

"Muhammad is... the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets..."—Holy Qur-án, 33 : 40  
 "There will be no Prophet after me."—Muhammad.

# The Islamic Review

Founded by the Late AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

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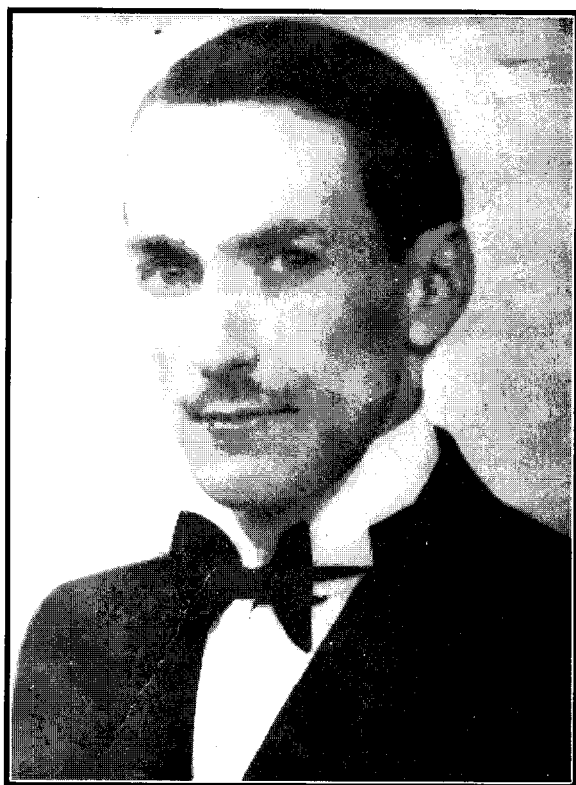
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## A DECLARATION

I, Harry George Evans, of Little Wind Street, Swansea, Glamorgan, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone ; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant ; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc., and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

LA ILAHA IL-ALLAH MUHAMMAD UR RASUL-ULLAH.

(There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger.)

8th December, 1934.

(Sd.) HARRY G. EVANS.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### ISLAM IN CHINA

BY MUHAMMAD SULAIMAN YING KWANG-YU

*(Continued from Vol. XXIII, p. 238.)*

From the Sui Dynasty (589—618) to the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644), and even subsequently, during the Chang Dynasty, up to the middle of the eighteenth century the Muslims in China were well looked after. The Government built mosques for them and granted them concessions. So much so that the Emperor Wu T'sung (1506—1522) of the Ming Dynasty forbade his subjects to rear pigs, obviously a gesture of goodwill towards his Muslim subjects. Another Emperor, Tai Tsu or Hung Wu, as he is also called, is said by many Muslim chroniclers to have become a Muslim, for he wrote "One Hundred Words" which were really the Sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Many times the Chinese Mandarins got annoyed with a spirit of envy and detraction, and on one of such occasions a royal edict was issued in 1731 :—

"In every province of the Empire, for many centuries past have been found a large number of Muslims who form part of the people whom We regard as Our own children just as We do Our other subjects. We make no distinction between them and those who do not belong to their religion. We have received certain official secret complaints against the Muslims on the ground that their religion differs from that of other Chinese, that they do not speak the same language, and wear a different dress to the rest of the people. They are accused of disobedience, haughtiness and rebellious feelings, and We have been asked to employ severe measures against them. After examining these complaints and accusations We have discovered that there is no foundation for them. In fact the religion followed by the Muslims is that of their ancestors. It is true that their language is not the same as that of the rest of the Chinese, but what a multitude of different dialects there are in China. As to their temples, dress and manner of writing, which differ from those of the other Chinese—these are matters of absolutely no importance. These are mere matters of custom. They bear as good a character as Our other subjects, and there is nothing to show that they intend to rebel. It is Our wish, therefore, that they should be left in the free exercise of their religion, whose object is to teach men the observance of a moral

## ISLAM IN CHINA

life, and the fulfilment of social and civil duties. This religion respects the fundamental basis of Government, and what more can be asked for? If, therefore, the Muslims continue to conduct themselves as good and loyal subjects Our favour will be extended towards them just as much as towards Our other children. From among them have come many civil and military officers, who have risen to the very highest ranks. This is the best proof that they have adopted our habits and customs and have learned to conform themselves to the precepts of our sacred books. They pass their examinations in literature just like every one else, and perform the duties enjoined by law. In a word, they are true members of the Great Chinese family and endeavour always to fulfil their religious, civil and political duties. When the magistrates have a civil case brought before them they should not concern themselves with the religion of the litigants. There is but one single law for all Our subjects. Those who do good shall be rewarded, and those who do evil shall be punished.”<sup>1</sup>

This edict while clearly proving the impartiality of the Emperor also shows that by this time the Imperial Throne was becoming accessible to persons who did not look upon Muslims with favour. The means which such persons adopted to further their views, and the results accruing from this short-sighted policy will be dealt with more fully at a later stage. Suffice it to say at present that in spite of opposition, sometimes open, but often secret, Islam had by now been firmly established in China. Ibn Batutah who visited China about the middle of the fourteenth century refers to the fact that the whole of Yunnan had accepted Islam. He speaks of the hearty welcome he received as being a new-comer from the country of origin of Islam and says that “in every town, there is a special quarter for the Muslims, inhabited solely by them, where they have their mosques, and they are honoured and respected by the Chinese.” Islam slowly but surely began to extend its sphere of influence by means of cautious and unobtrusive missionary efforts. The history of this movement is buried in obscurity, but the Muslims of the present-day in China are a living testimony to its efficacy. Mosques began to spring up all over the Empire. In

<sup>1</sup> Tome, Vol. I, pp. 154-6.



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Taiyuan, the Capital of Shansi Province, which is also called "The Blue City" because of its being in the coal mine area, was another city whither Muslims penetrated. One of its mosques was built as far back as 191 A.H. (807 A.C.). This province because of its importance has been called "The Model Province." The Muslim General Bai Chung Hai, the Great Hero of present-day China, in recent times achieved wonders there.

Cheungtu, the Capital of Szechuan, the largest province in China, is one of the oldest cities in the land, having been several times the capital of successive kingdoms and for this reason it is called the "Store-house of China." It boasted of its "Imperial City Mosque," the largest mosque in China, and many other mosques were also built in this town by Muslims. Peipin (Pekin) the former capital of China has fifty-two mosques.

Thus, from city to city, from province to province, Islam spread and was accepted and followed; so much so that, in the seventeenth century, a great part of the Jews, who had settled in China before even the Muslims set foot on Chinese soil, became converts to Islam in a body. The Chinese Mandarins, misguided by Christian missionaries, became alarmed and reports began to pour in from all directions to the Imperial Throne charging Muslims with sedition. By way of example a report of the Governor of Khwang-se, submitted to the Emperor in 1783, may be cited. It ran as follows:—

I have the honour to inform your Majesty that an adventurer named Han-Fo-Yun, of the Province of Khwang-se, has been arrested on a charge of vagrancy. This adventurer when interrogated as to his occupation confessed that for the last ten years he had been travelling through the different provinces of the Empire in order to obtain information about his religion. In one of his boxes were found thirty books, some of which had been written by himself, while others were in a language which no one here understands. These books praise in an extravagant and ridiculous manner a Western King called Muhammad. The above-mentioned Han-Fo-Yun, when put to the torture, at last con-

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fessed that the real object of his journey was to propagate the false religion taught in these books, and that he remained in the province of Shan-se for a longer time than anywhere else. I have examined these books myself, some are certainly written in a foreign language ; for I have not been able to understand them : the others that are written in Chinese are very bad, I may add, even ridiculous on account of the exaggerated praise given in them to persons who certainly do not deserve it because I have never even heard of them.

