

'Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets . . . ' HOLY QUR-AN 33 :
"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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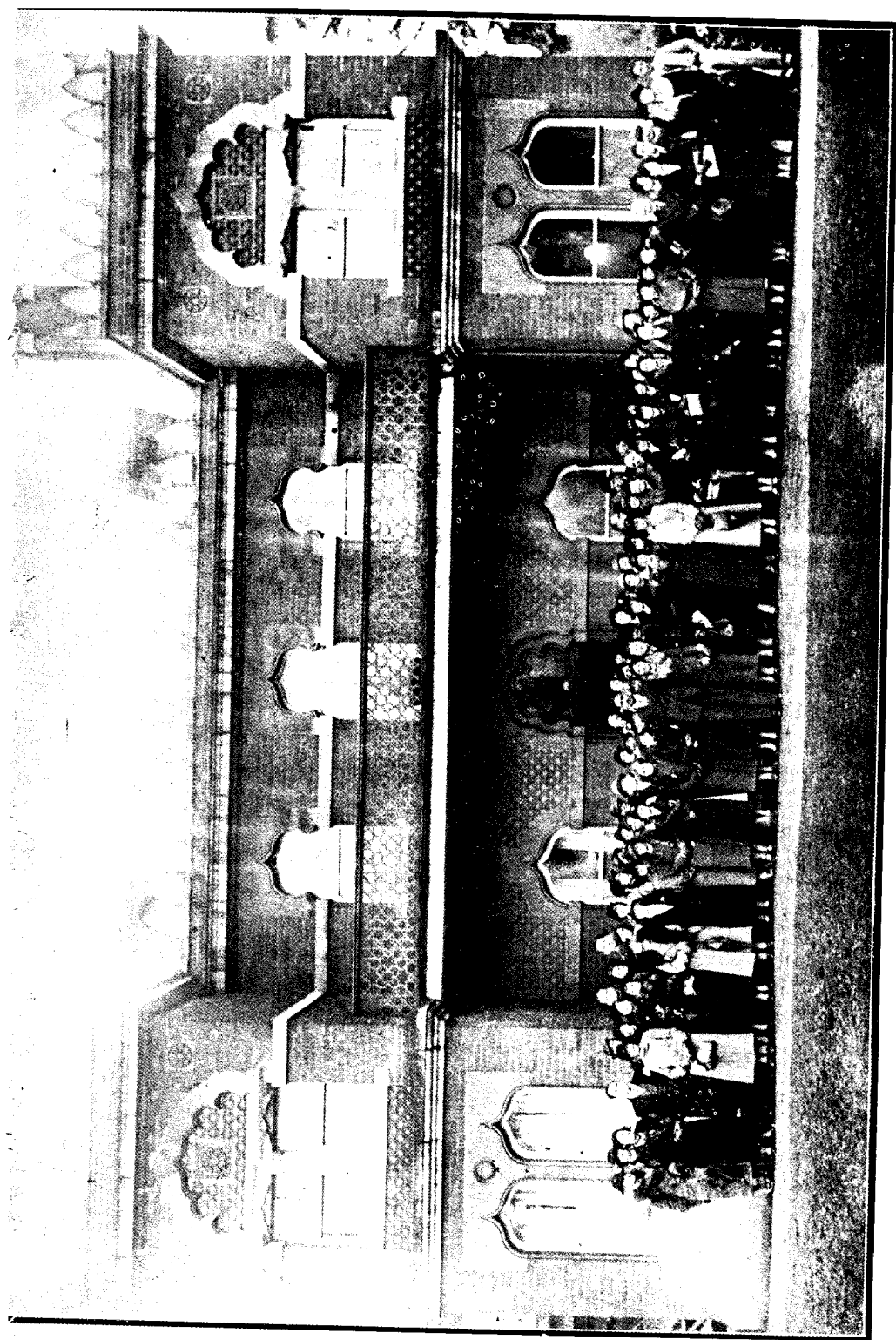
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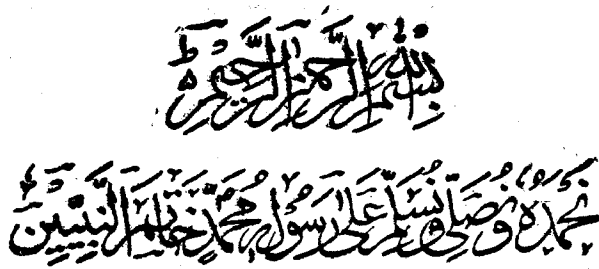
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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXVII]

SHAWWÁL 1358 A.H.
DECEMBER 1939 A.C.

