

Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets . . . " Holy Qur-an. 3:
"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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Miss E. Wentworth-Fitzwilliam is the daughter of the Hon. Henry Wentworth-Fitzwilliam, the second son of the 6th Earl Fitzwilliam. Her mother was lady Mary Butler, daughter of the Marquis Ormonde of Kilkenny Castle in Ireland. Miss E. Wentworth-Fitzwilliam embraced Islam recently, while her sister, Hajja Wentworth-Fitzwilliam embraced the Faith some years ago. Ed. I.R.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدًا خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

VOL. XXVI.]

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[No. 9.]

A DECLARATION

I, Miss Diana Samsome, daughter of Reginald Ernest Samsome, of Castle Hill, Reading, 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, and others, and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha il-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul Allah.

[There is but one God (Allah) and Muhammad is God's Messenger.]

(Sd.) MISS D. SAMSOME

AFFINITY BETWEEN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY¹

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

“You will certainly find the nearest in friendship to those who believe (to be) those who say: We are Christians. This is because there are priests and monks among them, and because they do not behave proudly.” (Chapter 5, verse 82.)

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

From this quotation from the Qur-án, you will find that the subject of this evening's discourse was not suggested to me by the free and tolerant atmosphere of the present times, but by a clear statement of the Qur-án—the Muslim Scripture.

There are two parts of the statement—one is that Christians are the closest in friendship to the Muslims, and second is that, guided by their monks and priests, they possess, in common with Muslims, the spirit of humility.

The history of the last thirteen hundred years would, however, appear to contradict these statements of the Qur-án. The Crusades, the Inquisition, the political attitude of Christian Europe towards the Muslim world, since the beginning of the modern era, ending in the dismemberment of Turkey, nay, the continuation of that attitude in various though subtle forms wherever European diplomacy has its grip, make it almost impossible for a Muslim or any student of the relationship between these two great religious communities to believe what the Qur-án says about it. The same difficulty lies in believing what the book says about the spirit of humility, when we see the dealings of the Imperial nations of Europe with their subject nations from the extreme East to the extreme West. For a

¹ A lecture delivered at an open meeting of the Inter-Religious Fellowship, held at 64 Great Cumberland Place, London, W. Mr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali was in the chair.

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South African native and an American negro or a Red Indian it will indeed be the hardest thing to believe. Yet, a deeper study of the subject will reveal to us that what the Qur-án says is true. We should not forget the great principle of psychology that the closer the relationship the greater the likelihood of its reaction in jealousy.

Indeed, it is this fact which accounts for the Christian's hatred for and jealousy of Muslims all the world over; and, without in any way intending to create any surprise, I may state that the nation which has been most ruthless and obstinate in its anti-Muslim policy in matters, political and economic, is spiritually the nearest to the Muslims to-day. Appearances are so often deceptive, and they have undoubtedly been so in this particular case. It is high time that both the Muslims and the British nation understood this.

As for the humility of mind, what usually strikes us is the arrogant acts of Western nations; but we seldom stop to think how would another nation have behaved with an equal amount of political power and material resources. If we turn our thoughts in that direction, and institute a comparative study of the case, we shall easily be inclined to believe also in this other statement of the Qur-án concerning the Christian nations—namely that, as a nation, they possess, in common with the Muslims, a comparatively humble and God-fearing heart.

Is this spiritual affinity between these two nations a mere co-incidence, or is it the outcome of deeper causes—some common belief, some common spiritual orientation, some common spiritual efforts? Let us examine the matter calmly. To the ordinary mind, the difference between the two religious systems is enormous. While the one insists on the Divinity of Jesus of Nazareth, the other as emphatically protests against it;

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while the one upholds the theory of vicarious atonement, the other stands for the opposite theory of personal responsibility for actions; while the one not only admits, but also stands for the Trinity in Unity with regard to the person God, the other is inexorable in the matter of His absolute Unity. It would appear as if they were poles apart, never inclined to meet anywhere. Nevertheless, a closer study of the subject will reveal that they are more similar than dissimilar, not only in their spiritual theories, but also in their spiritual allegiance.

Let us start with allegiance. Very few people here know that both Muslims and Christians inherit a common religious tradition. Apart from the fact that the Muslims believe the Torah, or the Book of Moses, the Psalms of David and the Gospels, to be among the revealed books extant to-day, to which, besides their own book, the Holy Qur-án, a reference can be made as samples of revealed guidance, the Holy Qur-án recapitulates the important incidents in both the Old and the New Testaments, and draws from them spiritual lessons of a most vital kind. So, from Adam to Jesus, the whole range of spiritual tradition is common to the Christians and to the Muslims. Nor could it be otherwise, seeing that the Prophet Muhammad claims physical and spiritual descent from Abraham, the ancestor of Jesus. If Jesus claimed to have descended from the patriarch through his second son, Isaac, Muhammad claims his descent from him through his first child, Ishmael.

It is high time it were realised that the Arabs and the Jews are cousins in blood as well as in religious traditions: hence their spiritual comrades, the Christians and the Muslims, are brothers, so to speak, in a way that no two other peoples in the world are.

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Now, this general tradition of the Old Testament is common not only between Muslims and Christians, but belongs equally to the Jews. As a matter of fact, the Jews appear to have a priority of claim in that, on grounds which are no doubt debatable. Racially the Christians, as a people, are in the same position as the Muslims as a people. Both are more or less outsiders.

More than the general tradition, however, there is a bond that ties these two great communities that has scarcely been sufficiently emphasized heretofore. It is the personality of Jesus. The warring religious communities of the world would do well to realize that of the utmost importance in a religious system is the personality of the founder. God realization in any religious community comes through its contact with the personality of the man who establishes it on the basis of Revelation. All the rest of the system is more or less of secondary importance, as far as the actual spiritual inspiration is concerned. The whole spiritual life of a nation revolves, consciously or unconsciously, round the impression of the personal character of its religious hero. This impression may be vitiated by extraneous influences, or obscured by subsequent developments, but, as long as the nation does not throw it altogether in the background as a model for spiritual conduct, it must continue to influence the moulding of its collective and individual character. Here is a great point for the consideration of both the Muslims and the Christians. It is hardly appreciated in its proper bearings that a pagan, a Jew or a Hindu intending to become a follower of Muhammad has first of all to subscribe to the Messianic claims of Jesus. It will certainly gladden the heart of a Christian with true spiritual perceptions to reflect that there are at least 400 million persons (to take a moderate computation) who, though they are not called by the name "Christians," will yet die

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for the honour and the claims of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary, and these would not admit anyone to their brotherhood, however much he may admire the Prophet Muhammad, the founder of the system, if he does not accept the Messiahship of Jesus. Not to go very far, I know at least two persons, one of whom is of European extraction, who, though they are quite willing to accept and follow the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, are nevertheless debarred from entering the Muslim fraternity on the sole ground that they insist on rejecting the Qur-ánic exaltations of Jesus and the Qur-ánic declaration that he was chosen of God. Entirely for this slight difference, although standing at the very gates of Islam, they have consistently been refused admittance into its fold. Would that our Christian friends appreciated this pathetic position of the religion of Muhammad! The Qur-án has to be believed in its entirety by a follower of Muhammad, and this book gives details of the birth, the teachings, the claims and the miracles of Jesus, and has dozens, nay scores, of references both to him and to his mother. It dedicates one of its chapters to the Lady Mary. It argues against all those charges that were levelled against her and her illustrious son by the opponents of the Christian faith, and finally makes significant prophecies about him and his followers. It may be recalled here that, in the seventh century of the Christian era, Christianity was a nonentity in the world, politically as well as culturally, and yet the Qur-án made a prophecy in these words:

“When God said: O Jesus! I will cause you to die and exalt you in My presence, and clear you of those who disbelieve, and make those who follow you above those who disbelieve, to the Day of Resurrection, etc. etc.” (3:54.)

