam into prominence.

Imperialism, aristocracy, capitalism and the Western Church were at the height of their ascendancy in the last century, and it was the Great War which sounded the death-knell of most of the ancient things. These four institutions collapsed, giving way to absolute Democracy, sometimes identified with Labour. But the most wonderful change occurred in the sphere of religion. Religion had been losing ground before the onslaught of Free-thought and Atheism. Though the Church Christianity was destroyed, more or less, in this conflagration, and the institution of the Sabbath, albeit of long standing, lost its sanctity, religion, in general, emerged unscathed from the ordeal. Nay, rather it seemed to have acquired new vigour. Science, though one of the principal adversaries of Christianity, was found to uphold belief in God. It established such belief on an intelligent basis, but the God of Science was not the God of the ancient religions. The scientific world sought to behold Him in His real colours. It strove to find the Deity in the pages of Nature. But a large portion of revealed theology proved to be faulty in this respect.

Though men of science were dead against religion, but further research in Nature compelled them to bow down before the God of the Qur-án, for the God of the Qur-án was the same God as the God of Science. It could not be otherwise. If Science can read the ways of the Lord as He works in Nature, Revelation must also come from the same Source, to teach us how best to utilize the treasures

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of the universe. Thus, Theology and Science are one and the same thing. There can be no conflict between a true science and a true theology. They must work as comrades to further the cause of humanity. But science was unable to support a dogmatised theology which cannot be confirmed by scientific truths. Science, for instance, saw the principle of Evolution working everywhere. It established that everything in its inception was perfect. Though it gradually passed through various phases to reach its complete state, it was, nevertheless, free from defects. It was progressive. It could not go back from good to evil. Faced with these truths, it could not believe in human nature—the best handiwork of God—as being sinful or, indeed, anything other than perfect; nor could it lose its perfection by anything which occurred in the Garden of Eden. Again, everything in Nature, was capable of observing the Law. Obedience to Law was the rule of Nature everywhere, and, therefore, human nature could not be sinful, seeing that sin consists in our inability to obey the Law. Thus the study of Nature demolished the very basic principle of the Church faith—the inherent sinfulness of our nature. Further observations contradicted the beliefs in the doctrine of Atonement. The scientific mind not only failed to observe any illustration of the Church Scripture in the realm of Nature, but rather saw something directly contrary thereto, which shook the teaching of the Church to its very foundation. This teaching asserted that the mercy of God could not be manifested without receiving some compensation. Hence, the remission of sin (an act of mercy) could not occur until some penalty had been paid in respect of that sin. This led to the doctrine of the Crucifixion. But science saw that God's mercy and grace had found expression long before man came into existence, demanding no *quid pro quo*; so the principle of Atonement fell through. In like

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manner was demolished the Hindu doctrine of *Karma*. According to *Karma* or the transmigration of the soul, man is born into this life to reap the fruits of his actions in previous existences. All comfort and happiness in this life are the reward of his past actions. But if we analyse the factors of happiness, we find human actions playing a most insignificant part in comparison with the work of Nature and its contribution to our comfort. The whole of Nature has to work for it ; and this was so, aeons before we appeared on the scene. We came to utilize the things already created, which were most decidedly not the result of our own actions. The Qur-án refers to this phenomenon when it gives the lie to the doctrine under discussion. Again, if progressiveness was observed as a distinctive feature of everything in Nature, why should man alone be retrogressive ? His soul could not return again to the worlds he had already known under the principle of *Karma*. In this respect, the Theosophists would say that if we quit the world, leaving undone things which in the circumstances ought to have been done, we must come back to do them. Science, however, contradicts this argument too. Things in the course of their evolution have passed through various worlds of progress. If they have left any world, bearing with them some deficiency, that deficiency is made up in the coming world. The progressive entity did not revert to the past stage for that necessary rectification. Some children are born with defective organs. These are improved, perhaps, by medical treatment, but the child never returns to the womb for such correction. How wise, then, is the Qur-án to count in the list of Divine Attributes, *Ar-Rahman*,—He Whose blessings come to us without reward. We, therefore, need believe neither in the dogma of Atonement nor in that of *Karma*. Moreover, we find *Rabb* as God's first attribute. It means, He Who puts things on a progressive course,

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from which they cannot turn back. Science has also relieved us of another false conception of theology, which was worked up into a high-flown philosophy in ancient India. It founded various schools of thought which are spoken of, even now, with pride by the Hindus, but practically they have been relegated to oblivion, seeing that they not only failed to further the cause of humanity, but retarded material advancement. India in ancient days remained barren of all such progress, and it was not until the coming of Islam that the country caught a glimpse of civilization, as we understand it to-day ; but the cause of this paucity was no other than the philosophy I have mentioned.

Matter and soul were taken as two independent entities, separate from each other in their birth. They were reckoned as eternal as God Himself, and the belief, in the long run, tended to destroy material progress. On the other hand, Islamic science, now reinforced by modern science, took its origin from the principle of the combination of ingredients. This law was discovered to be as ancient in its operation as the Law of Creation itself. In fact, both Laws synchronized with each other. The Holy Book also alludes to certain other principles in the universe working together with the principle of combination. It taught that ingredients of things first originated when various faculties were reposed in them. The said faculties remained in abeyance as long as the ingredients were scattered in space. Though situated far apart from each other, they were within the knowledge of a certain Power that knew also of their whereabouts, and how to exact homage from them. It knew how to combine them, and the proportions in which they had to mix. The Mighty Hand arranged them in their proper order, and then they began to exhibit their inherent properties. They remained, as it were, under keen watch and ward, until they

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reached perfection. We observe these various operations in Nature, and we follow their example in order to complete our civilization. It demands on our part, intense conviction as to the existence of these Laws which could not exist if matter was eternal, with no mind in it. Matter may be taken as possessing various properties which may be considered as eternal as itself, but the Laws, under which these properties exhibit themselves, are definitely the qualities of the mind. To begin with, things cannot become combined unless their ingredients come under the operation of a Mind, as I have observed elsewhere. Secondly, things that are eternal are also indestructible, while many of the properties of matter become destroyed in the process of combination. Oil has the property of greasing things, but it disappears absolutely when mixed with alkali; while soap, the produce of a combination, counteracts all the effects of the greasiness. This shows that the properties of things are not eternal. The world thus remained, of necessity, devoid of all progress as long as it believed in the eternity of matter. Let me mention a typical illustration. Civilization began to work at full strength when the science of chemistry was discovered. This was admittedly the work of the Muslims. They knew that various things in Nature could combine with each other in different proportions and produce new things. They also knew other cognate sciences; but their method of discovery was new and speedy. All scientific researches begin with belief in certain data. Sometimes they are found to be wrong, and the whole process of research came to nothing. It is, in fact, the accuracy of the data that assures progress in science. But the Muslim scientists had no doubt about their success, since they based their data on certain Attributes of God, which gave them a true insight into the Laws working in Nature. For instance, they believed in God being *Al-Bári* (The Originator),

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Al-Khāliq (The Combiner of things in given proportions), *Ar-Rabb* (The Reposer of qualities in things), *Al-Wājid* (The Finder of things), *Al-Jabbār* (He Who brings things to act according to His Will), *Al-Muhsi* (The Estimator), *Al-Muqtadir* (One Who makes the Law), *Al-Hādī* (He Who puts things on the right path), and the like. These names refer to the laws upon which the science of chemistry is based.

Thus it appears that theology is not simply a mental luxury for the religiously-disposed. True theology in its true form, is the comrade of true science. It brings humanity to advancement. Wrong theology not only maims our faculties but it slams the door on all advancement. No sooner had Islam brought the true theology to man, than he began to progress by leaps and bounds.

MUHAMMAD : A BLESSING TO MANKIND

BY DR. KHUDA BAKHSH.¹

Who was it that within a brief span of mortal life called forth a nation, strong, compact, invincible, out of loose, disconnected, ever-warring tribes, animated by a religious fervour and enthusiasm unknown in the history of the world before, and set before it a system of religion and a code of morals marked by wisdom, sanity and sweet reasonableness? Who was it? It was none other than Muhammad, the Prophet of God.

¹[This article was sent to us by the late Dr. Khuda Bakhsh some months back. We regret very much that we were unable to print it earlier, more so because of the untimely and sudden death of its learned author. We take this opportunity of recording our sincere appreciation of the services of the late Dr. Khuda Bakhsh to the cause of Islam. Let it be said that in his love and veneration for the Holy Prophet he was second to none. Those Muslims who, during his last days on earth, tried to stigmatize him should have thought a great deal more over the whole question than they did. It was unworthy of any Muslim to question Dr. Khuda Bakhsh's sincerity. He, indeed, was a true son of Islam. May the Almighty rest his soul in peace!—Ed., I. R.]

MUHAMMAD : A BLESSING TO MANKIND

It was he who launched the new faith on its world-wide career. It was he who attacked heathenism in its very stronghold, its cherished sanctuary, at Mecca, the central point of Arabian idolatry.