“ Perhaps the above-named Han-Fo-Yun is a rebel from Kan-su. His conduct is certainly suspicious, for what was he going to do in the provinces through which he has been travelling for the last ten years. Meanwhile, I would request your Majesty to order the stereotyped plates that are in the possession of his family to be burnt, and the engravers to be arrested, as well as the authors of the books, which I have sent to your Majesty desiring to know your pleasure in the matter.”<sup>1</sup>

It is true that this Muslim missionary was released and the Governor censured by the Emperor, but the incident is sufficient to show that an under-current was gradually setting against Muslims. Yet in spite of this the policy of successive Emperors remained the same. The Emperor Chine-Lung (1736—1796) ordered that the Holy Qur-án, the Traditions of the Holy Prophet and other Islamic books of importance be kept as a part of the “Imperial Encyclopædia of the Four Store-houses.” Thus until the end of the eighteenth century Muslims were respected and protected ; and they in return were grateful and rendered most loyal and valuable services to the Emperor and the State, both in times of peace and war. During the later years of the Chang Dynasty (1644—1912), however, the attitude of the Emperors and their Governments towards Muslims underwent a radical change. This was primarily due to the attitude taken at this time towards China by the Christian nations of Europe. Hitherto the European missionaries and traders in China had been dependent upon the goodwill of the Chinese. The Portuguese with their priests were not allowed to proceed beyond the settlement of the Macao. Protestant

<sup>1</sup> Tome, Vol. II, pp. 381-3.

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missionaries had scarcely gained a foothold. The British were not permitted to go beyond the limits of Canton ; the Great Wall was in the way of Russians ; the French were, as yet, nowhere on the scene. Do what these powers might the Chinese presented a united front and blocked their intrusion. Professor Vasil'ev, a Russian, was sent by his Government to study the situation on the spot, and on his return he published a most startling book, in which he drew an alarmist picture of the danger that threatened the civilization of Europe from the presence of this vast Muslim population, the existence of which had been hitherto so unsuspected, and whose religion he seriously presented as destined to be the national Faith of the China of the future. To put Europe on its guard he wrote :—

If China, which contains at least one-third of the human race, were to be converted into a Muhammadan Empire, the political relations of the whole East would be considerably modified. The world of Islam stretching from Gibraltar to the Pacific Ocean might once again lift up its head. Islam might and would again threaten Christendom, and the peaceful activity of the Chinese people, *which is now so profitable to the rest of the world*, in the hands of fanatics be turned into a yoke upon the necks of the nations.

The Musalmans in Turkistan and Zungaria will certainly not fail to continually threaten the Chinese Empire, where their co-religionists are found scattered all over the country ; and even if these provinces were to come again under Chinese rule, would Islam be the weaker for it or its spread and development be checked ? The question we have raised may be postponed for some years only : suppose, for ten, or perhaps at most for a century ; but all this while Islam will continue to make progress and watching for a favourable opportunity for the realisation of its hopes, will in the end attain the goal of its aspirations.

If the Chinese Muhammadans were only the descendants of strangers who came into the country some long time ago, we should have no concern with the question as to whether the whole of China will one day be converted to Muhammadanism ; but this very question pre-supposes that Muhammadanism is always gaining fresh adherents from among the people of the country, and we may, therefore, well inquire whether the progress it is making will ever stop.

Again, if Islam some day succeeds in establishing its political supremacy over China, and then claims the allegiance of

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the mass of the population to its Faith, will it meet with a refusal? We think not, for such a change will seem infinitely easier to the Chinese than the change of custom which took place on the accession of the reigning dynasty.<sup>1</sup>

In the same strain wrote M. P. Dabry deTheisant and M. J. B. du Halde. The agents of the Czar of all Russias placed the views of these three Europeans in the hands of all those who mattered in the Governments of European Powers.

England was the first to act. Lord Napier was sent to superintend British trade at Canton. He picked a quarrel with the Chinese Mandarins over the imports of opium, which for years the latter had been attempting to abolish by every means in their power. Lord Napier died suddenly and Admiral Sir Charles Elliot signed a treaty by which he undertook, on behalf of the English merchants, to refrain from importing opium into China. But he had acted on his own responsibility only. This did not suit the British Government for its sword was meant to have more than two edges—(1) sale of Indian opium, (2) the picking of a quarrel with a view to controlling the internal affairs of China, and (3) crushing the Muslims there. General depravity of Chinese was an extra bargain to be thrown in. Sir Charles Elliot was recalled and war was declared on China in 1840 when Sir Hugh Gough captured Canton and many other cities. Sir Henry Pottinger, who had succeeded Sir Charles Elliot, dictated the terms of peace by which Hong Kong was ceded to the British, and four additional ports of Amoy, Fu-Chow, Ningpo and Shanghai were declared open and the ban on opium imports was withdrawn by the Chinese. In 1876, as a result of Margary murder, this clause of the treaty was confirmed and the British were given exclusive rights to import opium.

This is but one aspect of the picture. Suddenly in 1853 Hung Siu-ts'uan, a Christian convert, proclaimed

<sup>1</sup> Vasil'ev, pp. 3, 5, 14, 17.

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himself as sent by Heaven to drive out the Muslims from China and to restore in his own person the succession to the Throne of China. He proclaimed the inauguration of the Tai-ping Dynasty of which he nominated himself the first Emperor under the title of T'ien Wang or "Heavenly King." As if still further to aid him in his schemes, Great Britain declared war against China in 1853 over "the Arrow Affair." Lord Elgin, who had been sent as a special Ambassador, captured Canton once again and recognised the Christian Emperor.

The French now appeared on the scene. They joined the British on the pretext of seeking reparation for the murder of a missionary in Kwang-si and in 1860 the Allies landed forces at Pei-tang. Ultimately a convention was signed between Prince Kung and Lord Elgin, whereby the Chinese agreed to allow the preaching of Christianity in the *interior*—as if the coastal region had already been converted. By this treaty also the command of the Chinese troops passed into British hands.

But Great Britain and France were not the only Powers of Europe in this arena. On the northern border of the Empire Russia began to exercise pressure and ultimately obtained possession of Vladivastok; but we must admit not on the excuse of any missionary blood.

In Korea in 1866 two Catholic missionaries were killed and Japan, at the request of America, landed forces there. While Russia, France and Great Britain were profiting by what they were pleased to call the "generosity of China," Germany alone had so far no excuse for putting her finger in the pie. So in 1897, she proceeded to help herself. The act was done ostensibly in order to compel satisfaction for the murder of two German missionaries—the fact that these missionaries belonged to a religious order which had been expelled from Germany made no difference—whose death was promptly avenged by the

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immediate seizure of Chinese territory. The Chinese Government appealed to the other Powers, but "they did not consider the demands of Germany to be *unreasonable*."

Having thus got a footing in China, each European Power sought to steal a march on the others. A keen competition, therefore, ensued and an equally keen international rivalry was set up. Each Power kept a watchful eye on the other and gradually the "Spheres of Influence" policy became prominent while in neutral zones "open doors" were left for smaller nations like Italy, Portugal and others to walk in by.

*(To be continued.)*

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## THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

BY HAJI ABDUL MAJID

Detractors of Islam have lately been finding fault with the Muslim treatment of women. Muslims, indeed, are depicted as looking upon the fair sex as mere chattels to be acquired when required, and to be discarded when no longer of any use. They are also believed to regard woman as without soul and therefore without rights either to consideration in this world, or to felicity in the next. The Qur-án is certainly not responsible at all for it if such be found to be the attitude of certain Muslim men, for the Book plainly says:—

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 almsgiving men and the almsgiving 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 has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, 33 : 35.

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And the Prophet Muhammad also plainly says in his last sermon on Mount Arafat :—

And treat your women well, for they are God's trust to you.

It may not be generally known that Muslim women have been enjoying rights of personal possessions ever since the birth of Islam, rights with which no husband or brother can interfere. Even a father, according to the Muslim Law of Inheritance, cannot disinherit a daughter, however much he may dislike her, for she is entitled, by authority from the Qur-án, to as much as half the share that a son would receive from the estate of the deceased parent. And as a wife, a woman is by the same Law of Inheritance equally protected from being disinherited or disgraced by having a penny left to her " with which to buy a rope to hang herself ; " for the Qur-án clearly defines the share of the widow in the heritage.

It is true that daughters receive only half as much as sons, which might perhaps be interpreted to mean that, after all, women in Islam do not receive as much consideration as men. But it should not be overlooked that women, when married, are maintained by their husbands; and when unmarried, the duty of supporting them devolves on the brothers. In the same way, the Islamic Law of Inheritance lays down that the widow of a deceased husband who leaves issue receives less share in the heritage than the widow of one who has none, as it is expected that the son or daughter will naturally support the widowed mother.