The importance of this prophecy cannot be emphasized too much in the interests of Christian-

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Muslim friendship and co-operation. It is, so to speak, the Seal of God put upon the abiding tie between these two communities. We should note that the supremacy of the world was vouchsafed by this verse to those who follow Jesus. The history of the last 1,300 years bears eloquent testimony to the Divine character of the prophecy. Since its revelation, the followers of Jesus have obtained a distinct upper hand over those who disbelieve his original claims to Messiahship. No doubt it was the followers of Muhammad in whose hands this prophecy saw its first fulfilment, but this did not leave the history of the other section of his followers going under the appellation of "Christians" unaffected. As a matter of fact, whatever your historians may say, the rise of the Muslims synchronised with a new stir of life among the Christians. Christianity grew and prospered as Islam became stronger and stronger. Indeed, it is a perverted history that does not see the tremendous moral support that came to Christianity from the rise of Islam. *Until the rise of Islam, there was no living, progressive culture, nor any living political nation, to support the claims of Jesus.* With the all-conquering power of Islam, however, this long-felt want was removed. The victorious banner of Islam proclaimed to the world the mission of Jesus along with the mission of Muhammad.

The Eastern and the Western universities of Islam fostered a reverence and an intellectual understanding of Jesus as well as of Muhammad; and it is really difficult to visualize what would have been the fate of Christianity but for the rise of Islam.

To go back to the principal topic—the personality of Jesus from the Qur-ānic point of view is a determining factor of the trend of history, and it creates two sharp divisions in the social life of humanity, which, in its turn, throws the Muslims and the Christians inseparably into the arms of each other. Their destinies are thereby

indissolubly bound up. It is high time they realised this fact. Let them go deeper than dogmatic differences and ritualistic quibbles and discover this current of spiritual destiny that underlies their joint historical existence.

An inquisitive mind may ask here the question: Why was this personality so chosen by God? It is, no doubt, very difficult always to explain the purpose of God. What goodness in a man pleases God it is not easy for the human mind to comprehend. Yet I do not think it is difficult, even with our limited knowledge of things, to see what made Jesus so great in the eyes of the Lord. It was he who, among the Israelite prophets, tried to impress upon his community the true significance of the Lord's promise to bless the nations of the world through Abraham's progeny. Although the Gospels, *as they have come down to us*, are not very eloquent on the point, to me it seems that the spiritual bias of Jesus was inclined more towards the Gentiles than towards the Jews. It might have been the result of a certain disappointment, but that it was a fact can be seen from the fact that, in course of time, his religion came to be adopted principally by the pagan nations of the world. Thus, if Muhammad made a free gift of the spiritual blessings of the House of Abraham to the whole world, it was certainly Jesus who consciously or unconsciously paved the way for it. Further, because he was the precursor of this great revolution in the history of the Hebrew race, he had also to bear the brunt of it by himself. The Cross of Calvary was, in fact, the price of this great adventure. Small wonder, then, that Jesus should have been counted so great in the eyes of the Lord, and that the Qur-án should make him the sign of a new stage in the evolution of human destiny.

If this joint allegiance to the personality of Jesus and a common destiny prove the affinity between these

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two great religious communities, it is no doubt difficult, but not altogether impossible, also to discover a family resemblance between the two sets of religious beliefs, which, on the surface, appear so divergent. One should proceed very cautiously in this matter because, as I have already pointed out, this happens to be the sore point in the relationship between these two communities. I, therefore, request you both, my Muslim and my Christian friends, to give me all your sympathy as I deal with this part of the subject.

The most important item in the Christian Creed, which presents also the most vexed problems to us, is the doctrine of the Trinity—three persons in One Godhead; but, to our great relief, we find that three significant appellations are given respectively to the three persons: one is the “Father,” the other is the “Son,” and the third is the “Holy Ghost.” Looking to the Muslim Creed, we find the first three items in it are: (1) belief in the One Supreme God, (2) belief in the angels and (3) belief in the Divine Revelations together with their mediums, called Prophets. Allowing for the Hellenistic colouring that undoubtedly has tinged the Christian Creed in the course of transmission, does not a discerning eye discover a clear family resemblance between these two sets of beliefs? For it need not shock a Muslim to think that prophets are, metaphorically speaking, the “sons of God” just as incorrigible sinners may be called the “sons of the Devil.” It is true the Holy Qur-án does not use the word “Father” with reference to God, because of its having been misunderstood in the past on account of its carnal associations, and uses the safer and more comprehensible term “Rabb,” which means “Creator,” “Sustainer” as well as “Evolver” of the destiny of Creation.

Nevertheless, for the sake of a closer understanding between ourselves and our Christian friends, we must

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make it clear that the idea of God's spiritual Fatherhood of humanity in general, and of righteous people in particular, is embodied in the Islamic conception of Him. There seems to be no harm in using expressions of human relationship in a metaphorical sense in matters spiritual as long as we are not liable to be misunderstood. After all, the Holy Qur-án has itself used such an expression with regard to certain sinners as "the brothers of the Devils." In fact, the righteous servants of God—to borrow a Biblical expression—"are not *of* this world, although they are *in* this world." No doubt they are born in the flesh, but the spiritual birth which they have later on, through their complete submission to God, supersedes their fleshly birth, since the former brings a higher form of life than does the latter. Whatever proceeds from them of thought or action is not of the flesh but of the soul, absorbed in the light of God. Potentially, no doubt, every human being, as the Bible would put it, is, in this sense, a "child of God." But its realisation comes only to a few who can be called "the children" or "the sons" of God as they are worthy of this honourable title. Now, a prophet, or an inspired reformer appears in a religious community when this sense of the spiritual connection is altogether forgotten by it. Only one man has the renewal of the sense of this Godward journey of the human soul. To one man alone, amongst the whole nation, is God a reality. That he should regard himself, or be regarded as, "the Son of God" of his own time and people is certainly quite pardonable.

Thus, if our Christian friends could see their way to overcome a certain weakness characteristic of almost all religious communities, and extend to the prophets of God, both Hebrew and otherwise, this spiritual sonship of God, their doctrine of the Trinity will appear not in any way disagreeing with the first three articles of the Muslim Creed. Our friends will do well to bear in mind

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that Jesus never tried to monopolise the spiritual fatherhood of God for his own self. The expression "Our Father in Heaven" in the Christian Lord's Prayer, is an ample testimony to this fact. It is evident that, according to him, all prayerful minds can have the realisation of this spiritual Fatherhood of God. Angels, it may be mentioned here, are, according to Islam, the agencies through the medium of which Divine revelation is transmitted to the prophet's heart, and are also the source of power for good in every heart. Evidently these functions of the angels are practically the same as those allotted to the Holy Ghost by the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. The only residuary difference between the two sets of beliefs will, therefore, be that whereas, according to Islam, both the spiritual son, or the sons of God, and the Holy Ghost, are the creations of God, and, as such, dependent on Him for their very existence, in Christian theology they are uncreated and are co-eternal with God. On the other hand, there has been no uniform opinion on this point within the Christian fold either.