The light dawned upon him, and the inner voice spoke unto him, and the decision was formed ; a decision firm and irrevocable, a decision for all time. The whole history of the Prophet is an eloquent commentary on the genuineness of this conviction. Battling against the whole force of his country arrayed against him, he stood undaunted, unshaken in his resolve. Is there one single instance of lapse from the position thus taken up ?

No consideration could induce him to give up that which he considered as a duty entrusted to him by the Most High, the duty of proclaiming Monotheism, in its undefiled purity, and of bringing back his erring countrymen, nay, the erring world, to the path of the true faith. Could anything but a conviction of the truth of his mission have sustained him in that terrible struggle ?

When enthroned as spiritual and temporal chief, what did he do to justify the most distant suggestion that he had altered or changed ? Did he change his mode of living ? Did he surround himself with the pomp of power ? Did he keep a retinue of bodyguard, or did he indulge in any one of those outward manifestations of earthly glory with which the monarchs of the earth, ancient and modern, have loved to surround themselves ? Did he amass wealth, or leave a large fortune behind ? In fact in no one single respect did he change. Power notwithstanding, and stupendous power too, for he exercised a power which the greatest of monarchs might have envied, he remained to the last simple, unostentatious, free from pride, living with his people in a noble self-effacement and a self-sacrifice rarely to be seen in life.

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But it is so difficult for a European to understand the Oriental's attitude towards life and religion. With the Oriental, every act of his has a religious bearing, a religious significance. His whole life, from the cradle to the grave, is one series of religious performances. There is no sharp dividing line between religion and politics. There is no such thing as "give unto Cæsar what is Cæsar's and unto God what is God's"—Cæsar is but a representative of God and obedience to him is obedience to God. Muhammad combined the two functions. He had not only to regulate the ritual, frame religious ordinances, direct the worship of his followers, but he had also to attend to their material wants, to guide their political destiny.

And what Prophet of Israel from Samuel to Isaiah was not a maker of kings and constitution? At Mecca his sphere of activity was necessarily narrow and confined—at Medina, the slow march of events added to his prophetic office the arduous duties of the head of a State. It was not a purely ideal code of ethics and morals that he was called upon to administer, but a code workable in daily life and in conformity with the existing moral standard of the age and the people among whom he lived.

He would have failed most egregiously if he had dealt with the political problems in the spirit of a visionary, in the fashion of an idealist. Take, for instance, his attitude towards the Jews. Could we, in the light of the fact that we do know, find fault with him for his attitude towards them? Modern statemanship would, perhaps, have taken a far less merciful view than the Prophet did. He tried his utmost to placate them, but they would not be placated. They would not even remain neutral, but they took up an attitude of positive, aggressive hostility. They formed alliances with his enemies, and they even secretly helped them. Was he to let them alone to destroy what he was painfully and laboriously building up?

MUHAMMAD : A BLESSING TO MANKIND

No statesmanship would have permitted or indicated any course other than the one adopted by Muhammad.

Take again his triumphal entry into Mecca. What a glorious instance of forbearance ! Arabia lay prostrate at his feet, and Mecca, the stronghold of opposition, was entirely at his mercy. Did he, then, show a spirit of revenge ? And could he not, if he had so willed, have cut off the heads of every one, those implacable enemies of his, who gave him no quarter, who forced him to leave his native land to seek shelter elsewhere, who held him up to scorn and ridicule, who persecuted him with a rancour and bitterness which was at once cruel, fierce and heart-rending.

But the personal element never entered into his actions—not once. He rejected every token of personal homage, and when the haughty chiefs of the Quraishites appeared before him, he asked :—"What can you expect at my hands." "Mercy, O generous brother !" was the supplication. "Be it so, you are free," he exclaimed. His simplicity, his humanity, his frugality, his firmness in adversity, his meekness in power, his forbearance, his earnestness, his steadfastness, his humility in greatness, his anxious care for animals, his passionate love for children, his unbending sense of fairness and justice—is there another instance in the history of the world where we have the assemblage of all these virtues woven into one character ?

Muhammad set a shining example to his people. His character was pure and stainless. His house, his dress, his food—they were characterised by a rare simplicity. So unpretentious was he that he would receive from his companions no special mark of reverence, nor would he accept any service from his slave for work which he could do himself. Often and often was he seen in the market purchasing provisions ; often and often was he seen mending his clothes* in his room, or milking a goat in his courtyard. He was accessible to all and at all times. He visited the sick and was full of sympathy for all. Unlimited was his benevolence and generosity, as also was his anxiety for the welfare of the community. Despite innumerable presents, which from all quarters unceasingly poured in for him, he left very little behind, and even that little he regarded as State property.

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But if Muhammad as a man, stands as a peak of humanity, his work, no less, is strong with the strength of immortality. True, the political power of Islam has ebbed away, but its spiritual power is as young and vigorous to-day as it was when first launched on its wonderful, world-wide career. In India, in Africa, in China the Muslim missionaries have won laurels. They have succeeded signally and succeeded where Christianity, with all its wealth and organisation, has failed most hopelessly. But its success has been confined not only to backward races. Has it not secured proselytes even in cultured Europe?

And what is the secret of its success? The secret consists in its remarkable freedom from the fetters of embarrassing ritual and bewildering articles of faith. Islam is the simplest of all revealed religions, and it is, therefore, a religion compatible with the highest as well as the lowest grade of civilization. Its simplicity is attractive and appealing alike to the man in the street as to the philosopher in the closet. Goethe fell into raptures over the Qur-án and Gibbon saw in it a glorious testimony to the unity of God. Belief in one God and belief in Muhammad as the Prophet of God : such is the quintessence of our faith. This theoretical belief, however, is allied with a principle of infinite grace and wisdom ; namely, that it is not mere faith in the theoretical belief, but purity of life and honesty of purpose, sympathy with the afflicted, and love of our fellow beings ; it is the conjunction of the two, the theoretical and the practical, which ensures salvation. This is a lesson which must needs be taught, if we would make ourselves worthy of the great faith we profess.

The practical, after all, is more important than the theoretical. It is this side of religion which Islam has brought clearly to light, and it is this side which we must now cultivate more and more, if we would win the prizes

MUHAMMAD : A BLESSING TO MANKIND

of life and come out triumphant in the terrible struggle for existence which is the most distressing feature of our modern civilization. Says Pierre Loti :—

Among us Europeans it is commonly accepted as a proven fact that Islam is merely a religion of obscurantism, bringing in its train the stagnation of nations, and hampering them on that march to the unknown which we call "Progress." Yet such an attitude shows not only an absolute ignorance of the teaching of the Prophet, but a blind forgetfulness of the evidence of history. The Islam of the earlier centuries evolved and progressed with the nations, and the stimulus it gave to men in the reign of the ancient Caliphs is beyond all question. To impute to it the present decadence of the Muslim world is altogether too puerile. The truth is that nations have their day, and to a period of glorious splendour succeeds a time of lassitude and slumber. It is a law of nature. And then one day some danger threatens them, stirs them from their torpor and they awake. This immobility of the countries of the Crescent was once dear to me. If the end is to pass through life with the minimum of suffering, disdaining all vain striving, and to die entranced by radiant hopes, the Orientals are the only wise men. But now that greedy nations beset them on all sides, their dreaming is no longer possible. They must awake, alas !

What did Muhammad bring to the world, wherein lies his immortal service to humanity ?

To a people steeped in the grossest form of fetishism he brought a pure and uncompromising monotheism,—belief in the One God, the Creator of the Universe. And, indeed, this gift was meant for the whole of mankind. It is an error to suppose, as it has been supposed by some European writers, that originally Islam was meant for Arabia and his own people alone. The Sura Fatiha speaks of the Lord of the Universe, and it is impossible to imagine that the Lord of the Universe ever intended His light for the guidance and illuminations of only a small fraction of humanity. There is not one single passage in the Qur-án which warrants the conclusion that Islam was addressed to the Arabs only. Facts, indeed, point the other way. To us, monotheism might seem commonplace enough, but it was not so when Muhammad delivered it to the world. By the side of the corrupting religion of the Arabs and the strange perversions of Christianity, it shone with all the

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lustre and brilliance of a newly-discovered truth. To preach monotheism, such as that of Islam, to a world such as that in which Muhammad lived, was an instance of rare courage and heroism, and it was a work which could never have succeeded without light, help and Divine support. Its success, more than anything else, is a convincing proof of its Divine origin. But with this most valued gift he bestowed another of no less importance in the history of human belief and human morals. He awakened in man the idea of responsibility to his Creator. To the pre-Islam Arab it was the immediate present which was of importance and of real consequence. He cared not for the past, nor did he show any interest in the future. His life was one continual orgy, undisturbed by any serious thought, or unrelieved by any care for the morrow. Muhammad opened the eyes of humanity to the fact that man, as a rational being endowed with the gift of understanding, was a responsible being, fully accountable to the Almighty for his deeds and misdeeds. What a tremendous step forward this meant for mankind ! It is impossible for us fully to realise the importance of this doctrine, this article of faith. Man, henceforward, became a moral being. He was so to speak, born again, and born with a conscience,—that inward judge whose vigilance none can evade, and from whose judgment there is no escape.