What of divorce then, you will say ? Well, divorce is one of the many things allowed, but not commended in Islam.

It is regarded, and in that sense only acted on, as a measure to enable a man to separate from a wife with whom, owing to want of sympathy or divergence of temperament, his life can only be a veritable hell. If a man divorces

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his wife for no plausible reason whatsoever, then all his subsequent good actions will be unacceptable to Allah. At least, the most apparent effect will be that popular feeling will be so much against him that he will find it difficult thereafter to marry into a respectable family. At any rate, a woman may easily protect herself from the whims of a man by demanding for himself a big dowry payable at the time of separation—a consideration which may serve as a deterrent to any hasty step. The divorce as allowed by the Qur-án is a very complicated process, having a large number of preliminaries and the woman has as much right to divorce the man as the man to divorce the woman.

### MARRIAGE AND POLYGAMY

Islam deals with the question of marriage on the basis that woman is the weaker vessel of the two ; hence it is that the dowry is paid by the man to the woman, and not by the woman to the man. Similarly, man is expected to take upon himself the more strenuous duties of life, such as the earning of his livelihood and the defence of hearth and home when attacked. Woman, on the other hand, is expected to nurse the sick and wounded, as they did during the wars in which the Holy Prophet was engaged ; and to manage the house. In other words, in a good Muslim house, the wife attends to the household duties only, and the duty of bread-winning lies with the husband entirely.

Another peculiarity in Islam is that would-be bridegrooms and brides do not “ make love ” to each other before marriage. Muslims do not believe that, when a young man and a young woman try to find good qualities in each other prior to uniting themselves in marriage, the feeling so engendered is “ love ” ; for love is a divine quality and expresses itself by sacrifice, which means the doing of a kind action without expecting anything in return from the person or persons for whom the sacrifice is made.



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Surely, no man or woman will take the other in marriage if there is nothing that he or she expects to get from the other in return. Therefore, the ties of marriage, strictly speaking, are not bound with the silken cords of love, but rather with matter-of-fact rope or string of matrimonial contract, under conditions which, among Muslims, are carefully gone into beforehand by the parents and relatives on both sides.

Yet, it must not be supposed that the future couple have no say at all in the matter, for Islam allows them to see each other in the presence of relatives before they finally give their respective consents for the union.

With such people thus united, attachment for each other grows as each recognises and appreciates the good qualities of the other ; and through this mutual attachment is engendered the Divine love which expresses itself by the exercise of sacrifice whenever occasion demands it. This Divine love soon expands and manifests itself in the care and solicitude which each takes for the other's relatives, friends and even fellow-countrymen, so that it might be said to culminate in being universal. It is for this reason that the Prophet Muhammad says :— " Marriage is of my way," that is to say, through marriage man is afforded opportunities of exercising self-sacrifice which is the essence of one's true love for one's fellow-creatures. And, in face of such tendency that marriage engenders in man, it is difficult to appreciate how marriage can be looked upon as being a hindrance in one's way towards God, Who expects us to love His creatures as we love Him.

As to polygamy, it is difficult for the Western mind to see any good in it, notwithstanding the fact that the Bible itself does not prohibit it, nor in any way limit it to any number at all. It should be borne in mind that it was the Nicene Council of 320 A.D., plus modern civilisation, that was actually responsible for the present-day idea of monogamy.

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No woman, Eastern or Western, will readily agree to her husband taking a wife or wives besides herself. And yet the God of Islam *allows* a man to have as many as four wives at a time. Please note the word "*allows*" carefully, and do not confound it with "*enjoins*." And He allows it with a proviso, thus :—

And if you fear that you may not be just or equitable to them then it is better to have only one.

Muslim commentators have given various opinions as to the interpretation of the word "just" or "equitable." To my mind the essential point for the quality of being just or equitable is not necessarily based on the distribution by the husband of equal quantities of provisions, or equal periods of his time among the respective recipients, for, if that be so, then God Himself may be accused of being unjust, since He has made some men rich, some poor, some without eyes to see, and some without ears to hear. One famous commentator, Abu Hanifa, believes that, as no man can be just by the orthodox standard of justice, the above-quoted proviso amounts to a prohibition. And Syed Ameer Ali in his *Spirit of Islam* basing his arguments on this conviction, comes to the conclusion that "monogamy is the ideal."

Be this as it may, it is not illogical to say that if a prohibition be really aimed at in the said proviso, why should God take the trouble of mentioning it at all? Similarly, if the All-Knowing God actually believes that no man can be just, would it not be wiser for Him simply to enjoin monogamy? It should, therefore, be obvious that the mere mention of permitting a man to have four wives should never be interpreted as a prohibition, or as amounting to a prohibition, by reason of the proviso.

We are told that the Prophet always made a point of asking the permission of his wife or wives before he took to himself another one. From this we can safely conclude

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that the chief thing to be feared in taking to oneself more than one wife is for the domestic peace which might be disturbed thereby. This peace is the principal consideration to be borne in mind by all our efforts to be just or equitable. It is natural that without peace, no matter how fairly a husband distributes his provisions and his time among his wives, it is better for him to have only one wife.

Few women understand that by allowing their husbands to marry another wife or other wives besides themselves, they are doing a meritorious service equal to a Jihad, for their sacrifice in this respect cannot but amount to the saving of their sisters from many of the evil effects engendered by the excessive numerical predominance of women over men, particularly after a war.

At the same time, it must be recognised that there are men so created and so placed in life, that they do need more than one wife, so that a monogamist law to them only opens up possibilities for unlicensed activities which cannot but be a disgrace to women and their children. Islam allows polygamy purposely to meet these peculiar circumstances, so as to avoid the existence of "mistresses" and bastards in the community. It is left to the good sense of a man to decide if he is to have one, or two, or three, or four wives to suit his convenience, his purse, and his peace of mind; and a woman can easily protect herself from having rivals in her husband's harem, if that be distasteful to her, by insisting on a stipulation to that effect in the marriage contract.

## THE HOLY QUR-ÂN AND ITS COMMENTARY

### THE HOLY QUR-ÂN AND ITS COMMENTARY

By THE LATE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

(Continued from Vol. XXIII, p. 202)

V. 127. Elsewhere a verse of the Qur-ân itself tells us that we should strive to make our condition correspond to the Attributes of Allah at the time of our praying for anything. Here the word “*‘Alim*” (Knowing) as following the word “*‘Sami’*” (Hearing) indicates that we should not merely call upon Allah in His capacity of the Hearer, but also as the Knower, that thereby we may show Him that our own condition is fit for the reception of His mercy. For in His capacity of “*‘Alim,*” (Knowing), Allah knows our condition, within as well as without, and we practically give the lie to this Attribute of His when we pray to Him for a certain thing and do not at the same time strive to make ourselves worthy to receive it. In fact these two words make it clear that we should ask for a blessing from God only when we have made our personal condition fit to be presented before Him and that if we neglect to do so, no prayer of ours will be accepted. “And the prayers of the unbelievers are but in transgression.” Whatever a man may call himself he is nothing but an unbeliever if he does not strive to make his condition correspond to the Will of God. In the prayer of Abraham there is a hint as to the life which a man should be living when he prays for anything.

V. 128. In this verse there is an exposition of the life referred to. “Our Lord make us Muslims and make our progeny Muslims too!” The word “Muslim” means a person who orders his life on the lines of the Divine Commandments; and “*Rab*” is that Holy Being who moulds the character of man. The prayer beseeches Him to give us the character of Muslims, but, as I have said above, we need to make a full-hearted effort to become

Muslims before we pray thus. I do not know of any person, whatever his religion, who does not become a Muslim before he achieves success. Even an Atheist, in trying to accomplish his purpose, uses the natural course of cause and effect leading thereto. It is immaterial whether he knows or not, that this natural course of cause and effect constitutes the Divine Laws ; but as soon as he adopts this course, he *ipso facto* becomes a Muslim and is bound to succeed. The subsequent part of the prayer throws some light on this, for, it is prayed therein that we should be shown the ways of our devotions. By the word "*Manásik* "—(Devotional practices)—as used here, is meant the prayers to and worship of God the Almighty ; but according to the teachings of the Qur-án, the customary prayers are only indications of the fact that the condition of the worshipper is in consonance with the form of the prayer. Thus to conduct oneself in accordance with the Will of God is the real devotional practice or prayer. The prayer under discussion, therefore, amounts to this, that God should show us the paths whereby we may come to do His Pleasure.