Next, the idea of Resurrection, with but slight difference, is common to both. Islam does not support the idea of eternal hell, and here it may appear to differ from the Christian idea of hell. Yet, to our great belief, the Roman Catholic Church has preserved for us the idea of Purgatory—which is the same as the Muslim hell. The Islamic hell is no place for eternal damnation, either for the believer or the non-believer. God's quality of mercy does not permit of any eternal torture or punishment for any created being. Hell is, and should be, a place of purging and curing, and so it is conceived in Islam.

If the concessions implied in the Roman Catholic idea of Purgatory are extended to non-believers as well, that will be exactly what Muslims understand by "hell."

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Still another conception peculiar to Christianity is the idea of "Salvation by Grace;" but, in a wider sense, this doctrine is also Islamic. There is a verse in the Qur-án: الرحمن علم القرآن "The Beneficent God it is Who taught the Qur-án." In other words, it is the attribute of Beneficence in God that is responsible for the sending of the Prophets and the Revelations to provide for the spiritual requirements of humanity. If our Christian friends could give the word "Grace" the widest significance it can bear, and not insist on its bearing the peculiar sense of salvation through the blood of Jesus, they will be standing for the truth for which Muslims also stand, and which has been denied by some of the new sects in Christianity. The idea underlying the phrase "Salvation by Grace" from the Islamic point of view, which might have been in the beginning the sense equally in Christianity, is that the human mind, as it is constituted, cannot unerringly walk in the direction of God, however strong its spiritual urge may be, unless God gives a special pull from above in the shape of revelations. This idea cuts at the roots of the doctrine that the human reason is enough to discover the Will of God for man, and proclaims the need of a special act of Grace on the part of God for the fulfilment of the spiritual destiny of humanity. So, believing in the personal responsibility of actions, as the Muslims do, they also subscribe to the doctrine of the "Salvation by Grace" although in a different meaning.

Lastly, there is the idea of Atonement. Given a liberal interpretation, this idea also will be found subscribed to by the Muslims. If the personal example of the religious hero serves as an agency for reconciliation between man and his Creator, all religious personalities do act as Atoners, because they create an Atonement between God and man. As a matter of fact, the Muslim doctrine of "Shafaat" or "Intercession" embodies this

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idea. As for the idea of suffering associated with Atonement, this seems to be the necessary corollary. After all, where is the reformer or the person who reconciles man with God who has not suffered at the hands of those whom he wants to reclaim? This suffering, being thus the common lot of all regenerators of humanity, may be taken to be the appointed price for the spiritual weakness of the generality of mankind. This pathetic lot of all prophets is a recurring burden of the Qur-ánic exhortations. So, in this particular idea, as well, there are many meeting points between Christianity and Islam.

Passing from the Creed to the spirit, the sublimest morality in Christianity is unreserved submission to the Will of the Lord: "Not my Will, but Thine be done." In the religion of Muhammad, the very name "Islam" signifies the necessity of this surrender before the Divine purpose. The word "Islam" means submission. It is to this submission of the unwilling physical self of man, to the Will of God that the whole moral and social Code of Islam is directed. Christianity stands also for peace in the world of matter, as well as, I presume, in the world of spirit. The emblem of the Olive Branch indicates that spirit of Christianity. Jesus has been given the title of "Prince of Peace." Here again, the word "Islam" also means "making of peace." So the objectives of the two religions are not only similar, but, we might say, even identical. Thus we see that Islam and Christianity possess not only a common tradition, which is of blood as well as of spirit, but also at bottom the same kind of religious ideas and the same objects in view; and, what is even more important, their spiritual allegiances are not mutually exclusive in that the central figure in Christianity is also the object of veneration for the Muslims. I do not deny that there are differences, but we must remember that even two brothers are not exactly

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alike. Besides, it cannot be said that there is absolute unanimity within the Christian Church itself.

Why then this prolonged animosity between these two communities? one may ask. There is no reply, except the one I have already given, *viz.* because they are so closely related. Is it not time that they realised their affinity and took steps to reduce the gulf of difference which, by its enormous dimensions, is threatening the cause of religion by emboldening forces inimical to religion? That question I leave for you to answer, my Muslim and Christian friends here present.

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF EARLY MUSLIMS

BY SYED MUZAFFAR-UD-DIN NADVI, M.A.

“Burn old school books—teach great history instead of hole and corner history—two-thirds of the teaching profession is in need of being reconditioned or superannuated—so we have no time to waste if our schools are not to go on delivering, year by year, fresh hordes of ignorant, unbalanced, uncritical minds, at once suspicious and credulous, weakly gregarious, easily baffled and easily misled into the monstrous responsibilities and dangers of the present world—mere cannon fodder and stuff for massacre and stampedes.” These are some of the observations made by H. G. Wells about the educational system of Great Britain. The same remarks, with greater force, apply also to the system of education that obtains at present in India.

That the structure of Indian education needs a thorough change—an overhauling from top to bottom—admits of no doubt. If Indian scholars and politicians have ever agreed on any one point in these days, it is that the system of Indian education has failed, and badly failed. Neither has it gone far enough to remove the

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illiteracy of the masses, nor has it provided a cultural background for the majority of students of Indian universities. All that our education has achieved so far consists in a supply of clerks and office-bearers to the Government and commercial firms. It gives no practical bend to the minds of our students; it does not cultivate their brains in the true sense of the term; it does not encourage the critical study of things; and, last but not least, it does not inspire confidence and self-reliance, so essential for success in the struggles of life. In short, it does not teach us how to live our lives, though it teaches us almost all the other subjects under the sun.

Scholars and educationists have, from time to time, formulated schemes of educational reforms, and some of these reforms have been incorporated in the educational system of the country but, with all these modifications, there has not been a marked improvement in our environment or outlook: What is needed at present is not a change here or an alteration there, but a complete revolution of the whole system of education. Unless, therefore, we approach the subject from that basis, we cannot rely much on schemes of reform that are being published by educationists from time to time.

In the present article, I propose to enumerate some of the outstanding features of the educational system of early Muslims, with a view to enabling the reader to compare and contrast the present system of education with that of the early Muslims and to see for himself which one suits our needs and requirements more fittingly and which serves human purposes more satisfactorily.

(1) Education was compulsory The Prophet of Islam made it incumbent on every Muslim boy and girl without exception to seek learning inasmuch as he said definitely: "The seeking of knowledge is compulsory for every Muslim man and woman."

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"Seek knowledge even though it be in China." Early Muslims believed that, just as one could not go without food, so also one could not do without education. In consequence, we find that almost all Muslims were literate.

The enforcing of compulsory education is still agitating the minds of educationists in India and in some other countries. It is surprising indeed that, in the present state of human emancipation, some countries and governments have not been able to introduce compulsory education, whereas Islam enforced compulsion in education more than thirteen centuries ago, when many parts of the globe were wrapped in the darkness of ignorance.

(2) Education was free Knowledge was freely imparted to boys and girls all over the Muslim world. Students had not to pay a single farthing for acquiring knowledge—no admission fee, no tuition fee and no examination fee. Nor were teachers disposed to accept any remuneration for their teaching work. As it was their duty as true Muslims to help the poor, feed the hungry and clothe the naked, so also was it their duty to diffuse learning among the illiterates free of cost, with a view to assisting them in their intellectual emancipation and cultural regeneration.