Nor can we forget the sublime idea of brotherhood in faith which Muhammad, for the first time, introduced into the world. All Muslims were brothers. There was to be no wall of division, no difference founded on the score of nationality, and no distinction begotten of colour. Islam truly realised “ the Parliament of men, the federation of the world.” It was a splendid achievement. It was a beautiful ideal to aim at, to strive for, to live up to. For the Muslim the whole world was his home, entire humanity his kinsmen.

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This broad and liberal doctrine found its counterpart in the splendid democracy which Islam set up. The head of the State and the Church was a popular nominee with very clear duties and very distinct obligations.

Read the inaugural speeches of Abū Bakr and Yazeed III, documents whose value is inestimable on a gold basis. Nothing like it has ever been realised in the East, and Europe itself has hardly any example to cite of so perfect democracy as was the one established by Islam. True, it was short-lived, but its existence, however brief, is a crowning glory to Islam.

A new view was opened, a fresh direction was given, a new starting-point was made—the whole past was obliterated, a new Arabia arose, and a new Arabian nationality was summoned into existence to take its place in the history of the world, and to hold aloft the torch of monotheism to guide erring humanity to the path of the true faith.

Glory to Muhammad for the light and illumination, for the joy and comfort and consolation which he brought to the sad suffering humanity.

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THE CHATEAU LAURIER,
OTTAWA.

DEAR MR. ABDUL MAJID,

Having heard that there were many Syrians here in Ottawa, I was most anxious to know something about them, and especially about our Muslim Brethren. Well, I was fortunate to find them out, and as soon as I knew one of them, I came to know all. The population of the Syrians here is about 15,000, of which ten per cent. are Muslims, the rest are Jews and Christians.

Now I want to tell you something about the condition of the Muslims here. They are only ten per cent. of the Syrian population, and as it would appear, their number being not large, they have no Mosque, though the Christians and Jews have their own places of worship. However, they try their best to keep up to their Muslim customs, or rather the Syrian customs, for instance, their girls are

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not allowed to smoke, dance, or drink, or freely intermingle with the opposite sex. Even many of the non-Muslim Syrians observe these restrictions. The Syrian girls have their own clubs where they meet each other. In the club they are not allowed to speak the English or French language, but only Arabic, or they are fined 25 cents. This is done to keep the old language going; even their little children know Arabic, though they are born and brought up here, many of them are taught to read and write Arabic by their parents, especially the Holy Qur-án and prayers. However, these children know less than their parents do; and it is not too much to assume, that if this process continued, our blessed religion will in time to come be completely lost. May God save them! *Amen!* Just now they love their religion, and seem very eager to know much of the Muslim world. When I suggested to them that I could send them a magazine, *The Islamic Review*, they expressed their gratitude, saying "We would love to know more about this religion of ours, as we, being completely cut off from the Muslim World, are apt to know less and less, and so lose hold of the religion altogether, whereas this Review will keep us in touch with the Muslims. After reading it, we will give it to some other Muslim friends who will also appreciate it, and thus we will not think ourselves completely cut off."

Now I am trying to find some more Muslims, in Canada and the States, and to stir their feelings towards our religion which may lie dormant.

Another point I want to bring to your notice is that they do not intermarry here even among the different classes of Syrians.

Yours sincerely,
H. A. HAROON.

TRINIDAD.
B. W. I.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
DEAR SIR AND BROTHER IN FAITH,

Assalamo Alaikum.

On Friday, the 5th of August, I was converted and became a member of the great world-wide religious fraternity of Islam. Prior to my conversion I followed Christianity as a unit of the Roman Catholic persuasion; but owing to the ritualism practised and the dogmatism imposed, coupled with, what I may with justice term, its Pantheon of lesser Deities (The Calendar of Saints), I found myself seeking another avenue for my religious expression. Protestantism, Methodism and the minor Christian sects drove me into a nebulous state, and I became apathetic as far as religion was concerned. But the innate urge to worship God truthfully goaded me, and I applied myself to the study of Christian metaphysics. In

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metaphysical Christianity I found some solace, but transcendentalism often conflicts with logic, and I needed something rational. Fortunately I came in contact with Mr. Abdul Rahman and some other Muslim gentlemen who, upon my asking, readily placed all Islamic literature available at my disposal. Incidentally I became deeply impressed with the tenets of Islam. I diligently studied Islam and compared its teachings with those taught to me formerly, and finally arrived at the blessed conclusion that the Religion preached by The Holy Prophet Muhammad (may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him!) is the only one which stands out prominently, as connotative of the marvellous grandeur of God and one which satisfies the spiritual craving of intellectual humanity.

Thus, Sir, to-day, all praise to Allah, I can glory in being a Muslim.

Yours in Faith,

ABU BAKR BEAUMONT-BENJAMIN,

(formerly Roderick Leofric Beaumont-Benjamin.)

DENVER,
COL. U. S. A.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING, ENGLAND.
DEAR SIR,

I have been reading the *Islamic Review*, which I find at the Denver Public Library, for some time now. I find it to be intensely interesting and instructive.

My ideas of Islam previous to my contact with the *Islamic Review* were limited, and for the most part erroneous.

The thing about Islam that appeals to me as portrayed by the *Review* is that it is so simple and reasonable, uncluttered as it is by a lot of saints, dogma and ritual.

Though I am a member of the Anglican Church, I was not raised in the Church, but became a member after I was twenty years of age. I have received, and still do, much comfort from my Church, but cannot agree with it on many points of faith and dogma.

Not only am I interested in Islam myself, but a friend of mine, a young coloured boy of about eighteen years of age, has become interested. He is a Roman Catholic, raised in the Church from infancy. It would not surprise me if he should embrace the Islamic faith. As for myself I believe that Islam offers a more satisfactory solution to the problems of our modern civilization than does Christianity. Therefore, I am sure that there are many people in this country who would embrace Islam if they could be brought in contact with it. They are not satisfied with Christianity as it is taught and practised.

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We would like some more literature. If you have anything of a special interest for women, please send it, as I should like to give it to my wife.

Yours truly,
WINTHROP KIMBALL.

PENNAR,
PEMBROKE DOCK.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
DEAR SIR,

Many grateful thanks for your kind attention and literature which have been such a great enlightenment to me who has been in despair of enjoying the best of life.

I am returning, after deepest and earnest heart-searching, the 'Declaration Form,' which you have kindly sent me. I don't know whether it is filled incorrectly. If it is not, I will be delighted to fill in another.

Perhaps a brief account of my previous experience may help you to understand more fully what I have been. Aged, 30 years, an ex-soldier; I had been doing local preaching for the last four years until I realized that I could not believe in what I was preaching, i.e., I seemed to form a different idea of what Life here, and in the hereafter meant, and after a rigid self-examination found out the Truth. I wish I had done so years ago, I could then have enjoyed the essence of enlightenment. However, I must be thankful to God that I am no more in ignorance. Rest assured, I shall truly endeavour to spread the sublime truth which has come to me.

Thanking you for your past helps and hoping to receive the same in future.

Yours faithfully,
EARNEST W. BLACKMORE.

ARUNDLE STREET,
CAPE TOWN.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
DEAR SIR,

My great desire is to be thoroughly acquainted with the fundamental principles of Islam. The language which I read and understand best is English and I find it very trying to concentrate my mind on the articles pertaining to the faith of Islam. In August of the year 1932 it will be twelve months that I have been a

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convert from Christianity. I wish to attain the goal of my spiritual salvation by knowing every aspect of Islam from its original sources that would prove beneficial to myself, and others, who may be in the same category as I am. You can picture the predicament I am in and therefore hope that you will instruct me by giving me your suggestions and instructions, which I'll gladly follow.

Yours fraternally,
MUSTAPHA WIENER.

THE EDITOR,
THE ISLAMIC REVIEW.

BATLEY ROAD,
WAKEFIELD.

DEAR SIR,

I have just read a copy of the *Islamic Review*. During my stay in Egypt, etc., I became sympathetically interested almost in spite of myself. *This interest has stayed with me, but I have, until I saw the Review, seen no channel for obtaining information.*

I believe you supply literature on the subject, and I should be glad to have some to study at more length, or any information you can give me, confidentially.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN W. BEAUMONT.

PORTSEA, PORTSMOUTH.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

Peace be unto you.

You asked me in your letter, which I received yesterday, to tell you what led to my seeking to be numbered with the Brethren of Islam. Well, really it has been a very gradual process. I served in the Royal Navy for a period of eighteen years, and was stationed at a great many places abroad where I frequently heard the call to prayer from the various Mosques—particularly in Constantinople and in some of the towns in North Africa, where I spent 14 days' holiday after an illness.

I was always struck by the devout attention at prayer-time shown by the worshippers entering their Mosque, much different from those of my own former church. Then, four months ago, one of my friends returned to England, on leave, and he was so enthusiastic about the Muslim Faith that I was deeply impressed and wrote to you for some books on the subject, which you so kindly supplied. After reading those books and purchasing an English translation of the Qur-án in a second-hand book-shop, I formed the opinion that to be a Muslim was the greatest blessing to be desired on the earth. The faith of Islam is broad-minded, clean, pure, sent by God Himself or otherwise it would never have prospered as it has done.