It is the Law of God that the favours of God come to such persons as comport themselves on the lines of His Will. But as soon as a person forsakes the ways appointed by Him, His help to that person ceases. And again, when that man relinquishes his evil courses and returns to the right way Divine favour visits him as before. In Qur-ánic terminology, to forsake the right way of life is called "Sin," and to return thereto is called "*Tauba* " which is usually translated "repentance." And the acceptance of "*Tauba* " on the part of God is His revisiting a person with His favour, when that person has sincerely repented and mended his ways. The literal meaning of "*Tauba* " is "returning," and "*Tawwab* " is One Who is a great "Returner." These words as a matter of fact present

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us with a keynote to the successful life as shown in the clause contained in the prayer of Abraham asking for His return. We may wander from the right way owing to negligence but we have to shake off this negligence somehow before we can hope to be successful. The return of God with His favours depends on our retracing our footsteps from the wrong path; so we cannot reasonably offer the aforesaid prayers so long as we persist in treading the path of error.

If we are always in need of the favours of God, and are at the same time liable to lapses of negligence, we should, at all hours of the day, resort to what is called "*Tauba*," that is to say the forsaking of all those things that have been involving us in wrong-doing; and it is impossible for a person so acting ever to fail in achieving the object of his life. That this is the meaning of the verse is also shown by the words with which it concludes. Here God is invoked in the words—" *Tawwáb* " and " *Rahím* ." As has been seen in the course of my comments on the " *Fátíha* ," the mercy of " *Rahím* " descends only on a person who has first done something to deserve it. The Qur-án customarily uses these words together, a fact which shows that God, as " *Tawwáb* ," accepts our " *Tauba* " when we forsake the path of error and come back to that of virtue. Let Muslims consider for themselves, how far their " *Tauba* " is in consonance with these conditions and accordingly how far their prayers are worthy of acceptance before God.

— Verse 129. Now comes the last part of the prayer. It is God alone Who possesses the knowledge of what a Muslim, who desires to live a life of resignation, should do and what he should not do; and, according to a verse of the chapter entitled " The Bee " God has taken upon Himself to impart this knowledge to man. It is for this purpose that He raised inspired holy men among

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them from time to time and it is they who are called *Nabi*, *Rasul* or Prophet. Accordingly, the Prophet Abraham, in order to assure his people's life in Islam, that is their resignation to the Divine Will, prays that God may raise up among them a Prophet, who shall receive revelation from God, for the needful guidance which he, in his turn, shall deliver to the people, codified in a book full of wisdom, and who shall himself act upon the principles laid down therein and inspire and direct others to do the same, so that their souls also may be purified. This verse not only points to the necessity for the appearance of persons called Prophets, but also tells us of the concomitants of Prophethood, that is to say, what peculiarity a man is required to possess in order to be called a Prophet. Since those alone who have talked with God can receive any directions of guidance from God, the most essential point in Prophethood is that persons with any claim to it should have the honour of talking with God. But it would be a mistake to suppose that the privilege of listening to the Divine Words will of itself suffice to make a man a Prophet. To attain to that exalted position, the revelation vouchsafed to him must present a complete chart for a life in God—a programme for a complete purification of the soul ; for, indeed, the purpose of revelation is nothing else than this and it is to this truth that reference is made in the following verse of the chapter entitled *The Sun* :

And the soul and its perfection, so He intimated to it, by inspiration, its deviating from truth and its guarding (against evil), he will indeed be successful who purifies it, and he will indeed fail who corrupts it.<sup>1</sup>

This short chapter begins with the enumeration of certain phenomena of nature, namely the sun and the moon, the night and the day, and the sky and the earth. Each one of these, conforming to certain specified laws of nature, becomes a source of benefit to other objects of

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, 91 : 7—10.

## THE HOLY QUR-ÂN AND ITS COMMENTARY

creation, and manifests its own latent faculties thereby. On the same lines has been the creation of the human soul, which is also called the rationality of man. When the soul attains its fullest development, it acquires the power of reflecting over all the phenomena of external Nature.

In his capacity of the Dispenser of benefits to others he plays the parts, so to say, of the Sun, the Moon and like objects of Nature ; but to attain this perfection of the soul one must be given revealed knowledge of the ways of piety and sin, through the medium of some Prophet. By "Sin" is meant those things which a man has to avoid, while "Piety" signifies all those things which it is incumbent on him to do. So that man alone can be called a Prophet whose revelations deal with the distinction between "Piety" and "Sin" which in religious terminology is called "the Law." In other words a real Prophet is he who brings "the Law" or the Book, establishes the truth of its assertions with wise argument and experiences the purification of his own soul through the guidance furnished by it.

I have already stated that the very first condition of Prophethood is the state of being spoken to by God, which, given other necessary adjuncts, turns into Prophethood, because it is the gateway of Prophethood. Now, because Prophethood is a matter of internal experience and has no external shape to present, it is necessary for the maintenance of man's faith in the fact of Prophethood, that persons other than the Prophets should also have the privilege of being spoken to by God, so that they may, on the basis of their personal experience, bear witness to the fact of God's actually speaking to man. Since the revelation of the Qur-ân was the final word of God on the subject of Law, and was to remain a guidance to mankind for all ages to come as distinguished from other revelations of its kind which had almost been lost, it was neces-



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sary that among the followers of Muhammad there should be a class of persons blessed with the spoken words of God, if the Holy Prophet was to bear testimony to the fact of God speaking to man from time to time. God has been gracious to this blessed religious community of the Muslims, inasmuch as not only has He shown the way that enables man to become the recipient of the Divine words, but has also made such recipients actually appear in the community, thereby distinguishing it from other religious communities who being less fortunate in this respect possess no such blessed tradition. As a result of this we find that whereas Muslims are for the most part believers in the phenomenon of Prophethood, the followers of other religions do not believe even in the possibility of God's speaking to man, to say nothing of Prophethood, the reason for this unbelief being the fact that no recipient of Divine words had ever appeared among them. This rejection of the theory of Prophethood has gone to such length that even the champions of religions that take their stand on revelation have begun to allege and incline to the view that those books which they claim to be revealed books are really only reflections of the Divine Will cast on the minds of certain holy persons, and that the actual words which are before us are not from God but are merely the words of the holy persons to whom the Will has been revealed ; and such a notion naturally has led the less-instructed of people in general to a condition of mind where the very reality of revelation is denied. As a consequence many of them have begun actually to disbelieve those books, which were once regarded as the revealed Will of God. Nowadays one comes across, though rarely, such persons even in the Muslim Community—persons who deny that the Qur-án is a verbal revelation from God. Such an idea is tantamount to holding that the words of the Holy Qur-án are the words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, who no doubt, received the ideas from God.

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Now, since the Qur-ân is the last Book of God, and the door of Prophethood has been closed for ever with the appearance of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the growth of false beliefs like the one mentioned above can only be checked if the first essential of Prophethood, namely, communication with God, continues to show itself from time to time. And as a matter of fact not a century has passed, since the passing of the Holy Prophet, that has not witnessed the appearance of persons receiving the revealed words of God. Such person in Islamic terminology is called a *Muhaddas*, being a person who has the privilege of receiving messages from God in abundance. The words of God come to such an one like a shower of rain ; but even this abundance of Divine Messages does not make him a Prophet. Such a person is not a common phenomenon, and only a selected few are deserving of this honour which in the first generation of Muslims fell to the lot of Umar. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said of him that if there could be any Prophet after him, it would be Umar ; but that since no Prophet could appear after him, Umar was certainly a *Muhaddas*, though he could not be raised to the position of Prophethood. And as I have already said, the revelation of Prophethood has been very clearly defined in the chapter, *The Sun* :

So he intimated to it by inspiration its deviating from truth and its guarding (against evil).<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, this is the very purpose of revelation. It is revelation that tells us what should be done and what should not. If such a revelation is not *furthering*, there could be no need for any revelation. But since revelation, being a matter of personal experience, runs the risk of being denied as a reality, as has happened in our own day, it is necessary that its elementary form—that is the phenomenon of God's speaking to man—should continue in human society. In short, revelation is inseparably bound up with the purification of the soul, as is stated in the final portion of the Prayer of Prophet Abraham.