(3) Education was open to all During Muslim rule, knowledge was imparted to its seekers irrespective of the religion they professed or the countries to which they belonged. According to the Vedic instructions, only high-class Brahmins and not the low-class Hindus, are entitled to acquire knowledge, but this sort of discrimination between man and man is against the basic principle of Islam. Islam stands for social equality, political democracy and universal brotherhood and, as such, it does not treat any class of humanity as helots or untouchables. During the first

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two or three centuries of Muslim rule, educational institutions had no building of their own. They were generally housed in mosques which, with remarkable catholicity, were open to all, Muslims and non-Muslims, alike. Important universities were visited by men of different nationalities who assimilated Islamic culture and spread it in their own countries. Teachers often lectured to students in an open space or under the shade of a tree and helped the masses, without distinction of caste or creed, in their struggle for intellectual enlightenment and cultural emancipation.

(4) Education aimed at specialisation Students were at perfect liberty to choose any subject or subjects for study, according to their taste. There was no restriction, from within or from without, on scholars taking up this science or that science in the course of study. The aim of Muslim education was not only to produce learned men but also to encourage genius, and hence students had a free hand in the matter of selecting a subject for specialisation.

At present, boys and girls are taught a variety of subjects in schools and colleges, but no serious attempt is made by the teachers, or by the taught, to specialise in any one branch of learning. Students have to learn too many things with the result that they become jacks of all and masters of none—with, of course, some notable exceptions. The case of the early Muslims was altogether different. They applied themselves to a few subjects only (generally one or two, in addition to the theological learning) and mastered them thoroughly. They aimed at quality and not quantity, and their education was creative and not imitative.

(5) Education was free from State control At present, the entire system of education is controlled by the State and our mentality has become such that we attach more importance to a Government institution

than to a public one. The case was the reverse during the Muslim rule. In the first place, the State had no control, direct or indirect, over the internal or external administration of academic institutions. It had nothing to do with their curricula, courses of studies, method of teaching, arrangement of classes, etc. Each institution was a self-supporting unit with full autonomous powers. Its revenue accrued largely from public endowments and donations. In the second place, those few madrasahs which were under the supervision or control of the State were not held in high esteem and did not enjoy the confidence of the public at large.

Muslims generally believed (and believe still) that the propagation of culture is not as much the duty of a State as it is the duty of public institutions. History testifies that the virtual independence of early Muslim institutions stimulated a spirit of independence among the seekers after learning. Intellectual liberty and cultural freedom are possible only when there is an atmosphere of freedom—an environment in which the human brain finds its fullest expression without let or hindrance, without fear or favour.

(6) Education had no age-limit The Prophet of Islam said: "Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave." From birth to death, man has to prosecute his studies unabated. Man is never too old to learn. The whole human life is a period of study. Both are co-existent and co-extensive. The present-day system of education, quite illogically, seeks to teach us the maximum number of subjects in the minimum period of time, and the result is obvious.

(7) Education was an end in itself During the Muslim rule, education was not a means to an end, but an end in itself, *viz.* the development of the brain and the emancipation of the soul. Modern students have their own ambitions, higher than the peaks of the

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Himalayas, but very few of them, if any, have "education" for its own sake as their final ambition or aim of life. Almost all of those who go to schools and colleges do so, not so much to extend the bounds of their knowledge as to extend the chances and prospects of their careers. Education has become a mere stepping-stone to a government post. Thus, in Indian universities, the real sort of education is seldom imparted. It is only instruction that we get, and no education. Hence the propagation of culture is out of the question.

I cannot do better than conclude my article by quoting a passage from "History of Islamic Civilization," Volume II (page 46), by the late Khuda Bakhsh.

"What then is the lesson which the history of Islamic Education reinforces? Its outstanding feature is its freedom from State control, an anticipation of the most enlightened modern view of to-day. The entire system owed its existence and continuance to a pure and pressing demand for light and lore. It was a system not imposed from above, but which drew its sustenance and support entirely from the people. It was liberal, for it set no barriers to light; it was free, for with a free hand it lavished its gifts; it was widespread, for few escaped its influence; it was corporate and organised, for it knit the whole of the Islamic world into one indivisible cultural unity; it was bold, challenging, scientific, shirking no conclusion, fearing no consequences, disdaining no guidance. It was an end in itself—the end being the glory of the mind, the adornment of the soul, the making of a good citizen."

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MUHAMMAD MY MASTER

BY HAMID RAZA, B.A. (ALIG.)

(Continued from Vol. XXVI, page 296.)

McCabe is of the opinion that "this wonderful triumph of the new scepticism, that is to say, the new non-Christian or non-religious humanism, was repeated in every country in Europe." This non-Christian humanism has its source in Islam which is responsible for introducing a humanist background of modern literature. Marlowe, Walter Raleigh and Milton were Rationalists. Milton's Arianism and his views of polygamy were considered as heterodox. Coming to the standard American poets, one finds that they, too, share the new revolutionary thought. Hawthorne, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, O. W. Holmes, were all Unitarians. The Unitarian philosophy is merely a denial of Jesus' divinity coupled with an admiration of him as a man. It has undoubtedly received a renewed zeal and power in these modern times from the religion of Muhammad. These poets found no inspiration in Christianity. Emerson says that Christianity has become a Mythos, as the poetic teaching of Greece and Egypt before it. James Russel Lowell, Edgar Allan Poe, Leland, Bret Harte and Walt Whitman were Rationalists out and out. "In England—in Europe generally,—a small minority at least of the more distinguished poets were Christians. In America none was."*⁵² The literature of the nineteenth century confirms our thesis that its non-ascetic tendencies are a distinct creation of Islam. Maeterlinck, Maupassant, Moreau, Victor Hugo in France; Fischer, Grillparzer, Nietzsche, J. P. Richter, Heine, Goethe, Schiller, Fichte, Kant, Spengler in Germany; E. de Amicis, Boito, Pascoli, A. de Quental and Rapisardi in Italy and Spain; Baggesen, Count

* 52 Ibid, p. 58.

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Gyllenborg, Ibsen, Kellgren and Strindberg in Northern Europe, have enthusiastically preached against that quietism and asceticism which has influenced the history of the Church for ages. Darwin, Huxley, Haeckel, Freud, MacDougall, Marx, Bergson, Ingersoll, William James, Hoffding, Lecky, Shaw, Wells, Bradley, Alexander, Eddington, James Jeans, Arthur Keith, General Smuts, to mention only a few typical protagonists of modern thought, have attempted to formulate a new creed discouraging the old ethics of "asceticism." In their campaign against Monachism they have received their inspiration from Muhammad. Even Luther is inspired by the Prophet in his bold denunciation of the corruption of Christianity. Islam is the guide of Nietzsche in his classic utterance on asceticism:

"And if he (man) founded monasteries, and inscribed over their portals. 'The Way to Holiness,' I should still say: What good is it? It is a new folly!" A strong, mighty, and magnificent man, overflowing with life, is born to evolve finally into the Superman with overpowering passion as the aim of his life, hope and will.

"Islam is the most complete, the most sudden, and the most extraordinary revolution that has come over any nation upon earth."*⁵³ In its relation to modern scientific thinking modern socio-economic problems, †⁵⁴ and inter-cultural contacts, Islam fulfils the higher demands of humanity. It has waged a ruthless war against all agencies of exploitation and soul-killing ignorance. Muhammad has increased human happiness

* 53 R. Bosworth Smith, "Mohammad and Mohammedanism," p. 105.

† 54 For the Islamic solution of the present-day economic difficulties, see the exhaustive and laborious article "Islam's Solution of the Basic Economic Problems," by Dr. M. Hamid Ullah, Ph. D., published in the "Islamic Culture," April, 1936. N. P. Agnide's "Mohammedan Theories of Finance" should be read with care.