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You have probably noted by my address and other facts that I am a working classman, therefore my means are not sufficiently large to give a great deal in alms, but I shall, according to my income, send you 5 per cent. of my total income each quarter—October, January, April and July.

The Qur-án which I have got is translated by the Rev. J. M. Rodwell. The translation, I believe, is correct, but the suras are mixed, and his comment in small print, shows a narrow mind and prejudice against our Blessed Prophet.

Yours fraternally,
EARNEST J. BROMLEY.

PRECIOUS GEMS.

Verily there are rewards for our doing good to quadrupeds, and for giving them water to drink. There are rewards for benefiting every animal having a moist liver.

* * * * *

And if a man abuses you and exposes your vice which is known to him, then do not expose any which you know in him.

* * * * *

Convey to others none of my words, except those you know for a certainty.

* * * * *

Islam consists in cherishing the profoundest respect for Divine Commandments, and extending sympathy to His creatures.

* * * * *

Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes.

* * * * *

God says : “ O Man, only follow my laws, and you shall become like myself.

* * * * *

Whoever loves to me Allah, Allah loves to meet him.

MUHAMMAD.

THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION AND LITERARY TRUST.

Balance Sheet for the year ending April 1932.

LIABILITIES.	Rs.	a.	p.	ASSETS.	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Capital Account of the Trust.	81,242	3	4	<i>Reserve Fund.</i>						
Loan taken from Reserve Fund.	1,000	0	0	Fixed Deposits with Llyods Bank, Ltd., Lahore.				40,390	0	0
Overdrawal from the Bank.	633	3	8	<i>Investments.</i>						
				4% Government Loan Bond for 1960-70 re Mangrol Donation.				20,000	0	0
				<i>Cash in Bank.</i>						
				Savings Bank Account.				457	5	6
				<i>Cash in hand.</i>						
				Postage Stamps ..				21	4	9
				Stationery ..				48	0	0
				<i>Stock of Books.</i>						
				In India ..	5,022	0	0			
				In England ..	3,973	11	5	8,995	11	5
				<i>Furniture.</i>						
				In India ..	285	0	0			
				In England ..	7,500	0	0	7,785	0	0
				Advance recoverable				5,178	1	4
	82,875	7	0					82,875	7	0

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

The books and vouchers have been checked.

The bank balances, both in the Current and in the Savings Bank accounts, have been verified and reconciliation statements prepared.

Out of the Fixed Deposit receipts for Rs. 40,390 a receipt for Rs. 25,000 has been produced. The Fixed Deposit receipt for Rs. 6,390 has been encashed during July 1932. This forms a loan from the Reserve Fund to Current Account and its proceeds placed in Current Account to meet current expenditure. The receipt for the remaining amount, viz., Rs. 9,000, is in the custody of the Bank as security against overdrawals which has a constant flow.

The existence of Loan Bonds for Rs. 20,000 with the Secretary has been verified. The figures for furniture are approximate.

ABDUL HAMID BUTT,

Auditor.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

THE HOLY QUR-ÂN AND ITS INTRODUCTION. INTRODUCTION.

BY KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DÏN.

(Continued from Vol. XX, page 380.)

CHAPTER VII.

THE OPENING CHAPTER OF THE QUR-ÂN.

All submission (praise and thanksgiving) is for *Allah*—the Creator and Maintainer of the worlds; The Beneficent (in giving free gifts); the Most Merciful (in giving manifold rewards for every good action). The Owner of the time of requittal. Thee do we serve and to Thee do we look for help (as the last resort). Guide us on the right path—the path of those who are blessed: not of those who have invited Thy wrath, and the misled.

What a wonderful piece of literary composition! What a miracle in language! Seven short verses only, but comprehensive enough to include the whole of the Qur-ân, and called, for this reason, the Mother of the Book; few words, but each word equivalent to a volume, pregnant with truths to serve as our surest guides on all planes—physical, social, economical, intellectual, moral and spiritual.

At the very outset it speaks of *Allah*, the Name given to God by the Arabs, together with four other Attributive Names which lead us to a belief in the existence of the Deity, based on intelligence and reason; referring indeed even to quite recent discoveries of science which distinctly tend to promote such belief. These Names not only do away with all those Attributes of Divinity current in other religions, Attributes which are repugnant to reason and intelligence, but make of *Allah* our Guide and Model in the pursuits of everyday life. It is clear that if Some One is the Author of this beautiful and beneficent universe He is the One who should be

INTRODUCTION TO HOLY QUR-ÂN

followed by us in every way. In short, the chapter is a summary of the whole Qur-ân. It gives us a code of life, a code wide enough to bring within its purview all that is necessary for human thought and action in the way of advancement. It presents a religious creed to which no one who has studied Nature and its phenomenon with care and observation can take exception! To whatever creed or class we may belong, we need a code of life, and such a code, in its most perfect form, will be found in these verses.

Humanity could not make even the semblance of progress while it believed that the universe was a haphazard product, the result of mere chance. To-day we realize that the world was designed for our use and benefit, and it is our belief in such a design that urges us to research in its various avenues. But the very idea of design leads us to believe in the existence of a Designer, and next, in the fixed nature of the ways which He has adopted in working out His scheme. This would facilitate our task of research. The Qur-ân has, when it is a case of essential verities, never left us to the mercy of hypothesis or surmises, but gives cogent reasons to establish the validity of each. It comes, therefore, with strong arguments for the existence of the Designer, but shows us also that it is to our own interest to cultivate a belief in the Deity. The history of progress begins with our acceptance of the fact that there exist laws ruling everything in Nature. It is for us to discover these laws and through them achieve wonders in the way of progress. The very idea of law creates belief in the Law-Giver, and so, we cannot make any progress unless we believe in the existence of the Supreme Being.

The world has never been free from atheism. It is more the wrong conception of Divine Attributes than the existence of the Lord itself that gives birth to scepticism.

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We are asked to hold beliefs by some persuasions, the very acceptance of which is an insult to our intelligence, otherwise no one can take exception to the First Intelligent Cause who decidedly works in the universe all around. Nature exhibits some morals that appear to belong to an Intelligent Being, we must look to the observance of these laws in the Universe, particularly those affecting our creation and sustenance. We would willingly follow them if they constitute a religion just as we follow the will of a person, out of gratitude, if we are under his obligation in some way. The Qur-án came with this Gospel, and it therefore serves as a real consolation to the secular church.

It, however, may be rightly asked that how can we follow in the ways of the Lord when we do not believe in His existence. Though Science in its initial stages created an atheistic bent of mind, but it has now taken a new turn. It is more an advocate of Divine existence than otherwise. The world has never been free from atheism, and though it had existed from all time, yet no sacred Book, until the coming of Islam, had tried to refute it. Buddhist literature makes no mention of the Deity. Other books, though devoted to Him, give no reasons to prove His existence. Therefore in these circumstances it was natural that scientific mind should have sown the seeds of atheism. It came to its full growth in the first half of the last century, but received a severe check when it became known that scientific research had begun to discover certain laws at work in nature. It was also observed that though these were apparently at conflict yet, as often as not, they all served the one end. "Monism" was the name that was given to the phenomenon of harmony in the working of this heterogeneous mass. Further exploration revealed in nature Intellect, Power, Rule and Design, and ultimately the evolutionary principles at work in the

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Universe. This led men to believe in the existence of One Great Mind working behind the scene Who furthered the great Scheme. Thus the idea of God became established but in a most hazy manner, inasmuch as some were found to contend that these things could just as well be the inherent qualities of matter exhibiting themselves in the course of its development without the agency of any Mind. The Qur-án, however, dealt with the subject from an angle which made it impossible for any sceptic to honestly disbelieve in the Mind. The Book did not only lay down logical premises and then deduce inferences wherewith to preach Divinity, since this method, scholarly and precise as it might be, would not suit every type of intellect ; but it also spoke directly of God and referred to such phenomenon in nature as were too apparent to leave any doubt concerning Him. The Book adopted various ways of achieving this purpose, but I would speak here only of such things out of many, which also comprehended the above-mentioned verities as discovered by Science.

The Rule of Law obtaining in the world is repeatedly alluded to in the Book, and has been described in the clearest terms as a work of God. " Everything in heaven and in earth," the Book says, " submits to Him voluntarily and involuntarily."¹ No one can fail to observe that things in Nature are, as it were, bound to pursue a course prescribed for them by Some One Who has been styled *Allah* in the Qur-án. By way of illustration it refers to the mightiest things and every other luminary moving in the ethereal firmament as being bound with the chains of Law ² as being unable to swerve an inch from the orbit of revolution allotted to them. Though moving very near to each other, they never come in each other's way. This, the Book says, is under the decree of the Lord Who is All-Mighty and All-Knowledge.³ The Book also defines

¹ 3 : 82.

² 36 : 38.

³ 36 : 38.