(*To be continued.*)

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-ân, 91 : 8.

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### TWENTY YEARS AGO

#### SOME SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND THE WAR

The immortal Poet Hafiz has said in apology for wine that it reveals the true character of those who come under its influence . . . . This terrible war, which is shaking the very foundations of the earth by its concussions, has, in the same way, revealed the true character of the much-vaunted European civilization and culture. This ungodly civilization and materialistic culture had inherent in them those failings and weaknesses which have now become so glaringly conspicuous. . . . Drunkenness and licentiousness both are evils which generally flourish during peaceful times when nations are prosperous and joyous. The shock of the War should have killed them, but they have increased instead. Why? Because they were deeply rooted in the European Society and were never discouraged either by law or by religion. The religion most prevalent in Europe went so far as to bless wine-bibbers and to take alcoholic drinks on certain occasions became a religious duty. When the King took the pledge of total abstinence a pious Christian wrote these lines to a paper :—

“I observe that next Sunday is appointed by certain bishops to be observed as ‘Temperance’ Sunday, and the clergy are asked to enjoin upon their congregation the duty of giving up the entire use of fermented drinks during the War, because the King has thought fit to do so. It is to be sincerely hoped that they will listen to no such advice. This invasion of our Christian liberties is utterly uncalled for, and will not help, but rather hinder, the cause of the Allies. . .

“If the example of the King is ‘paramount’ what about the example of the King of Kings, who ‘Came eating and drinking’ and was called a wine-bibber and a ‘friend of publicans and sinners.’ It was Mohammad who enjoined the total disuse of wine, whereas the Lord Jesus commanded its use in one of the Chief ordinances of his Church : ‘Drink ye all of this (this wine) in remembrance of me.’

“Let those who prefer to drink barley water and lemonade, by all means do so ; but for my own part I intend to continue my occasional use of a glass of beer or wine and feel that I am none the worse Christian and citizen for doing so.”

<sup>1</sup> *The Islamic Review*, July 1915.

## APAKAH ISLAMITOE ?

### APAKAH ISLAMITOE ?

[This is the Indonesian version of our pamphlet : "What is Islam ?" It was translated by Mr. M. A. Desoeki Medan—Ed. I. R.]

**ISLAM AGAMA PERDAMAIAN.** Perkataan Islam artinja. (1) Perdamaian, (2) djalan pentjapai perdamaian, (3) tawakkal, sebab tawakkal kepada kehendak orang lain itoe adalah djalan jang paling selamat oentoek mentjapai perdamaian. Didalam agama arti perkataan itoe ialah tawakkal jang sepenoeh-penoehnja kepada kehendak Toehan.

**MAKSOED AGAMA INI.** Islam menjediakan oentoek pengikoet-pengikoetnja oendang-oendang jang tidakdapat dibantah lagi soepaja mereka dapat mengerdjakan apa-apa jang moelia dan baik pada sisi manoeesia, sehingga terdapat perdamaian sesama manoeesia.

**NABI DARI AGAMA ISLAM.** Moehammad, jang terkenal sebagai Nabinja agama Islam, adalah nabi jang penghabisan jang ditoeroenkan Toehan. Kaoem moeslim, jaitoe pengikoet2 Islam, mengakoei semoea nabi-nabi jang ditoeroenkan kedoenia ini, seperti Ibrahim, Moesa, dan Isa, jang menoendjoekkan kehendak Toehan oentoek memimpin manoeesia.

**KOER'AN.** Kitab soetji kaoem moeslim ialah koer'an. Kaoem moeslim mempertjajai jang tiap-tiap kitab soetji jang lain2 jang didatangkan Toehan, dan karena semoea kitab2 itoe telan berobah oleh perboeatan tangan manoeesia, maka koer'anlah, kitab penghabisan jang ditoeroenkan Toehan, jang menggantikan semoea kitab2 jang dahoeloe itoe.

**ROEKOEN IMAN DIDALAM ISLAM,** ada toedjoe banjknja. Pertjaja kepada (1) Allah, (2) Malaikat, (3) Kitab2 jang ditoeroenkan Toehan, (4) Pesoeroeh2 (Rasoel2) Allah, (5) Hari Penghabisan, (6) Oekoeran lebih dahoeloe dari perboeatan (oentoeng baik oentoeng boeroek datang dari Allah), (7) Pembangkitan sesoedah mati.

Hidoep sesoedah mati, menoeroet peladjaran Islam, boekanlah penghidoepan baroe, tetapi adalah tjoema samboengan dari penghidoepan sekarang ini, jang membawa jang gaib<sup>2</sup> kepada jang terang. Itoelah penghidoepan jang mempoenjai kemadjoean jang ta' terbatas, siapa-siapa mereka jang menang berdjoelang oentoek kemadjoean didalam penghidoepan ini akan masoek ke sjoerga, dan siapa<sup>2</sup> jang tiada mendapat kemadjoean didalam penghidoepan in ioleh karena perboeatan<sup>2</sup> mereka jang kedji<sup>2</sup> dan moengkar<sup>2</sup> akan mendjadi isi neraka, jaitoe satoe penghidoepan jang djaoeh sekali dari kesenangan sjoerga, malahan penoeh dengan berbagai azab dan siksa oentoek membersihkan mereka dari segala kakedjian sampai mereka sempoerna oentoek diam didalam sjoerga. Keadaän sesoedah mati adalah soeatoc gambar dari keadaän roh didalam penghidoepan ini.

Roekoen iman jang keenam selaloe mendjadi salah pengertian kepada beberapa orang jang menjamakannja dengan takdir. Seorang moeslim tiada pertjaja kepada takdir atau kedjadian jang soedah dimoestikan lebih dahoeloe daripada perboeatannja. Segala apa jang didjadiakan Toehan adalah oentoek kebaikan menoeroet peratoeran dan keadaän memakainja. Kalau tida dipakai menoeroet peratoeran dan keadaän, maka terdjadilah keboeroekan dan penangoengan.

TIANG (ROEKOEN) ISLAM, ada lima. (1) Pengakoean bahwa tida ada Toehan melainkan Allah jang Satoe, dan Moehammad itoe pesoeroehNJA, (2) mengerdjakan sembahjang, (3) mengerdjakan poeasa, (4) mengeloarkan zakat, (5) pergi hadji ke Baitoellah di Mekah.

SIFATNJA TOEHAN. Kaoem moeslim menjembah Toehan jang satoe—Jang Maha Koeasa, Maha Tahoe, Maha Adil, jang mendjadiakan segala 'alam. *Kawan*, *Pemimpin*, *Penolong*. Ta' ada jang menjeoroepaiNJA. Dia tida bersekoetoe. Dia tidak beranak dan tidak poela diperanakkan. Keadaännja ta' dapat dibagi-bagi. Dia

## APAKAH ISLAMITOE ?

adalah Tjahaja dari Sjoerga dan Boemi, jang pengasih dan penjajang, Moelia, Perkasa, Molek, Kekal ta' berbatas, pertama dan penghabisan.

**IMAN DAN AMAL.** Iman dengan tiada amal ta' ada artinja. Iman sadja tidaklah mentjoekoepi, kalau tida ditambah dengan amal. Seorang moeslim pertjaja, bahwa dia menanggoeng djawab atas segala perboeatannya pada penghidoepannya sekarang ini dan dihari jang achir. Tiap-tiap orang akan menanggoeng bebannya masing-masing, dan tiadalah seorang djoega jang dapat meneboes dosa orang lain.

**PELADJARAN2 KEMANOESIAAN DIDALAM AGAMA ISLAM.** "Tanamlah didalam dirimu sifat2 dari Toehan:" kata nabi jang moelia itoe. Toehan adalah tjonto jang teroetama bagi manoesia, dan sifat-sifatnja adalah sendi dari peladjaran2 kemanoesiaan dari kaoem Moeslimin. Kebenaran menoeroet agama Islam didapat dengan memimpin penghidoepan jang sesoeai dengan sifat-sifatnja Toehan itoe. Mengerdjakan lain dari itoe adalah dosa.