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and liberty by giving no power—temporal as well as spiritual power—into the hands of the priestly caste whose claims and privileges have so greatly hampered the growth of civilization. The institution of priesthood has done the greatest harm to the interests of spiritual religion. The spiritual monopoly of this class is perhaps the most dishonourable shame in the entire annals of the human race. The advance of civilization has unfortunately not realised the enormity of this crime. Religion under the sway of the priests has been an opiate of the people in the East as well as in the West. European History will never forget her struggles against the Popes, and the Brahmins have had no less glorious (?) record to have been the guardians of the souls of men in Hindustan. Muhammad is the greatest benefactor of the human race as he has expelled for ever the blighting shadow of the priest from the world of religion. By this single measure, he changes the entire course of religious and secular history, and saves religion from being a branch of statecraft, a plaything of politics. The West is still under the pernicious control of its priests and statesmen, and has to carry on a deadly struggle against their exploitation.

Islam is, to quote Caetani's phrase, "a grande rivoluzione" in the world of religion, and Muhammad is the most successful teacher to control the forces of history, and thereby to create a fresh world of ideals. He awakens the world-shaking psychological forces and brings the renaissance of the spirit of Man. He is the last of the line of the Prophets* 55 خاتم النبيين and emancipates his followers "by giving them a law which is realisable as arising from the very core of human conscience." The idea of the finality of "prophethood"

* 55. The Qur-an, 33: 40.

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in Islam deserves the most serious attention of mankind. It does *not* imply stagnation but has a great cultural value of its own. It rather emphasises the progressive reality of life and initiates a cultural activity culminating in a dynamic view of life. No spiritual surrender to any human being after Muhammad is necessary. The idea of finality of revelation in Islam has nothing to obstruct the free passage of life, as Islam is essentially creative, and freedom is the very breath of its nostrils. As a matter of fact, the interests of Islam are on the side of creative forces rising in revolt against the tyranny of mechanism. To turn to Islam after reviewing the old religions and cults is to undergo a definite and healthy change of intellectual climate. We have ostensibly left the religion of the Hebrew Prophets and entered the new domain of Islam. Humanity is reborn to tackle her problems and has a new wisdom, a saner intellectual world. "The birth of Islam," observes Iqbal, "is the birth of inductive intellect." The abolition of priesthood and hereditary kingship, the constant appeal to reason and experience in the Qur-án, and the emphasis that it lays on Nature and History as sources of human knowledge, are all different aspects of the same idea of finality. The idea, however, does not mean that mystic experience which qualitatively does not differ from the experience of the Prophet, has now ceased to exist as a vital fact The idea of finality, therefore, should not be taken to suggest that the ultimate fate of life is a complete displacement of emotion by reason. Such a thing is neither possible nor desirable. The function of the idea is to open up fresh vistas in the domain of man's inner experience.*56

Mankind is to-day at the cross-roads. Elementary decencies of human life are threatened by the gigantic

* 56. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, "Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam," pp. 176-77.

conflicts of ideologies, and materialistic rationalism has brought "an insensitiveness to values and a sacrifice of the individual to the mechanical which is essentially self-destroying." The future of religion and the future of civilization are thus hanging in the same balance. Fascist imperialism has brought a world crisis and religion is to-day but an instrument of European chancellories for imperialist expansion. The incoherence of Christianity and its apparent incompatibility with modern knowledge seems to have aggravated the task of religion. Communism despairs of humanity, as it is; and, finding it already half-mechanised, completes the process. The world to-day is suffering from a tremendous spiritual chaos. Islam thus finds man torn and frustrated between the old tyranny of the beast within and the new tyranny of the slave turned master—the machine. There is a world hunger for all that Islam claims to give as a tree gives its fruits. The application of its principles is *the way* by which the world can recover and move forward. Islam is absolute actuality incorporated into human life and stands revealed both in the witness of history and in the urge of the present. The expression of its creative force among men in the terms of righteousness, justice, brotherhood and love of God has been potential. Islam alone can save us from the inhumanities of a one-sidedly materialistic trend of thought. The present world crisis is ultimately spiritual and moral. Islam alone solves the great problem with which every society stands confronted, because it contains the ultra-rational sanctions for those onerous conditions of life which are essential to it, and yet allows free play to those intellectual forces which contribute to raise to the highest degree of social efficiency the whole of its members. A society of nations is impossible without those ultra-rational attitudes which either instinct or religion must create. Its maintenance, however, is

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dependent upon the co-operation of spiritual insight with prudence. Here also Islam solves the knotty problem of international politics. As Snouck Hurgronje points out: "The ideal of a league of human races has been approached by Islam more nearly than by any other religion; for the league founded on the basis of Muhammad's religion takes the principle of the equality of all human races so seriously as to put other communities to shame." That Islam has reached the acme of Divine wisdom none will deny. Goethe's classic tribute to Islam is significant: "You see this teaching never fails; with all our systems, we cannot go, and generally speaking no man can go, further than that." Islam is thus the guiding spirit of all that is best in the systems of the East and of the West.

So let us follow our Master in the true spirit of his companions and children.

ISLAM—A MESSAGE OF PEACE

BY C. A. SOORMA.

(Continued from Vol. XXVI, page 306.)

CHAPTER IX

THE DEATH OF THE PROPHET

After performing *the Hajj-ul-Balagh* or *the Final Hajj* the Prophet returned to Medina. He was sick and weary, but, nonetheless, he led the public prayers until within three days of his death.

"One night, at midnight, he went to the place where his old companions were lying in the slumber of death, and prayed and wept by their tombs, invoking blessings for his companions resting in peace." He chose Ayesha's house, close to the mosque, for his stay during his illness, and, as long as his strength lasted, took part in public prayers. The last time he appeared in the mosque he

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was supported by his two cousins, Ali and Fazl, the sons of Abbas. A smile of inexpressible sweetness played over his countenance, and was remarked by all who surrounded him. After the usual praises and hymns to God, he addressed the multitude thus:

“Muslims, if I have wronged any one of you, here I am to answer for it; if I owe aught to any one, all I happen to possess belongs to you.”

Upon hearing this, a man in the crowd rose and claimed three *dirhams* (about three annas) which he had given to a poor man at the Prophet's request. They were immediately paid back, with the words:

“Better to blush in this world than in the next.”

The Prophet then prayed and implored heaven's mercy for those present, and for those who had fallen in the persecution of their enemies; and recommended to all his people the observance of religious duties *and the practice of a life of peace and good-will* and concluded with the following words of the Qur-án:

“The dwelling of the other life We will give unto them who do not seek to exalt themselves on earth or to do wrong; for the happy issue shall attend the pious. (*The Holy Qur-án, Chapter XXVIII, verse 83.*)

“After this, Muhammad never again appeared at public prayers. His strength rapidly failed. At noon on Monday (12th Rabi I, 11 A.H. or 8th June 632 A.D.) whilst praying earnestly in whisper, the spirit of the Great Prophet took flight to the blessed companionship on high.” (*Ameer Ali, The Spirit of Islam*, pp. 116-17.)

As I stood before the shrine of this mighty and yet poor King, my feelings—and the feelings of all those who were there—got the better of me. I wept as I had never wept before! In his presence, we all felt so small,

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so insignificant, so utterly contemptible. Right before me in his eternal sleep lay one who had endured much, and suffered and sacrificed much in the cause of Truth, one who gave to the world a noble conception of Nature, of man's relationship to the Almighty, of the duty of tolerance and brotherhood. A memory of things beautiful, of a world of infinite peace and contentment, rose before me. It was hard to tear myself away from his august presence. He is a link that binds over three hundred millions of humanity into one single, living and enduring brotherhood. They sang his praises in all the known languages of the world. It was the sweetest music that I had ever heard!