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the time when this Rule began. No sooner were the things necessary for their further development created, than the Law was at once ordained to guide them.¹

Evolution.—The Holy Qur-án, as I observed elsewhere, is the first book that draws our attention to the principle of Evolution at work in the creation of all things. There was nothing haphazard about it, any question of things coming into existence suddenly of their own accord, as it were, hardly arises. There was first a design; then arrangement of original things before their combination; next, they were put in the course which they had to follow through several stages of development till they reach the final goal. The Book also spoke of the various faculties reposed in the original ingredients, which were disclosed gradually in the course of Evolution. It established the working of a ground scheme under the ever vigilant eye of its Maker, through thousands of years in some cases, in order to bring things to their final fruition. The Holy Book ascribed all this to the One Great God.²

Monism.—The discovery of Monism had to wait for some fifty years before the idea of God dawned on men of science. It was the discovery of the mind working in Nature which, together with belief in Monism, established Monotheism. But the Qur-án spoke, at the same time, of the Great Designer, wherever it referred to Monism; which was declared to be a part of the scheme. The Book, for instance, announces that all that is in the heaven and the earth is subservient to man.³ From the mightiest Sun⁴ down to the insignificant atom, everything is created to serve one main object: the service of man. How could this grand purpose be attained if there were more than one hand to work it out? Not even the magination of all the poets could depict or suggest harmony in the ancient deities. The divinities in Greek or Indian mythology

¹ 25 : 1.

² 20 : 52 ; 80 : 19 ; 27-32.

³ 45 : 15.

⁴ 14 : 23—33.

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had always some apple of discord to set them by the ears. Again, the Book refers to various other phenomena in Nature that work apart from each other in different spheres which nevertheless converge to the same one end—the service of man. In chapter 2, verse 164, it cites the coming of the rain, which helps us in the production of crops, and traces its origin from the very beginning when the heavens and the earth were created. The latter was made to stand on its axis at a certain angle, and this caused the alternation of day and night. From the torrid regions of the Earth water evaporated upwards, and when cold winds came to occupy the vacuum thus made, the vapours became condensed into clouds which were spread about by the blowing of the winds. These clouds came in the form of rain to fertilize the earth everywhere. The same blowing of winds, on the other hand, helped the navigation on the sea, which, too, produced its treasures for our profit. Thus we find several laws working in spheres far distant from each other to achieve these results. The Laws often conflict in their functions, but for all that they are tending to the same end. This is the conclusion as stated in verse 163 : “ Your God is one God—the Beneficent and the Merciful.” Thus Monism and oneness of design which should be spoken of as it were in one breath, establish Monotheism in an unassailable manner.

The Book refers to complimentary and supplementary relations existing between things in Nature, and makes mention of the purposes for which they have been created ; their propriety, fitness and to the perfection of their fashioning. These four features may be possessed by matter, but it cannot display them unless it comes under the operation of the Mind. The Qur-ân always speaks of them as instruments to work out some deliberate design. Let me refer to water again in this regard. By means of water

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our nourishment comes from Heaven, and that nourishment is one of its chief purposes. It travels thousands of miles towards a new sphere of action—the Earth which is ready to receive it in the most proper manner for the purpose. How can an inanimate thing become complimentary to another thing from which it is far apart, while that other thing supplements the latter's shortcomings in producing the harvest, unless some Mind intends that this should be so. The water comes in a most appropriate form, not in a huge volume, as in the case of floods when it would wash the Earth of all seeds and gravel which is so necessary for cultivation, but gently dropping, since moisture is the chief requisite for growth of verdure, and water cannot moisten clay unless it comes in the form of drops which trickle down gently in its recesses, and the Earth, on the other hand, cannot retain the moisture if its volume be ponderous.

Perfection.—Perfection is observable everywhere. Everything in Nature is free from defect and flaw; and contains nothing which is evil. Even man with all his inordinancy was born with a sinless nature. Nevertheless, perfection in things is no mere chance. It is something designed. Had things reached their final stage as a direct growth from their origin, one might perhaps think otherwise, but a most complicated process is to be observed in Nature before things attain perfection. No sooner do incipient specks emanate than they come under a long series of collocations specializing new ingredients at each stage of their journey to the goal. Innumerable things are blended together to secure perfection. It has already been shown that ingredients cannot combine with each other unless they come under the control of a Mind. The phenomenon presents a very Mighty and Wise Law extending to the limits of the Universe, which knows not only the whereabouts of the original ingredients, but also

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wields power over them to bring them to the required place so that they may mix with other ingredients. They combine in prescribed proportion and follow a given course. If such things may be taken as an index of the Mind of their Maker, He must be pure of evil and imperfection, and possess all that is good. Science tells us the same regarding the course which things pursue in order to become perfect. The Holy Book refers to these prominent features in the following verses :—

Whatever is in the heaven and whatever is in the earth declares the *Tasbih* (glorification) of *Allah*, the King, the Pure, the Mighty, the Wise.¹

We also read the same in 59 : 1—24 and 51 : 1. On another occasion the Book says :—

Whatever is in the heaven and whatever is in the earth declares the *Tasbih* (glorification) of *Allah* ; to Him belongs the Kingdom and to Him is due all *Hamd* (praise) and He has power over all things.

The current translation of *Tasbih* and *Hamd* “ glorification ” and “ praise ” is not adequate, as the English words do not convey the real significance of the words. *Tasbih* means to declare that *Allah* is free from all evil and error, *Hamd* that He possesses all that is good. No one can deny the truth of these verses as Science will confirm it word for word. They are sufficient to prove the working of the Mind on matter in creating the cosmos. The Book also refers to four other functions of the Mind observable in the creation of everything. They are *Takhliq*, *Taswiyah*, *Taqdir* and *Hidayat*, which again cannot adequately be rendered into English. I will, therefore, explain them. *Takhliq* is the infinitive of *Khalq* which generally means creation. But it signifies three other different functions, namely, the shaping, the combining and fixing the proportions into which incipient things have to combine in order to create new things. In other words, the work of creation synchronizes with these three things,

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though they, in a way, precede creation. Combination is the first thing in origination, when shape and proportion are designed. It creates something which in its turn combines with other created things. So the process of combination and creation continues until things take their designed shape at their final development on the earth. Combination is the first process in creation, coming, as it does, immediately after Emanation. But matter itself cannot combine unless it comes under the operation of some Mind. Electricity, for instance, is created when a metal combines with an acid. Both the elements are in our possession, but they themselves cannot mix with each other unless we combine them for the purpose. How can electricity come into existence in the clouds if there is no Mind to combine the elements in the upper regions? Similarly, hydrogen and oxygen combined become water. We have got them both here, but they never combine with each other. How wonderful of the Qur-án to refer to the very action of *Khalq*, i.e., combination when speaking of the existence of God.

Taswiyah means the reposing of the various faculties in the ingredients of things which disclose them in the various stages of evolution through which they pass before their final development. *Tagdir* is the prescribing of laws which rule creation in the various stages.

Hidayat means guidance to things for observing the proportion in which they have to mix and the way they have to pursue in the evolutionary course from the beginning to the end. These four functions clearly prove the existence of Mind. They work in Nature. They cannot be the qualities of Matter. In short, the said four Names act as the best guide in building up life, so that it may excel physically, morally and spiritually.

Allah.—The word *Allah* is very eloquent in the whole religious literature of the world. The word has, from

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the very beginning, been used by the Arabs as a proper name signifying the Deity. Even in the Days of Ignorance, when they practised the worst type of polytheism, the Arabs never applied this sacred Name to any other object of adoration. They worshipped different gods from time to time, but always reserved the name of *Allah* for the One, Whom they regarded as a Spirit, presiding, as it were, over the Arab pantheon. In this respect the holy word differs from all like words in any other language that stand for God. They may be used as common names to be applied to God as well as to things, or persons other than God. For instance, *God* in English, *Khudawand* in Persian, *Sahibji* in Panjabi, *Phia* in Burmese, etc., etc., are often used for God, but they also denote various objects of adoration, as well as men of rank and position, but *Allah* is a species of proper name. It may be taken as meaningless in itself, as some grammarians hold, but like other proper names, it possesses certain Attributes. These verses speak of four, but their significance brings within their scope the other 96 Attributes given in the Qur-ân. It should not, however, be forgotten that this sacred list in the Qur-ân is in no sense exhaustive. The Lord possesses many other qualities that stand far beyond number and imagination. These hundred Names are such as can be read in the pages of Nature. We can perceive them and, to a certain extent, imitate them. In this sense we have been spoken of as prototypes of God and we have been asked to assume His colours and imbue ourselves with the Divine character, otherwise even the working of these Qur-ânic Names baffles our ingenuity. Take an instance. *Al-Musawwir*, The Fashioner, is one of His Attributes. We also fashion things in our small way, but can we understand, even dimly, His workmanship in fashioning the various things in their embryonic condition ?

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My surprise knows no bounds when I think of the Divine Economy in the selection of these Names for our contemplation. Not only do they serve the purpose of theology, but they are comprehensive enough to bring within their scope all that is needed to guide us through all conceivable avenues of human activity, and perfect our civilization. They are our guide in mundane affairs, in ethics, in economics, in morals and in spiritualities.