**KEADAAN2 MANOESIA MENOEROET AGAMA ISLAM.** Seorang moeslim pertjaja bahwa tiap-tiap orang itoe dilahirkan dengan tiada mempoenjai dosa, dan keadaannya itoe terboeat daripada benda jang soetji, dapat mentjapai kemadjoean jang ta' berbatas, sehingga melebihi deradjat dan pangkat malaikat, dan membawanja dekat kepada Toehan.

**KEDOEDOEKAN PEREMPOEAN DIDALAM ISLAM.** Laki-laki dan perempoean itoe datang dari asal jang sama, mempoenjai roch jang sama, dan sama-sama mempoenjai persediaan oentoek mentjapai deradjat. kebathinan dan kemanoesiaan jang tinggi. Islam memberi hak jang sama kepada laki-laki dan perempoean, begitoe djoega sesama mereka.

**PERSAMAAN DAN PERSAUDARAAN SESAMA MANOESIA MENOEROET AGAMA ISLAM.** Islam

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adalah agama Persatoean dari Toehan dan persamaän sesama manoesia. Ketoeroenan, kekajaän dan pangkat adalah tjoema benda jang datang kemoedian, boedi jang baik dan bertolong-tolongan seasma manoesia, itoelah hanja jang sebetoel-betoelnja berharga. Perlainan warna, bangsa dan paham ta' dikenal didalam pangkat-pangkat Islam. Semoea manoesia adalah satoe familie, dan agama Islam itoelah agama jang telah berhasil memtjampoerbaoerkan si koelit hitam dengan si koelit poetih, sehingga mendjadi satoe kaoem jang bersaudara.

**TIMBANGAN SESEORANG.** Islam menjoeroeh tiap-tiap orang menimbang sesoeatoe hal dan menghargai pertikaian faham, sebab, sebagai sabda nabi kita, adalah pertoebaran fikiran itoe soeatoe rachmat daripada Toehan.

**ILMOE.** Menoentoet ilmoe adalah soeatoe kewad-jiban didalam agama Islam, dan ilmoe itoelah jang meninggikan deradjat manoesia lebih daripada malaikat.

**KEMOELIAAN OESAHA.** Tiap-tiap peroesahaän dimana manoesia hidoep dengan loeroes, dihormati. Malas dan deodoek berpangkoe tangan adalah satoe dosa jang besar.

**KEDERMAWANAN (KESANTOENAN).** Semoea kepandaian dan kekajaän jang diberikan kepada manoesia adalah sebagai satoe djaminan dari Toehan, oentoek kebaikan sesama manoesia. Hidoep oentoek keperluan orang lain adalah kewadajiban bagi tiap2 manoesia, dan semoea kedermawanan dan kesantoenannja itoelah didjalankan dengan tida membeda-bedakan manoesia. Kedermawanan (kesantoenan) menoeroet Islam itoe mendekatkan manoesia kepada Toehan. Kedermawanan dan memberi sedekah adalah kewadajiban pada tiap2 moeslim, dan tiap2 orang jang mempoenjai harta jang berlebih dari satoe batas dimoestikan mengeloearkannja sebahagian, jaitoe dimoestikan dikeloearkan oleh si kaja oentoek penolong (penjantoeni) si miskin.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### CORRESPONDENCE

#### A VETERAN CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY EXAMINES AN ENGLISH CONVERT TO ISLAM.

[Some months ago, the Rev. Mr. Hawker of the Oxford Mission of Calcutta came to the Mosque, evidently with the purpose of finding out for himself if our movement here was actually gaining ground, as it is rumoured abroad. He was anxious to know if any Englishman of education and thinking was a Muslim, being at the same time quite conscious of the implications of his faith. The Imam, in his Islamic frankness, gave him the address of a newcomer to the fold of Islam—Mr. Horace Pepper of Edinburgh. The reverend gentleman utilised this address quite in the manner of a Christian missionary and bestirred himself to his utmost to estrange the mind of this brother from Islam by holding before him the garbled picture of Islam as drawn by his class. But the conquests of Islam are as frank as sure, and they can stand the onslaughts of all insinuations and seductions: and this proved as true in this case as in any other. Whatever was shown to this brother of ours as a defect of Islam, appeared to him as an additional beauty of the Faith. We wish the majority of our born Muslims had this vision of matters Islamic.]

The two letters written to us by Mr. Horace Pepper give one a fair idea of his controversy with this reverend gentleman. We take the liberty of reproducing them *in extenso*. Mr. Pepper declared his faith in Islam last year.—ED. I. R.]

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EDINBURGH.

THE IMAM,  
*The Mosque, Woking.*

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

*Wa 'alaikum Assalam.*

I thank you for your note which was sent me here, as I have removed to Edinburgh, having attained a position here. I have written to the Rev. Hawker and I wrote at length explaining my views and reasons for turning to the great truths of Islam. He has written back, sending me a pamphlet written by himself and issued at Lahore, (India). This pamphlet attempts to explain the Christian doctrine of the atonement. I have read it, and it leaves me unchanged. I cannot see the point it attempts to point out; it is just the old story of the sacrifice of Christ as a pure and spotless victim to appease the wrath of God—a doctrine I had rejected before I had ever heard of Islam. It is the old pagan idea of a sacrificial person—the idea behind all the past and present dark superstitions of the people who have always had a weakness



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for this sort of thing. As I pointed out to the reverend gentleman, H. G. Wells, in his *Outlines of History*, crushes once and for all this stupid doctrine. He says that nowhere in the Gospels did Christ ever attempt to explain this doctrine of the atonement; in other words, it is a man-made idea and was in men's minds before Christ lived. The ancient Jewish idea was similar. No, I have tried to make it clear to the gentleman that never will I accept the doctrines of Trinity, atonement or divinity of Christ. I rejected them formally before I even wrote to you last May. I am a Muslim and as a Muslim I shall go on. The reverend gentleman points out the difference between the life of Muhammad and the life of Jesus. I have told him that it is the religion that Muhammad founded that matters, not his life. Muhammad founded the great universal Faith of Islam which for purity of doctrine and clearness of policy stands out alone as an understandable religion, free from priestcraft and superstition. I am not going to judge the life of Jesus and the life of Muhammad. I am going to choose, and have chosen between the two religions they have left behind them, and to me Christianity is so unlike the teachings of Jesus that it leaves me no choice but to accept Islam, as I did years ago before I ever officially wrote to you. No amount of argument or reasoning could change my views now. I have found in Islam God's great truths and a bulwark against false teachings. Islam is to me a light that shines out bright against all the dark superstitions of official Christianity with its masses, its altars, its image-worship and its professional priests. The one thing that turned me out of the Christian Church above all others was priestcraft and false worship of images. I know Protestants do not worship images as the Romanists do, but they teach doctrines that I cannot accept and they attribute Divinity to Jesus and I cannot believe it. I have pointed out to him that nowhere in the Gospels did Jesus claim to be a god—never did he consecrate a priest or set up an altar, in other words, most of what is characteristically Christian in worship and usage, Jesus himself ignored. He continually flouted the dearest virtue of the formalist, the Sabbath day—he preached the tradition of men “full well ye reject the commandments of God to keep your own traditions.” I have pointed out to the gentleman all these things and thanked him for his interest, but I have told him definitely that I am a Muslim believing in the One God—in His mercy without intercession by anyone, and I stand by what I have done for better or for worse. May the peace of God be with you, and may He bless you all in your work for His cause. Do write to me and tell me all about the things at Woking.

Yours-in-Islam,

HORACE PEPPER.

## CORRESPONDENCE

EDINBURGH.