HEROIC DEEDS OF MUSLIM WOMEN

BY SYED SULAIMAN NADVI.

(Continued from Vol. XXV, page 444.)

The madness of the Crusades had not only overtaken the male population of Europe, but the egregious frenzy had also made the Christian women rise to the occasion. Amad Katib says that scores of Christian women always remained present in the fighting field. The Muslim women also did not remain unaffected by the hardships and exploits of the Muslim soldiers. When Usama, a Muslim Amir, went on to the Crusade, his mother and sister accompanied him, and clad in arms they helped Usama in his fight against the Christians.¹

The religious zeal of the Muslim mothers did not fail to produce its desired effect upon their children. The Christians were exhausted as a result of the long siege of Akaka, but they had grown friendly with the Muslim soldiers and once they proposed a fight between

¹ Vide "Haquq-ul-Mira'at Val Islam," by Ahmed Bek Ajayaf, the Russian.

the children of the Cross and the Crescent. Children rushed forward from both sides and fought with one another. The little cubs of the Muslims encircled the Christian lambs and bound them tight in ropes.¹

India is generally not mentioned when one narrates the historical glories of Islam. But we propose to take India also within our scope. We find a large number of Muslim women in the Islamic history of India, noted chiefly for their high sense of chivalry, heroism and courage.

Raziya Sultana, the daughter of King Iltumish, ruled for a shorter period of time, but in a better way than any Muslim queen did. Ibn Batuta, who came to India in Muhammad Tughlak's reign, writes that "Raziya rode out in man's attire and clad in arms." It was usual with the kings of India that when they went on a hunting expedition, ladies and female attendants accompanied them. Once Iltumish went to hunt lions, and the ladies of his harem followed him at a distance. A lion came suddenly out of his den and leapt furiously upon the king. Raziya hastened skilfully to the spot, and with her sabre inflicted masterly strokes on the lion, which fell half-dead to the ground.

When she succeeded to the throne, she ruled with stern and enviable authority. The nobles grew powerless and their selfish ambitions found no place in the realm. Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Vizier of the State, Malik Izuddin, Malik Saifuddin, Malik Allauddin and others who were for long the adherents of the State rose in rebellion, besieged Delhi and won over the armies, which came to Raziya's help. But Raziya defended herself alone, and dissolved the besieging concourse with great military tact. In 637 A.H. she herself led the army against the rebellious Governor of Lahore. She next summoned

¹ Al-Fatah-ul-Qasi fi Al-Fatah-ul-Qudsi.

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the army when the Governor of Bhatinda rose in revolt, but she was arrested on the way through the treacherous infidelity of her servants, and her brother Muizuddin was proclaimed king. After she was released from prison, she organised her troops afresh and fought for the throne of Delhi thrice, but her army was quite new and untrained, so she sustained defeats.¹

In this connection we come across a strange incident in Allauddin Khilji's reign, which enhances the historical glories of the Muslim rule in India. Allauddin, a man of undaunted courage, lofty ambitions and imperious authority, is an extraordinary figure in the annals of Muslim History. When he successfully opposed the savage raids of the Tartar hordes which the invulnerable fortresses of Khawrizm and Baghdad, the high walls of China, and the adamantive forces of Russia and Iran failed to do, he, like Alexander the Great, began to dream of worldwide conquests. One day he said in his court that there was left no kingdom in India which could dare oppose him. The Raja of the fortress of Jalawar, Kaner Deo, was present in the court and he retorted haughtily that Jalawar would not acknowledge his authority.

The Sultan was irretrievably enraged but kept silent on the occasion. After three days he sent the Raja away from Delhi and gave him leave to make preparation with all his resources to resist his invasion. Three months later, the Sultan sent his female slave Gul-e-Behisht (Flower of Paradise) in command of an army to Jalawar. Gul-e-Behisht reached Jalawar very swiftly. The Raja could not oppose her in the open field and closed himself within the fortress. Gul-e-Behisht besieged the Rajah and conducted the skirmishes to the great bewilderment of her opponents. The

¹ "Tarikh Akbari" (Ms.), by Mulla Nizam-ud-Din Herwai; description of Raziya.

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fortress was on the point of being subdued when Gul-e-Behisht fell seriously ill and the cruel hand of death cut short her career.

After she died the Rajah came out of the fortress and beat back the Imperial army. Gul-e-Behisht's son, Shahin, was killed by the Raja, but a new commander-in-chief, Kamaluddin, came and conquered Jalawar.

At the end of the seventh, and beginning of the eighth century a great revolution took place in the world. Amir Timur rose like a cyclone from Turkistan and enfeebled the powerful kingdoms of the Turks, shook the foundations of Damascus and Arabia, put out the twinkling light of the Tughlaks, and laid the foundation of the Moghul kingdom in India, which has been unrivalled up to this time by any kingdom established in this country. Timur's conquest of India bore fruit one hundred and twenty-five years later in the shape of the glorious rule of the Moghuls which commenced with Zahiruddin Shah Babur.

Did women contribute nothing to these conquests? The world-conquering forces of Timur comprised a number of women, who fought in battles, sallied forth arrayed as opponents, stood firm against valiant enemies, manœuvred swords manfully, discharged arrows skilfully, and did not in any way lag behind men.¹

¹ "Ferishta," Vol. I, p. 128, Nawal Kishore Press.

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Apply to the Muslim Book Society, Azeez Manzil, Brandreth Road, Lahore (Punjab, India); or Bashir Muslim Library, The Mosque, Woking, England.

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL POINTS IN THE QUR-AN

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL POINTS IN THE QUR-AN

BY PROF. SYED MUZAFFAR-UD-DIN NADVI, M.A.

(Continued from Vol. XXVI, page 38.)

CHAPTER III

Hadramaut or Hazarmaveth

The portion of Arabia occupied by the descendants of Hadramaut (Hazarmaveth), son of Qahtan (Joktan), is named after him even to the present day. Hadramaut is situated on the extreme south of Arabia, on the coast of the Arabian Sea and on the east of Yemen. The descendants of Hadramaut established an independent kingdom, which was mentioned by the Greeks as well as by the Muslim historians. Archæological experts have also discovered the names of some kings of that House. The word "Hadramaut" occurs in Greek in different forms. e.g., "Asarmouth" (S. Jerome), "Astamitæ" and "Chatramotitæ" (Pliny), and "Adramitai," "Chathramitæ" and "Chatramotitæ" (Ptolemy).¹

Arab historians have not given a detailed account of Hadramaut, but they testify that his family also, like the Sabæans, produced a number of great kings, entitled '*Aydhil*'. According to them, "Their kings equalled the Tubba' kings of Yemen in fame and reputation." Ibn-i-Khaldûn also mentioned some of the kings of this family in his history. Nashwân bin Sa'id, the Himyarite, referred to them in his "Qasida-ul-Himyariyya."² As regards the descendants of Hadramaut, Ibn-i-Khaldûn says: "Most of them perished and the survivors were merged in the members of the Kinda tribe and were counted as such."

As the Hadramauts occupied the coasts of the Arabian Sea facing the south of India, they were

¹ Vide Forester's "Historical Geography of Arabia," Vol. I. Sec. 2.

² Vide "Qasida-ul-Himyariyya," a manuscript in the Bankipur Library, Patna.

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masters of the maritime trade of India. The commercial business of India was transacted through them. They were expert mariners and had colonies in the East Indian Islands, Java, Sumatra, and almost all the Indian coasts. They formed a part of the Deccan army until the rise of the Mahrattas in India. The expansion of Islam in those islands and in coastal towns was due to their efforts.