Whatever branch of life we may enter upon, we find in these Names the surest of guidance. We may entertain any belief or belong to any persuasion we cannot dispense with good character and actions. We therefore must receive from the Muslim formula of faith our inspiration for them. We must keep *Allah*—God in the Qur-án—always before our eyes. We should remember His Attributes as given in the Qur-án through our actions. For this reason we find hardly any page in the Book that does not make mention of the Lord.

There is, however, another reason for it. We have been declared in the Qur-án as the Viceregent of God on the earth. Nature discloses the best of civilization. If it is the work of God we can as well command the highest progress if we represent Him in a proper manner. But how can we do so unless we appear in His colours. The Holy Book, therefore, declares it to be our religion. This also explains why the Book insists upon our belief in the Oneness of God. We cannot serve two masters nor act as lieutenant of the two Rulers. Besides, if the perfection of our character lies in our imitation of God's Attributes how can we afford to be polytheist. We, no doubt, have passed the days of ignorance when we use to bow down before such effigies as we made with our own hands but the worst type of polytheism according to Qur-anic teachings lies in obeying our low behests. They lead us to do what is contrary to the requirements of these Excellent Names.

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How can we win favour with the Lord with such tendencies? If Divine forgiveness depends on our repentance from misdeeds—the fruits of polytheism as explained here—there then its follower cannot claim it. The Book asks us to approach our Lord through these Names, which means that we cannot obtain any audience with Him if our actions deviate from the requirements of the Names. But in doing so, we shall be doing all that is needed to perfect our progress. What a wonderful arduous task has the Book come to perform? It comes to give us a religion, but it makes our progress to be our religion. It asks us to worship God, but it proposes that we should adore Him by following such of His Names as will perfect our civilization. Let the Moralists on one side and the people of culture and progress on the other contemplate on these Qur-ânic Names, and see if they can find a better code of life.

The Book properly calls these Attributes Excellent Names, thus negating the association of God with any form of evil. It is a blasphemy even to imagine that ‘God’ is the author of evil. Evil is born when we abuse a thing which is meant for good. Evil is the misapplication of things that are really good. Similarly every Attribute that the Holy Book ascribes to God, can create evil if misused. For instance, we read of God as the Possessor of love. But love has got its wicked side too, if we yield to the dictates of lust. God is Merciful. But mercy becomes murder in the words of Shakespeare when we forgive those who kill others. He is the All-Giver. But His blessings will create laziness and sloth, if they are showered undeservedly, and the same may be said concerning other Attributes. It reminds me of Nietzsche’s Superman. According to him he who subjects others to his will and knows how to make others do what he wants, is the Superman. The conception is perhaps a beautiful one, but it suggests the idea of arrogance and self-will. A person may have a

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wrong angle of vision and so cause immense harm to society. Moreover, the philosopher's definition of 'Superman' is not exhaustive. We require other things to perfect our character. We find two Names in the Qur-ánic list of Divine Attributes which satisfy the best aspects of the Superman theory. They are *Al-Qahhar*¹ and *Al-Jabbar*.² Both the words have the same meanings but, with different shades. The Attributes signify a person who can bring others to subjection and compel them to do what he wishes. But it *must be for the good of the persons so compelled, which idea is wanting in the Superman conception*. But these are only two Attributes of the Qur-ánic Superman. There are 98 others. Islam has taken another precaution in the use of these Names. The prefix *Al* is always used before them in Muslim literature. *Al*, of course, is the definite article in Arabic, but in the case of the Attributes it suggests that they are to be taken in the best form.

(To be continued.)

SOME THOUGHTS ON POLITICS IN ISLAM

BY M. A. C. M. SALEH.

The meaning of the word politics has undergone such vast changes and its original significance has by now become almost completely obscured. The modern conception of politics warrants a wider application, and it is here to be noted that, apart from its general idea, Islam has given to the world quite a different interpretation. Ameer Ali says that "the Saracen's genius for government is intuitive, inborn and self-taught, not acquired." This is the inspiration drawn from the Holy Qur-án—a Message to humanity revealed by God to His Apostle Muhammad. Islam is a system of unification, political, if you will, having an ultimate spiritual background and

¹ 7 : 39 ; 13 : 16 ; 36 : 85 ; 39 : 4.

² 59 : 23.

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recognizing the worth of the individual. The spread of Islam and its gradual expansion resulted in the desire to deliver this Message—which every Muslim feels it obligatory to espouse as his one and only mission in life, since all human life is spiritual in its origin. On the other hand, Christianity first appeared as a species of a monastic order until Constantine tried it as a system of unification, and its failure as such compelled the Emperor Julian to return to the old gods of Rome.

The Unity of God is the key-note of Islam and its practice involves a system in which both temporal and spiritual aspects are indissolubly bound up. Hence an attempt to divorce religion from politics in Islam has no foundation. A Muslim who does not act in obedience to this doctrine virtually ceases to be within the fold of Islam ; for Islam, as a polity, aims at the practical achievement of its complete system of principles in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind, through the establishment of human organization. It enjoins loyalty to God and not to thrones. God in Islam is the spiritual basis of all life, and loyalty to God is man's ideal perfection. True to the words of the Muslim Gospel "And to those who exert We show our path," the contributions of the Muslims to the civilization of the world are a lasting monument to the glory of Islam. To whatever land Muslims migrated, they made it their home, and exerted their influence to the structural and cultural perfection of the country of their adoption.

Islam is unique and distinct, both in its claim and in its significance, from other religions. Confusion of thought arises only when it is understood in the light and by the standard of other religions, whose secular meaning suffers from a limitation in the scope of its application. But Islam is a single unanalysable reality, whose point of view varies according to the degree of understanding.

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The state is established to achieve the essence of oneness, which is equality, solidarity and freedom. It is a human organization so to transform these principles and bring them within the focus of space and time, that the forces of aspiration may lead to a definite realization.

The Prophet Muhammad, the Founder of Islam, says that "the whole of this earth is a mosque." To a thinking mind what a tremendous opportunity is here afforded for reaching the ideal political stage! The mosque is sacred; it is the cradle that fosters the equality and brotherhood of man; it offers the best medium through which man may come to love his fellow-man; its door is open to all, irrespective of any distinction, and the voice of the humblest individual is heeded; no one is denied or debarred because of his inferiority or lack of followers. It is the vastness of the field that enables an admixture of all to assemble in solemnity and sanctity and idealize life as the symbol of human perfection, whether it be moral, material or cultural. But all this immensity constitutes a scope for the spirit's self-realization, and the State, in Islam, is, therefore, an effort to realize the ultimate Truth of the spiritual life in the physical world.

The Turkish Nationalists have imbibed the idea of the separation of Church and State directly from European political influence. Primitive Christianity had nothing whatever to do with political or civil matters; when the State became Christian there promptly arose a conflict between the two. In Islam this can never occur, for Islam has been, from its very beginning, a civil society with a simple set of principles which worked wonders so far as they were acted upon, for they contained great potentialities both for expansion and inward development. The present day so-called Nationalist has no ground to stand on, seeing that Islam does not recognize dualism which is absolutely foreign to the spirit and letter

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of its teachings. Said Halim Pasha, who led the Religious Reform Society in Turkey, says that "there is no Turkish, Arabian, Persian or Indian Islam." Modern culture, based as it is on national egoism, is, according to this Grand Vizier, only another form of barbarism. It is the result of an over-developed individualism through which men satisfy their primitive instincts and inclinations. "Islam," says Khuda Bukhsh, "is neither nationalism nor imperialism, but a League of Nations."

Wherever the Muslims dwell, they have a duty to perform, for the neglect of which they are answerable to God. To help them in the fulfilment of this mission should be the endeavour of all lovers of Truth, that is to say, the embodiment of the ideal underlying all religions because that is the task of Islam. To say that Muslims are a group of communalists who narrow the issue as a wheel within a wheel is merely fantastic. It must be borne in mind that prejudice and ill-will can never hope to solve a question of this kind. A Muslim is one who bears a message of peace, brotherhood and equality to all mankind—a message which he must deliver from the pulpit of his mosque which comprises the whole universe. He cannot possibly ignore this fundamental duty if he wishes to remain a Muslim in word and belief as well as in practice. Anyone, therefore, denying access or attempting to prevent entry into such a faith does in fact check the progress of certain principles of an all-embracing nature, and such an action calls for wholesale condemnation. Happily, with the dawning of the twentieth century the outlook of humanity has changed, and affords better prospects for a universal religion like Islam. Islam with all its elasticity and catholicity can never afford to forfeit its fundamental right to stand for all that the world needs in its process of spiritual purification. Let not Muslims be denied the chance of establishing universal peace which is the highest ambition of cosmic consciousness.