THE IMAM,

*The Mosque, Woking.*

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

*Assalamo 'Alaikum.*

I am very sorry I have not written to you before, but I have been working all hours, and I don't get much time for writing—so please pardon my not writing before. As regards your request that I should send you the letter I wrote to the minister, I am sorry I am unable to do so, as I have not kept a copy of it. The point that was raised was simply this. The reverend gentleman pointed out that the life of Jesus was much superior to that of Muhammad, and, as you know, I replied that it was the teachings of Islam, as compared with the teachings of Christianity, that mattered. As you say, a comparative study of the lives of the two Prophets is a nasty subject and I wrote the gentleman that I didn't wish to enter into controversy upon this subject. I agree with your splendid statement as an answer to the Christian charges against the life of our Holy Prophet. I see it quite clearly—Muhammad's example was a practicable one, and Jesus's example was, in most cases, an impracticable one for a human being to follow—in any case Christians seldom attempt to follow it, and those that do attempt to follow it are in a very great minority. The reverend gentleman did not raise the question regarding the Holy Prophet's plurality of wives, and so I did not mention the subject—what he did say was that he belonged to a brotherhood who were celibate (another Roman Catholic institution) and I asked him whatever he hoped to accomplish by denying himself God's appointed companion throughout his life. His answer was that it simply left him free to do God's work better. Of course I don't agree. Myself living here in Britain under the existing circumstances, I don't desire more than one wife. I couldn't keep more than one, anyway, and I have no desire for more, if I could. But still I see no wrong in polygamy in countries where everything is different and cannot be compared with circumstances existing here in Britain. In any case, polygamy and questions arising from it are not fundamental. I believe Islam is the Truth and has the greatest message for all mankind—the purest message, and the most straightforward teaching that was ever delivered to mankind—free of priestcraft and stupid sacraments and false gods. I assure you, I accepted Islam after five years of careful study and I am proud to belong to so mighty a movement that teaches the truth from God. I did not turn to Islam without much prayer and enquiry, but once I took the step that has given me peace and contentment, no amount of argument can turn me back from the road I have chosen. My minister friend sent me a book of the traditions. He said it would give me some shocks. I returned

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the book to him, and I told him that I saw nothing amiss. I thought the wording was very beautiful, and I would have liked to have possessed one for myself. Could you tell me where, and for how much, I could obtain a true version of these Traditions? The version he lent me was entitled *Selections from Mohammadan Traditions (Mishkatul Masa'ib* by the Rev. William Goldsack). Perhaps you can recommend a better version than this—but I would like a book of the Traditions in English to study.

Yours very sincerely-in-Islam,

VINCENT H. PEPPER.

## THE ADVENT OF MUHAMMAD FORETOLD

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

These are the days of revolution, when men would appear to entertain hatred rather than any reverence for tradition. "Down with the past" is the slogan in the air. Humanity seems prepared to build its future without any reference whatsoever to what has gone before. Still there are many who doubt if humanity can ever actually erect a wholly new structure of civilized life; and whatever hope we may repose in the present Russian spirit of progress by revolution, humanity, at bottom, is averse from taking indefinite risks of an entirely new future. That it desires change there can be no doubt—only such change as comes in the shape, as it were, of pieces grafted on to the principal body of the existing system. A change that thwarts or injures this principal body may excite radicals to hurried enthusiastic action, but can never appeal to the generality of people as a practical programme. Be this as it may, economic and political movements can achieve a measure of success by methods revolutionary, because they have facts and figures to offer that are tangible to external senses, that minister to animal needs, and promise results that are near at hand.

But religion being what it is, has to depend constantly on tradition—a reference to the past religions, prior to Islam, had this as their sole support. Islam, however, introduced for the first time reasoning and argument in the

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establishment of religious truths ; and this reasoning was drawn, first, from the phenomena of nature, and secondly, from the lessons of history. Although this latter kind of reasoning is also a reference to the past, yet it decidedly comes within the category of argument. The sort of reference to the past, however, which religion is particularly wont to make, is that comprised in tradition and prophecy, and Islam, although it had its independent way of carrying conviction to the unbelieving mind, found also the necessity of having recourse to this particular method of proving the truth of its claims. The reason is obvious. However rationalistic a religion may be, its perspective, since it has to deal with facts which require subtler faculties for their comprehension, is naturally far hazier than it is in the case of secular movements. A reference to tradition, to show in the light of present events the fulfilment of some prophecy made in the past, is helpful in creating the faith needed to take action on the lines of the new movement. It not only assists the new leader in his claims to leadership, but also increases faith in those whose prophecies he comes to fulfil. Thus, incidentally, it affords a mighty proof of the existence of God—the bedrock of religion inasmuch as it indicates the continuity of a single and conscious Will throughout successive periods of human history : and further—and this is of immediate concern—it minimises the uncertainties of treading an untrodden path—the one chalked out by the prophet or the reformer on the field. Even here there is, it is true, the danger of abuse, but where is the method which has not this danger ? Considerations such as these constitute, I hope, a sufficient justification for the publication of the present tract. Who knows how many sincere souls there may be, outside the fold, who may find in this a great sign from their Lord ?

A word in conclusion—just to guard against a misunderstanding that may arise in the wake of my contentions

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that follow. We Muslims resent Christian Missionaries quoting from the Qur-án in support of their own contentions, and yet I have myself based the relevant portion of my arguments on the Christian scriptures. The reality at the bottom of this apparent paradox is that whereas the Christians regard the source of the Holy Qur-án as unholy, and its Messenger as wholly a pretender, we Muslims look upon the source of the Bible as holy and Divine, and its Medium as a truthful man. Of course, Muslims regard the Christian scripture as interpolated, but interpolation still implies retention of some original truths.

### A UNIQUE FEATURE OF MUHAMMAD'S CLAIM

And when Allah made a covenant through the prophets: Certainly what I have given you of Book and wisdom—then an apostle comes to you verifying that which is with you, you must believe in him, and you must aid him. He said: Do you affirm and accept my compact in this (matter)? They said: We do affirm. He said: Then bear witness, and I (too) am of the bearers of witness with you.<sup>1</sup>

### THE PROMISED ONE OF ALL PROPHETS

Prophecies concerning the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) are to be found in the previous sacred books, and had great currency among all nations. In fact, those very prophecies might well have impelled both Jews and Christians to settle down in Arabia; for the land of the Promised Prophet was specified by name in their Scriptures.

The Qur-án declares that the appearance of the Holy Prophet was foretold by each and all of the preceding prophets, through whom also the covenant was made with their respective peoples, that they would accept him when he made his appearance. The distinguishing feature of the Promised One, they were told, was that he would bear testimony to the truth of all the prophets of the world. It seems that Providence had thought it fit to depute a separate prophet for each nation, in the days of yore, when the nations of the earth lived in absolute isolation

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, chapter III, verse 80.

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one from another, and modern means of communication had not come into existence. Then, to amalgamate the diverse religious systems into one all-comprehensive faith, as well as to weld humanity into one universal brotherhood, He raised up a Prophet whose mission was to the whole of mankind. Thus, while on the one hand the happy tidings of such a World-Prophet had been imparted to each preceding prophet, the Promised Prophet was, on the other, commissioned to testify to the truth of all the foregoing prophets wherever and whenever raised up the whole world over. And the Holy Prophet answers in every detail to this description. He laid it down as one of the cardinal doctrines of Faith that all the other prophets of the world should be accepted along with him. At the very opening of the Qur-án, a description of the Faithful is given in the following words :

“And those who believe in that which has been revealed to thee, and that which was revealed before thee.”<sup>1</sup>

Then, as regards the raising up of a reformer in each nation, the Qur-án makes a general statement :

“There has not been a nation but it had a warner.”<sup>2</sup>

Elsewhere, too, it says that it makes mention of certain of the prophets, while there are others who have not been expressly spoken of.<sup>3</sup> So, from both their points of view, the Holy Prophet Muhammad stands forth unique. For the predictions of all his predecessors find the due fulfilment in his person, and he alone out of all the prophets has made it a binding article of Faith to believe in all the prophets of the world. Thus, he is the last of that noble band of prophets, as foretold by all his predecessors.

The principle that the Prophet testifies to the truth of all previous revelation, furnishes a strong foundation for harmony between the various religions of the world, as well as for the unity of the human race, and the fact that all the foregoing prophets testify to the truth of the

<sup>1</sup> 2 : 4.

<sup>2</sup> 35 : 24.

<sup>3</sup> 4 : 164.

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Prophet Muhammad constitutes a yet stronger testimony to the truth of Islam and the unity of religions. There has been no prophet in any country, among any people, who has not prophesied the advent of the Prophet Muhammad. This is a point which deserves the most earnest consideration at the hands of all reasonable men. Prophets who lived thousands of years ago and in countries far distant from Arabia, all drew their knowledge from the same All-knowing Source, and all foretold the advent of a mighty Prophet in Arabia. These prophecies are not merely so many items of news—they were accompanied by the signs of the mighty hand of God, far beyond the imagination of mortal man.