Hadramaut and the Old Testament.—The tribe of Hadramaut is mentioned once in the Old Testament along with the sons of Joktan. In another place, we find "Haran and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur and Chilmad, were thy merchants" (Ezekiel, XXVII, 23). The port of Canneh is mentioned in inscriptions also.

Hadramaut and Greeks.—Greek historians also referred to the commercial relations between Hadramaut and India. According to Eratosthenes (276--194 B.C.), Hadramaut, with Sabbathath as its capital (Sabbathath was originally Shabwah, which is still a famous town in Hadramaut), lies on the eastern border of Yemen; and the whole place is noted for perfumeries. There grew the most beautiful fruits without number, and there was an inexhaustible abundance of animals of every kind. Hadramaut is forty days' journey from Sheba, and both the towns are exceedingly rich and have many royal and religious buildings. According to Pliny, Hadramaut was the name of a part of Saba, with Sabbathath as its chief town. There were sixty temples in Hadramaut. From there, frank incense was sent to Sabbathath, which could not be sold or disposed of unless a tithe was reserved for the god of Sabbathath.

From the Greek accounts, it appears that the kings of Hadramaut were not hereditary, and rulers were chosen from among the upper classes of the town. Theophrastus (d. 312 B.C.) also testifies to the abun-

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dance of incense and perfumeries in Hadramaut and Saba, and says that the former town was a part of the latter.¹

Hadramaut and archæological discoveries.—The remains of Hadramaut have not been fully discovered. Until 1913 A.D., when the first volume of the Encyclopædia of Islam was published, a large number of inscriptions that were found in Sabbathath (Shabwah), the capital of Hadramaut, could not be deciphered.² Nevertheless, from what has been ascertained, it appears that for a long time the people of Hadramaut had cordial relations and family connections with the Minâeans and that the port of Canneh and a portion of the country were partially under the suzerainty of the Minâeans. After a long interval, Hadramaut passed into the hands of the Sabâeans.

The period of the Sabâeans is estimated to have extended from 900 or 1000 to 115 B.C. In that period, the kingdom of Hadramaut is also mentioned in connection with both war and peace, and the Sabâean kings are designated as kings of Hadramaut also. On the opposite side of the coast of Yemen lies Abyssinia, the people of which were originally Sabâeans. They had established a colony in ancient times, just opposite to their homes, and in the period under review they were also drifting slowly towards the coasts until they conquered Hadramaut in 300 A.D.

Hadramaut and Islam.—After having completed his mission in Hijâz and Nejd, the Prophet of Islam despatched 'Ali Ma'âdh and Mûsà Ash'ari (the last was a Yemenite in origin) to preach Islam there and, within a year, the whole place was Islamicised. In the same year, Ziyâd b. Walîd Khazraji was appointed governor thereof.

¹ For all these references see Duncker's "History of Antiquity," chapter on "Saba and Hadramaut."

² "Encyclopaedia of Islam," Vol. I, p. 377.

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NEITHER EASTERN NOR WESTERN¹

By W. B. BASHYR-PICKARD, B.A. (CANTAB.)

My brothers and sisters, let me commence my lecture to-night by reciting a verse of the Holy Qur-án, even the 35th verse of the Sura An-Noor (The Light), which reads: "*Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth; a likeness of His Light is as a pillar on which (or a niche in which) is a lamp; the lamp is in a glass; the glass is as it were a brightly shining star, lit from a blessed olive tree, NEITHER EASTERN NOR WESTERN, the oil whereof almost gives light, though fire touch it not—light upon light—Allah guides to His Light whom He pleases; and Allah sets forth parables for men: and Allah is cognizant of all things.*"

I think it will clear the ground a little, and lead up to my subject, if I very briefly illustrate certain points from the above passage from the Holy Qur-án.

Thus, not only is Allah the Light of mankind, to guide them in the way of His blessings, but no less is He the Light of the heavens, controlling, guiding and directing the radiance of the stars of the mighty universe, being, indeed, Creator and Source of every high intelligence that therein hath part. His is the all-embracing ether: Lord of the illimitable is He.

If we seek a likeness of his Light, then this likeness is expressed by the Arabic word "mishkât," and I would ask you to observe the beauty of this word "mishkât," and the aptness of its double significance.

Firstly, "mishkât" may be translated by the English word "pillar." From this rendering we receive the impression of a brightly shining lamp, raised upon a lofty pillar and shedding the brilliance of its beams abroad, outwardly, to the world at large, to all and sundry, a very beacon of blessedness, free to all and observable by all. This is the *external* significance.

¹ Text of a lecture delivered at a Meeting of the Muslim Society in Great Britain.

NEITHER EASTERN NOR WESTERN

But secondly, the word "mishkât" carries the meaning of "niche;" and, from this rendering of "niche," we receive the impression of mystic significance. There is suggested to our minds a hallowed light, emanating from a niche in a Mosque upon the hearts of true believers: or again, with more homely meaning, we may consider a divine lamp, set in a niche in the house of a Muslim, and guiding and blessing and shedding peace over the humblest domestic interior. This is the mystic, or *internal* significance.

The Light of the heavens and the earth, therefore, even the Light of Allah, even Islam, springeth from a blessed olive-tree, which is *neither Eastern nor Western*; and this blessed olive-tree yields a resplendent oil, which giveth light of its own bright nature; and, when kindled in the lamp, it shineth abroad and around with a two-fold brilliancy—light upon light. Thus the oil of inspiration giveth an inner light, and inspiration kindleth a light that is transmitted to others—veritably light upon light.

Now the Light of God streameth abroad over the heavens and over the earth. Hast thou ever considered how immeasurably greater the heavens are than the earth? And upon the immensity of the heavens, how, I would ask, can the Light from God be considered within the narrow limits comprised by "Eastern and Western"? In the immensity of the heavens is there in reality any "up" or "down," or "Eastern" or "Western"? Are not these, in reality, minute terms pertaining to the minuteness of the earth?

But now, as, for the present, we are upon the earth, and our good and bad, and our benefit and harm, and our sphere of action of virtue or evil is also upon the earth, let us confine our attention for the moment to this earth.

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Verily, the Light of God lighteneth the earth! Islam is the light of blessedness for mankind, and Islam—what is Islam but the voluntary submission unto God with a humility that craveth guidance, with a thankfulness that ever gives praise, and uses aright the resplendent mercies of God with a love that has cast out pride, and welcometh all mankind as brother. This Islam, this Light of God upon earth, how can we say that it belongeth either to the East or to the West?

Nay! it is not so; Islam is "*neither Eastern nor Western.*" Even as Islam casteth out distinction of class and colour, and breaketh the narrow barriers of nationality and triumpheth over the agelong distrust of race, so the terms "Eastern" and "Western" become meaningless before the searching light of brotherly love in Islam.

It would, indeed, seem that, by embracing and sincerely following Islam, both the man of the East and the man of the West rose and met upon a higher plane, where is neither East nor West, but a sane and kindly humanity designated "Muslim."

And now I would ask my hearers to give their kindly attention to another aspect of the subject. When one brings forward the plea for a religion in the words "*neither Eastern nor Western,*" some people may be inclined to say that Islam is definitely an Eastern religion, that it arose in Arabia and that its Book is in the Arabic language.