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History indicates that the European Reformation was, in effect, a political movement which sought to remove the universal ethics of Christianity in Europe and put national ethics in their place. But Islam has retained its vital force of a universal character which cannot be bartered away for any imperfect system of European national ethics. Dr. Horton, Professor of Semitic Philology at the University of Bonn, says :—"The spirit of Islam is so broad that it is practically boundless. With the exception of a theistic idea alone it has assimilated all the attainable ideas of surrounding peoples, and given them its own peculiar direction of development." "Primitive Christianity," says Naumann, "attached no value to the preservation of the State Law, organization, production. It simply does not reflect on the conditions of human society." And he concludes, "Hence we either dare to aim at being without a State, and thus throwing ourselves into the arms of anarchy, or we decide to possess, alongside of our religious creed, a political creed as well." Religion and the State, ethics and politics are embodied in a single revelation of the Muslim Bible in the same way as in Plato's "Republic."

The aim of Islam is to provide a perfect basis upon which the final combination of humanity, with its adherents from a variety of mutually repellent races, rests, and then to transform this atomic aggregate into a self-consciousness of its own. It is for this reason that Islam regards commerce as a means of distributing culture, and the affinity of the cultural side has much to do with political aspect when the ultimate goal is spiritual. By looking at the Muslim structure from the stand point of social advantage or disadvantage to this or that country, the larger purpose which is being gradually worked out in the life of mankind as a whole is apt to be overlooked.

THE STATUS OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

“Next to the Romans,” says Von Kremer, “there is no other nation besides the Arabs which has its own system of law so carefully worked out.” The absence of direct representation in the legislatures of non-Muslim countries causes great hardship to the Muslims generally and to the judges in particular who have to adhere to what are called standard authorities. The net result is that people move and the law remains stationary. The Persian Constitution of 1906 has a Supervisory Committee of *Ulema* over the Majlis. The mere mechanism of Aristotle’s logic affect the ultimate principle of movement. The idealism of Europe is a perverted ego, preaching through mutually intolerant democracies the exhortation to exploit the poor for the preservation of the rich.

THE STATUS OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD.

A lecture delivered at Bishop James’ Sanctuary, Knights-bridge, London.

As we all know why we are assembled here this evening I will, without wasting any time in preliminaries, proceed at once to my subject. This is a Church, and the audience is supposed to consist of Christians. I am addressing a Christian audience as a Muslim on the subject of the status given to women by Islam. Now, as we are logical beings, things are understandable to us only in their relation to others. I would, therefore, ask the audience to recall to their minds the Biblical account of the Fall of Man, since the whole superstructure of Christian Theology is based on this theory. With all our hostility to Saint Paul and his doctrines, we Muslims give him the credit of being consistent when he wrote—“Adam was not deceived, but woman being deceived was in the transgression.” Consistent, too, were the Fathers

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of the Mediæval Church, when they hurled anathemas at woman, some calling her "the organ of the devil," others describing her as "the instrument which the Devil uses to gain possession of our souls." However ludicrous these notions may appear to us of the Twentieth Century, they are certainly quite in keeping with the theory of the Fall of Adam, as enunciated by Christianity.

We Muslims also believe in a theory of the Fall of Adam, and here is our theory, in the words of the Holy Book :

And We said, O Adam, dwell you and your wife in the garden, and eat from it a plenteous food wherever you wish, and do not approach this tree, for then you will be of the unjust : but *the Devil made them both fall from it*, and caused them to depart from that state in which they were.¹

Hence, it will be seen that the Islamic theory is that Adam and Eve were simultaneously and equally deceived by the Devil.

In this connection, I may state that the Qur-án repudiates the idea of woman being created from the rib of Man :—The Chapter entitled "The Women" begins with the words :—

O people, be careful of (your duty to) your Lord, who created you from a single being, and created its mate of the *same essence*.

The point is made clearer still elsewhere by the Qur-ánic verse :—

And Allah has made wives for you *from among yourselves*.²

This lays down that our wives are of the same kind and essence as ourselves. No clearer announcement of the equality of the sexes, from the *theological* point of view, has ever been made.

Coming to the social position of woman, let us once more refer to the Bible. "Neither was the Man created for the Woman, but the Woman for the Man," are the words we read in the New Testament. Again, "Let the

¹ 2 : 35, 36.

² 16 : 72.

THE STATUS OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

Woman learn in silence, with all subjection, for I suffer not," says St. Paul, "a woman to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." In contrast to these views on the rights of Woman as opposed to those of Man, we have the following in our Muslim Scripture Al-Qur-án, "And they (*i.e.*, women) have rights similar to those against them in a just manner,"¹ while the interdependence of Man and Woman is still more clearly asserted in the words: "They (your wives) are a garment for you, just as you are a garment for them."² What a beautiful metaphor is this! As garments hide our nakedness and such physical defects as need covering, so do husband and wife hide the animal weaknesses each of the other. Unfortunately the civilized man of modern times does not seem to realize that sexual passion in man is only the expression of the animal that is in him, and that the more it is hidden and controlled the better it is for his dignity as a rational being. Again, as our clothes give comfort to the body, so do husbands and wives find comfort in each other's company; and, lastly, the garment is the grace, the beauty, and the embellishment of the body; so, too, are wives and husbands, the one to the other.

"The treasures of the deep are not so precious as are the concealed comforts of a man, locked up in a woman's heart," cried a renowned English poet, and I make bold to say that this sentiment is only an echo of the Qur-án, and is in no way inspired by the Bible, for it is the Qur-án that says:—

And one of His (God's) signs is that He has created wives for you of your own species, *that ye may be comforted with them*, and has put love and tenderness between you.³

Such is the ideal of wifehood in Islam, and I have nowhere found a higher conception of the mutual relations of man and woman based upon love, affection and equality.

¹ 2: 23.

² 2: 187.

³ 30: 21.

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In this connection I cannot resist the temptation of quoting some sayings of our Prophet, that is, the Prophet Muhammad. He says :—

Women are the twin halves of men.

God commands us to treat women well, for they are our mothers, daughters and aunts.

The world and all things in the world are valuable, but the most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous woman.

A Muslim must not hate his wife, and if he be displeased with one bad quality in her, then let him be pleased with another which is good.

A virtuous wife is a man's best treasure.

He is the most perfect Muslim whose disposition is best ; and the best of you are they who are best disposed to their wives.

Fear God in regard to the treatment of your wives, for verily they are your helpers. You have taken them on the security of God, and made them lawful by the words of God.

I now come to the legal rights of women. Here, again, I can say, without any fear of contradiction, that Woman, *as Woman*, owes not a single right, not a single privilege, to Jesus, the Christ. It would not have mattered to Woman if he had never been born, for Jesus had not one single word to say in the matter of the "Rights of Woman." Rather his example is one of hatred and horror for Womanhood ; indeed, he could not afford to please his own mother. However much the Modern Church may claim that the rights enjoyed by woman of to-day are an evolution of the spirit of Jesus, it is becoming more and more common knowledge that, in reality, it is the spirit of the pagan laws that has been at work behind them. And who knows if it is not the influence of the laws of Muhammad working indirectly on the social mind ? Now, the rules laid down by the Qur-án in the matter of the legal rights of woman are clear, and comprehensive, and a

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decided improvement on any other contemporary system.

The Qur-án says :—

Men shall have a portion of what the parents and the near relatives leave, and women shall have a portion of what the near relatives leave, whether there is a little or much of it.¹

While listening to these words of the Qur-án, Christian men and women of England would do well to remember that the recognition of the right of woman to property is a comparatively recent phenomenon in this country, whereas Muslim women have been enjoying such right for 1,400 years. A woman is a distinct individuality in Islam, whether in her parents' house or in the house of her husband. She has her distinct personal name, and she is known by that name everywhere. On her marriage she retains her share of inheritance in the property of her parents, while she acquires an additional right of inheritance in the property of her husband. There is, in Islam, no occasion for a Miss Eleanor Rathbone to fulminate against husbands willing away their property to the total deprivation of their wives. I should advise my audience to read, in this connection, the views of Mr. Pierre Crabitès who was appointed Judge by President Taft in the year 1911, to represent the U. S. A. on the Mixed Tribunals of Cairo, Egypt. These views were expressed in an article : " Things Mahomet did for Women." He says :—

When all is said and done, however, nothing astonished me more than to have the proof driven home to me that before 632 of the Christian Era, the Prophet of Islam had accomplished more to safeguard the property rights of the wives of his land than the legislature of Louisiana has yet done for her who bears my name. . . . Mahomet's outstanding contribution to the cause of woman resides in the property rights that he conferred on the wives of his people. The juridical status of a wife, if so technical a term may be pardoned, is exactly the same as that of a husband. The Moslem spouse, in so far as her property is concerned, is as free as a bird. The Law permits her to do with her financial assets whatever she pleases without consulting her consort. . . . It is therefore useless to tell me that the Moslem woman is nothing but a human lacteal machine, that her soul is not her own, and that man is her