### PROPHECY IN THE PARSİ SCRIPTURE

Among existing world religions, the Parsis and the Arya Samajists, on behalf of Hinduism, vie each with the other to prove a more remote antiquity for their respective faith. Learned Hindu historians, like the late Messrs. Tilak and Lajpat Rai, also admit the antiquity of both these religions, of which we now take the first. The religion of the Parsis has two collections of scriptures, *the Dasatir* and *the Zand Avasta*, which may be called respectively the Old and the New Testaments of the Parsi faith. In *Dasatir* No. 14, which is associated with the name of Sasan I, there is not only a corroboration of the doctrines and teachings of Islam, but a clear prophecy as to the advent of the Prophet Muhammad. This prophecy had gained so much currency and was deemed of so great an importance that for thousands of years after Sasan, the Parsis have been eagerly looking forward to the advent of this Promised One. St. Matthew, the Evangelist, taking advantage of this universal belief among the Parsis, sought to show that the Promised One was Jesus, but, as it happens, there is no prophecy among the Magians which can at all correspond with the figure of Jesus. On the other hand there is a prophecy contained

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in the above-named Nama No. 14 which clearly points to the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad. Thus Sasan, after depicting a state of extreme disorder and demoralization in Persia, says as follows :—

When the Persians should sink so low in morality, a man should be born in Arabia whose followers shall upset their throne, kingdom, religion and everything. The mighty stiff-necked ones of Persia shall be overpowered. The house which was built (referring to Abraham building the Ka'aba), and in which many idols have been placed, shall be purged of idols and men shall say their prayers facing towards it. His followers shall capture the towns of the Parsis and Tās and Balkh and other great cities round about. People will strive with one another, and the wise men of Persia and others will join his followers.

This prophecy is contained in a book which has always been in the hands of the Parsis. The words are most clear and unambiguous. The coming man is to be an Arab. The Persians would join his Faith. Fire-temples would be destroyed. Idols would be removed. People would say prayers facing towards the Ka'aba. Can this prophecy fit in with any person other than the Prophet Muhammad ?

### MATTHEW'S VERSION UNFOUNDED

Among the Evangelists, St. Matthew is a man with a taste and temperament of his own. Wherever he comes across even a vague rumour, he seizes upon it and applies it to Jesus. He is particularly adept in distorting texts from the ancient scriptures, clothing them with meanings of his own, and making them fit in with the life of Jesus. Where necessary he does not hesitate to alter the text even of the Old Testament (*vide* Introduction to the Bible by Prof. Horn). In Persia, the prophecy of Sasan was on everybody's lips, and people were looking forward to the advent of a Tazi man, *i.e.*, an Arab. As soon as St. Matthew came to know of this he at once coined a story about it, containing a great many things which are beyond comprehension. The fact that no other of the Evangelists has mentioned this story is a conclusive proof of its falsity.



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St. Luke, who claims to record only the authentic reports, gives us, instead, another story about some shepherds. But he makes no mention of the alleged fact that the "Magi" seeing the star, came from Persia and prostrated themselves before Jesus; and indeed the Christian tradition that a certain Magian or a King of the Magians became Christian has no foundations in fact. It is, however, not our purpose to go into such details. Suffice it to say that the prophecy about the Tazi (Arab) man had gained so widespread a currency among the Persians, that for thousands of years the Magians had been eagerly looking forward to his advent. As foretold in the prophecy, just before the coming of the Holy Prophet, the Persians had sunk to very low depths as regards morality and religion. At the hands of his followers Persia was conquered, and the wise men of Persia embraced Islam. Fire-temples were extinguished. Mosques were erected. The House of Ka'aba became the Qibla of the Persians, and thus the prophecy of Sasan was fulfilled to the very letter.

### PROPHECIES IN HINDU SCRIPTURES

In the Hindu Scriptures also there are many prophecies touching the Holy Prophet Muhammad. A few of these are in the Puranas, two of them in the Upanishads and others in the Vedas. Of the Puranic prophecies, that in the Bhavishya Purana is the clearest of all. It gives even the name and the main attributes of the Prophet, and for this reason, the Arya Samaj has tried to cast doubt on the authenticity of the passage, their only argument being to the effect that it contains a reference to the Prophet. According to Sanatanist Pandits and the vast bulk of Hindus, however, it is considered quite authentic. The prophecy runs as follows :—

Just then a man with the epithet "Illiterate," Muhammad by name, and an inhabitant of Arabia, appeared with his companions.... O denizen of Arabia and master of the world, to thee

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is my adoration ! O thou who hast found many ways and means to destroy all the devils of the world, to thee is my adoration, O pure one from among the illiterates, O sinless one, the spirit of truth and absolute master, to thee is my adoration. Accept me at thy feet.<sup>1</sup>

This is the spiritual illumination which the author of the Bhavishya Purana obtained and he described, accordingly, the coming of Prophet Muhammad.

II.—Above the Purāna in point of importance comes, in Hindu literature, the position of the Upanishads which are considered by most critics as supplementary to the Vedas. One of these Upanishads is known as Allo Upanishad. From its style and date of compilation it would seem to be a part of the Atharv Veda. In the Sanskrit lexicon, *Wachaspati*, which is considered to be of very ancient origin, the author, giving the meaning of the word Allah, says that “ Allah Sukta ” is a Sukta or song of the Atharv Veda. In *Shabdkalpadrum*, compiled by Raja Radha Kant, also “ Allah Sukta ” has been mentioned as a “ Sukta ” of Atharv Veda. “ Allo Upanishad ” has been printed apart from the Veda—one edition in Bombay along with a Gujarati translation by a Shastri Pandit, and another in Calcutta by Upendra Nath Mukhopadhyā. In this the words of the prophecy are :—

Allah is the owner of High attributes, complete, perfect, All-knowing. Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, the All-wise. Light upon light, Allah is Imperishable, One, Ever-perfect and Self-subsistent.

III.—Above the Upanishads come the Vedas and the Atharv Veda has the following clear prophecy about the Holy Prophet :—

O people, hear this most heedfully ! The man of praise (Muhammad) will be raised among the people. We take the emigrant into our shelter from sixty thousand and ninety enemies—whose means of conveyance are twenty camels and she-camels, whose loftiness of position touches the heaven and lowers it. He gave to “ Mamah Rishi ” hundreds of gold coins, ten circles, three hundred Arab horses and ten thousand cows.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bhavishya Purana, Para 3, Kanda 3, Adhyaya 3, Shlokas 5, 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Atharv Veda, Kanda 20, Sukta 127, Mantra 1—3.

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The emphasis placed on this passage is nowhere else to be met with in the four Vedas. It is true that in the text of this prophecy there is a certain amount of discrepancy in the various editions of the Atharv Veda, and it would seem that attempts have been made to amend it. The edition of the Veda printed in Ajmer differs in several words from the Sayna Bhashya text of the Atharv Veda. For instance, the Ajmer edition gives the word *ishae*, whereas Sayna Bhashya has "Rishi." It is just possible that, originally, instead of the words Mamah Rishi there may have been Muhammad Rishi. However that may be, there never has existed any such Rishi as Mamah Rishi among the Vedic Rishis. The fact that he had camels and she-camels to ride on also shows that he could not be an Indian Rishi, for, according to Manu Smriti, Shalok 201, it is forbidden for the Rishis to ride on camels. To escape from 60,000 enemies is also a peculiarity of the Prophet's emigration to Medina. The loftiness of his position, reaching up to heaven, is a translation of the Qur-anic verse. "He is on the highest horizon." Ten thousand cows refer to the 10,000 companions whom the Prophet had with him at the time of the conquest of Mecca, as also mentioned in the Bible, Deut. 33 : 2. The ten circles are the ten detachments under ten different chiefs into which his army was divided. The three hundred Arab horses also seem to indicate that the prophecy relates to the Arabian Prophet. These two Vedic Mantras refer to the two most conspicuous episodes in the life of the Holy Prophet. One is the emigration when, from the midst of 60,000 enemies bent upon taking his life, God brought him in safety to Medina. This was the height of the Prophet's helplessness. The other landmark selected from his life is the occasion when at the zenith of his glory and at the head of 10,000 angelic companions he entered Mecca in triumph, riding on a camel.

(*To be continued*)

## 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.

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

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Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the 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.

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