Of all such people I would ask: "Whether is Christianity an Eastern or a Western religion? Where is Christendom? What language did Christ speak and in what language was the Bible (both Old Testament and New Testament) first written down?" If people say that Christianity is Western, then I say that, in these circumstances, the adjective "Western" is equally available to Islam. If people say Christianity is Eastern, then I say, "Whence cometh the boasted superiority of

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the West? and whence cometh Western materialism?" If the West be eaten up with materialism, why waiteth Christianity a servant at the feet of Mammon?

But "*neither Eastern nor Western*" is the blessed olive-tree, that yields from the hand of Allah the oil of illumination, even revelation, so bright, so self-convincing in appeal to human sensibility, that hardly does it require man-made efforts to kindle it, but rather its light shines abroad almost of its own accord: that, veritably, is the truth of Islam.

So now I would appeal to you, my brothers and my sisters here to-night, and to all whom these words may reach, to realise, in your own minds and in your practical lives, that to-day the barriers are thrown down, levelled by the grace of God, between the East and the West. Let not the memory of this barrier that was between East and West survive any longer! Realise that it is swept away! Realise that the East can meet the West, that the West can meet the East! that the East can love the West, and that the West can love the East!

And how best can this be done? Europeans study Oriental culture and languages. Men and women of the East acquire knowledge of the culture of the West, not merely the mechanical, the material, the conveniences of modern luxury of everyday life, but the thoughts of the philosophers, sages and humanitarians of the West. Read the lives of those, who were devoted to the cause of humanity, who whole-heartedly desired, and strove for, the benefit of humanity. O Muslims, of the East and of the West alike, acquire knowledge! By knowledge, by the casting out of ignorance, shall ye acquire a greater forbearance, a greater patience, a greater tolerance, and so shall you carry out the behest of the Holy Prophet upon Muslims, contained in the Hadith: "Seek knowledge even unto China!" Hasten, too, the coming of the blessed state of Muslim world

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brotherhood rather by dwelling upon and expounding and celebrating the beauties and the glories of Islam than by dwelling upon the weaknesses of other faiths. Build up the fabric of Islam in the blessedness of beauty rather than by the acrimony of disputations.

"And Allah guides to His Light whom He pleases."

This being so, how possibly could Islam be otherwise than worldwide, wide as humanity. Whether from the East or from the West, God guideth, whom he pleaseth, unto His Light.

This I take to mean that, if God pleases, He will guide by His grace whomsoever He pleases of Eastern humanity or of Western humanity; and to mean, further, that, although indeed there come no more Prophets, seeing that Muhammad (on whom be peace!) is the last of the Prophets, yet will God still send the Light of His revelation upon whom He pleases of His submissive, clean-hearted servants.

In other words, though the Qur-án, given to Muhammad, the very guidance of man towards God, remains incorrupt, requiring no renewal, nevertheless, if it please God, those of His servants, who attain by this pathway to His nearness, shall not, if He please, be denied the Light of His revelation. *And Allah knoweth all things.*

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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-AN.—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 Pre-measurement. 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

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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.

BISMILLAH 'R-RAHMAN 'R-RAHIM.

DEAR BRETHREN-IN-ISLAM,

Assalam-o-alaikum.

In these few lines we should like to draw the attention of our Muslim readers to a point which is of the utmost importance for the welfare of Islam and the Muslims. The institution of Zakat, which is one of the fundamental principles of Islam, was established by the Holy Qur-ân not only as an act of individual charity, but also as a matter of national concern. The Zakat or the legal fortieth of all the personal amassings was collected by the Holy Prophet and his successors as a part of the national treasury and applied to various purposes specified by the Holy Qur-ân and best suited to the national welfare of the Muslim Community.

To our great misfortune, this prime source of our national wealth and strength has now almost gone dry by its misuse and, instead of this great volume of permanent income being used, as originally intended, to make the whole community flourish, we have only a few individual acts which 'lose themselves in the sand.' This highly organised system of Islam has so degenerated that before Rajab comes, thousands of professional beggars, who can easily earn their living by the sweat of their brow, get out of their houses and spread from one corner of the country to the other to beg for Zakat, thus cheating the Muslim Public under a cloak of piety, —a state of things never contemplated by Islam. The principle of Zakat was meant really to uplift the Community of Islam and not to turn it into a nation of beggars.

The Zakat is generally calculated and distributed by the Muslims in the sacred month of Rajab. If the Zakat may properly be collected and used, it would meet our various needs. Great stress has been laid by the Holy Qur-ân and the Prophet (May the peace of Allah be upon his soul) upon the institution of Zakat, and the Book lays down some eight objects to which Zakat should be applied. The sacred words are:—

"Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and the official (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-ân, 9: 60.)

Among the eight items of expenditure of Zakat explicitly mentioned in the Holy Book, one item is the wages of "the officials appointed over them" which clearly indicates that the Holy Qur-ân requires the Zakat to be collected in the Bait-ul-Mal. The Holy Words show that 3/8 of the Zakat, i.e., 3rd, 4th, and 7th items should go towards the propagation of Islam and its defence against enemies, and to this we should like to invite your attention particularly. Propagation of Islam is the greatest national need of the Muslims all over the world. It is much to be deplored that one finds over and over again instances of missionaries and other Christian teachers wifully misrepresenting our Faith to the World. The Holy Pro

Supplement to the Islamic Review, September 1938.

phet of Islam is being deformed before our eyes. Under the circumstances it would be quite in the fitness of things that a greater portion of the Zakat should be spent on this object, i.e., to put the correct version of Islam before the World. There are good many restless souls in the world who are eager to accept Islam. We can do wonders within a short time if we have enough of money to distribute Islamic literature broadcast. The whole world is thirsting for Islam, if the Muslims were only to make up their minds to convey the blissful message of peace and amity to the farthest ends of the world. This can be easily done if our Muslim Brethren should realize the importance of the institution and obey the injunctions of the Holy Qur-ân with regard to the payment of Zakat for strengthening the funds for the propagation of Islam.

Need we say that our Missionary activities at Woking, England, have proved to be most successful of all the other movements that we (the Muslims) have undertaken within the last quarter of a century to serve Islam, while our political activities have been baffled by others. The best way to preach Islam in Europe is dissemination of Muslim literature, and in this respect our efforts so far have met with entire success.

Hence, we are encouraged to place before you the claims of the Woking Muslim Mission, England, on your Zakat. We can say, without fear of contradiction, that this Mission is carrying on the work of the propagation of Islam on the largest scale in the world. The Mission has turned out the most useful and most convincing literature. It has been sending the *Islamic Review* to thousands of libraries in England, America, Africa, Australia, China and Japan, free of charge. It has been publishing thousands of tracts and pamphlets for the furtherance of the cause of Islam and for defending the honour of the Prophet. It has been establishing good many distributing centres for the Islamic literature all over the world. Its Missionaries have regularly been working in England. We would therefore, request you to kindly see that when carrying out the commandments of the Holy Qur-ân as to the payment of Zakat, a portion is set part by yourself, your friends and relatives for the Woking Muslim Trust, to be sent to uphold the noble cause of Islam. In case our appeal, based on the accepted principles of Islam, meets with your approval, the money (Zakat) may be remitted to the Financial Secretary, the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust, Azeez Manzil, Brandreth Road, Lahore. (Punjab India).

AZEEZ MANZIL,

BRANDRETH ROAD,

Lahore (Punjab, India).

Yours fraternally,

KHWAJA ABDUL GHANI,

SECRETARY,

*The Woking Muslim Mission and
Literary Trust (Registered).*

[All remittances to be made payable to the Financial Secretary, the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust, Azeez Manzil, Brandreth Road, Lahore. (Punjab, India), or to the Imam, The Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.]

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