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lord and master. I am not dealing with social conditions ; I am drawing a picture of the work of a great legislator, and of the legal edifice constructed by him. But if I were pressed too hard, I should not fear to face the issue on this score of woman's effective power. I should begin by challenging the right of any man or woman to cast the first stone, unless he or she could demonstrate that the wives of his or her state enjoy legal prerogatives which measure up to those of the hidden flowers of Islam. I think that I should be perfectly justified in applying such a rule. I am afraid that it would somewhat seriously restrict the quota of eligibles, but that is not my fault. I should then invite those who thus passed Ellis Island, to come to my court. There I should probably be able to show them veiled sisters with tattooed arms, rings in their noses and fly-covered children on their shoulders, without lawyer or friend, standing before a judge or counsel and defending their rights with an assurance, a volubility and a mastery that would be sure to arouse admiration. If this spectacle should still leave my inquirers unconvinced, I should ask them to find out, from somebody or through someone in whom they had confidence, just *who* first kindled in Egypt the spark that is now threatening England, *who* has kept the flame aglow, and *who* are the blindest, the most fearless and the most intractable foes to any kind of compromise. To such a query there could be but one answer. It is that, for good or for evil, *the Moslem woman is a driving force which was fashioned by a master mind*. In a word, rights beget responsibility, responsibility engenders leadership, and leadership always asserts itself. It was Mahomet who fixed with unerring discernment the property rights of the married woman of his land. It was he who gave them a legal personality of their own. He thus put the *sceptre within their grasp*.¹

I need not waste any time in pleading the case of Divorce to you ; since it is a recognized necessity in every country in these days. If the Church has held to the indissolubility of the marriage tie, modern Russia has gone to the other extreme of Divorce at will, while even the orthodox Christians are not ashamed in these days, of discussing companionate marriages. Islam judiciously holds the balance between the two. There is a necessary margin for Divorce in Islamic law, but the conditions are so hard as to make it a rare happening. If the Divorce takes place through the fault of the husband, the wife is to receive the promised sum of dowry settled upon her at the time of the marriage. If, however, the wife is to blame in the matter, she forfeits her claim to the dowry-money.

¹ *The Asia* (Jan. 1927), New York, U.S.A.

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The Prophet of Islam spoke the final word on the attitude of Islam towards Divorce when he declared—"Of all the permissible things Divorce is the most disliked by God." This observation is certainly more judicious and legist-like than the one ascribed to Jesus. Judge Crabites very rightly remarks : "the Muslim looks upon marriage solely as a matter of contract, the terms of which depend, within very wide limits, on the will of the parties." This statement is as true of the commencement of the transaction as of its end.

Let us now pass on to the question that has given rise to the greatest misapprehension in the European mind—I mean the question of Polygamy. But before I proceed to discuss it—and in that I have to be very brief in view of the shortness of the time at our disposal—I must remind my Christian friends that so erudite a Biblical student as Martin Luther had officially advised Phillip of Hesse that the New Testament did not prohibit polygamy, and that such pious Christians as Valentinianus, Constantius, Charlemagne, Frederic Barbarossa and many others like them had a plurality of wives. Above all, can we forget the conduct of the great king who laid the foundation of the Anglican Church? The challenge of the eminent European philosopher Schopenhauer, has not, as yet, been replied to by any Christian layman or church dignitary. He says :—

There is no use arguing about polygamy, it must be taken as *de facto* existing everywhere, and the only question is how to regulate it.

Let us place the Islamic permission of polygamy in the background thus prepared. In Islam it is only a *permission* and not an *injunction* ; indeed, it is remarkable that the verse containing this permission both begins and ends with a big "if." It reads :—

And if you feel you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two, and three and four ; but if you feel that you cannot do justice between them, then marry only one.¹

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It is quite clear that the Qur-án gives the rule as monogamy, and that polygamy is an exception—an exception arising out of the existence of numerous orphans to be looked after by society, *i.e.*, where widows with their children are to be provided for. Such a situation presented itself to the Muslims of the Prophet's days when a very large number of Muslims fell on the field of battle to vindicate their rights of religious freedom. But even in this exceptional case only those persons are allowed to marry more than one wife who have the extraordinary capacity of dealing equally with all.

There are several misconceptions unfortunately lurking in the Western mind regarding this measure of polygamy allowed by Islam. The Qur-ánic *permission* is taken for an *injunction*, and it is believed that every Muslim is *bound* to marry a number of wives. This is wrong. A monogamous Muslim is as much a Muslim as a monogamous Christian is considered to be a Christian. The difference lies in this, that whereas Islam says that if under certain conditions a Muslim is legitimately polygamous he remains a Muslim, but *in no case can he be allowed to keep a single mistress*. Christians say that if a Christian formally marries more than one woman, he no longer remains a Christian, but if he keeps 200 mistresses, and that openly, he still remains untouched by the Christian law of the present day.

It is also believed by the people of the West that this polygamy is a matter of force—as if a Muslim goes to and fro in the earth laying hold of any woman that comes in his way, and marrying her willy-nilly. Misconception could hardly go further. These people should know that Muslim marriage is, in all cases, a matter of free contract between the parties. So in Islamic polygamy the woman is as much responsible as the man.

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There is, moreover, another aspect of the question. Taking into consideration the fact that a Muslim marriage is only a civil contract between the two parties—of course, for life—the woman who is going to be married as the first wife of a man, can very easily impose the condition that in case of the man's marrying a second wife, the marriage tie shall automatically be dissolved. So if Islam permits polygamy to save a society from adultery and the curse of "street girls," "other women," "mistresses" and "war-babies," it has the most effective control possible of the situation in the contractual character of its marriage. It may interest my hearers to learn that in India,—the country which is mainly responsible for the preaching activities of Islam in these days—the percentage of polygamous marriages amongst the Muslims is not more than three or four per thousand—and, remember, there are no Hyde Park or Piccadilly scenes in India. A Muslim is really monogamous, when he is monogamous. The "other woman" business is inconceivable in Islamic society.

Now, I must say a few words with regard to the spiritual rights of Woman in Islam. It is a monstrous lie to assert that Islam recognizes no soul in woman. As I have already pointed out, Islam declares that Man and Woman both came from the same source; so that both must possess the *same quality of soul*. But let the Qur-án speak in reply to this libel against Islam:—

Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, and the believing men and the believing women, and the obeying men and the obeying women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the alms-giving men and the alms-giving women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the men who guard their private parts, and the women who guard, and the men who remember Allah much, and the women who remember Allah much—Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward.¹

¹ 33 : 35.

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Muhammad knew, perhaps, what St. Paul had said about women, so he emphatically declared: "Do not prevent your women from coming to the Mosque." So great was the liberty of women in the Mosque, that once, when the great Caliph Omar was delivering his sermon in the Mosque, an ordinary woman suddenly rose to a point of order. The mighty Caliph humbly submitted himself to the correction and observed: "The women of Medina understand the Qur-án better than Umar." I do not know if the spiritual rights of Women can well go further. There have been women saints in Islam—persons to whom God spoke. There is a whole chapter devoted in the Qur-án to the Lady Mary, the Mother of Jesus, to whom as well as to the mother of Moses, God used to speak, according to Muslim belief. The great saint Rábi'a is an inspiring force in the Muslim world—and there have been other women like her in the history of Islam.

(To be continued.).

A NEW DECLARATION.

I, H. M. Boyd, son of H. S. Boyd, of 523 N. Nevada Avenue, Colorado Springs, Colorado, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I adopt Islam as my religion; that I worship one and only Allah alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His messenger and servant: that I respect equally all prophets, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc., that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha il Allah, Muhammad ar-Rasul Allah.

H. M. BOYD.

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.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE ISLAMIC REVIEW, JAN.—FEB., 1933.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,—Assalamo-Alaikum,

Charity, if properly collected and used, would meet our various needs. Though some of our brethren have now realised the importance of this institution, yet most of us, though liberal in various other ways, are still negligent of this duty. The Holy Qur-án and the Prophet (May the peace of Allah be upon his soul) lay special stress on the institution of *Zakat*. The Book also says that the life of a nation depends upon alms-giving. The Book lays down some eight objects to which we should apply our *Zakat*. The sacred words are as follows :—

“Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and the officials (appointed) over them, and those whose hearts are made to incline (to truth), and the (ransoming of) captives, and those in debt, and in the way of Allah and the wayfarer : an ordinance from Allah ; and Allah is Knowing, Wise.” (Holy Qur-án : 9 : 60).

The holy words show that 3/8th of the *Zakat*, *i.e.*, the 3rd, 4th and 7th items should go towards the propagation of Islam ; because the success and prosperity of our nation, as the Qur-án* says, depends on doing so.

Need I say that our Missionary activities at Woking have proved to be most successful of all the other movements that we have undertaken, within the last quarter of the century, to better our conditions. And I may say that all our political activities have been baffled down by other.

The best way to preach Islam in Europe is the dissemination of Muslim literature. Our efforts in this respect

* And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful. (Holy Qur-án : 3 : 103.)

have been successful. We can do wonders within short time if we have enough of money to distribute Islamic literature broadcast. The question is a simple one if our brethren would consider the following points :—

Firstly, the Qur-án has enjoined upon us the spread of Islam. Secondly, the Qur-án has laid *Zakat* upon us as a duty and demands from us to spend a large portion of it in this respect.

Thirdly, Woking Mission is now decidedly a success, and more help to it from you would achieve wonderful success, for our work.

Fourthly, time for *Zakat* is near at hand and I request you to pay a portion of it to meet our Mission expenses.

Yours sincerely,

KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN,

Founder of the Woking Muslim Mission

(ENGLAND).

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