[No. 12

A DECLARATION

I, Denys Vere Gray, of Freascobeas Road, Cornwall, 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 ill-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul Allah.

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

(Sd.) D. V. GRAY.

Above we publish the declaration of the acceptance of the Faith of Islam by Mr. Denys Gray. This young friend has been interested in Islam ever since he was nine years of age. Asked as to what books he had studied on Islam before he had come to know of the Woking Muslim Mission, he wrote to say: "Since I was about nine years old I had a great interest in Arabs (and still have increasing interest in them). I do not know why

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I like them so much, but I have always been interested in anything 'Arab.' I used to read true stories about Arabs, Arabs like Amru, Khalid, Omar, Abu Bakr, Abdul Muttaleb and many others. Not until I was 13 years old did the first ray of the Muslim religion catch me. I went to a friend's house to see him about something, and on a bookshelf I saw an old, dusty book, with the words on it, *The Al-Koran of Muhammad*. The name of Muhammad was well-known to me then. Taking down the 'book' (Book now, with a capital B) I started to read it. I stayed the morning at my friend's house and I never expected to read such wonderful writings as in the Qur-án. Everything in this Book is put in plain meanings so that nearly everybody can understand it. (There were notes in this Book explaining certain passages and sentences.) From then on, I have made a regular practice of reading the Qur-án. But I do not like the man who wrote the Foreword in this Qur-án because he insults Muhammad terribly. I was so angry that I tore the Foreword out and flung it on a dung heap. I do not believe that Muhammad pretended anything or that he made things up as this man would have us believe.

Another book I came across was, 'Islam Under the Arabs.' Also I read a book entitled 'Islam,' produced by the non-Christian societies. Later I read : 'Arabia Felix' and 'Wandering in the Arabian Desert' by Doughty and 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' by Gibbon.

It may sound childish, but I often shed tears when I pray to Allah, with what few prayers I know. I say the first Sura of the Qur-án and creed, *La ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul Allah*. I have given up smoking; I will never drink alcohol, nor eat the flesh of swine, and things strangled or which have died a natural death.

DENYS GRAY."

ISLAM—A MESSAGE OF PEACE

By C. A. SOORMA

(Continued from Vol. XXVII, page 306.)

CHAPTER XIV

DIVORCE IN ISLAM

After marriage comes divorce. What is the view of the Qur-án on this burning topic?

- (a) "And if you fear a breach between the two, then appoint a judge from his people and a judge from her people; if they both desire agreement, Allah will effect harmony between them; surely Allah is Knowing, Aware." (IV: 35).

This verse apparently refers to the case where the husband has not finally separated from his wife, or *vice versa*. In such a case, the Qazi is to appoint arbitrators on both sides to effect a reconciliation. Should the desire for reconciliation be genuine, then Allah would hasten the reunion. On the other hand, if the differences are irreconcilable, then a divorce may be pronounced by the Qazi against the party at fault.

It is clear from this verse that the Qur-án considers it more salutary for the husband or the wife to go before the Qazi and appeal for arbitration to smooth their difficulties than to do any rash act which may cause much unhappiness to both afterwards.

- (b) "Those who swear that they will not go in to their wives, should wait four months; so if they go back, then Allah is surely Forgiving, Merciful." (II: 226.)

By "going back" is meant the re-establishment of conjugal relations. If, before the expiry of the period mentioned, the husband and wife resume marital relations, then Allah is willing to forgive the faults of either or both.

- (c) "And if they have resolved on a divorce (*Taláqa*), then Allah is surely Hearing, Knowing." (II: 227.)

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Muhammad Ali, commenting on the above verse,

says:

“*Talâq* is an infinitive noun from *talaqat*, said of a woman, meaning she was left free to go her way, or become separated from her husband, and signifies the dissolving of the marriage tie Divorce is one of the institutions of Islam regarding which much misconception prevails, so much so that even the Islamic law, as administered in the British Courts in India, is not free from these misconceptions. The chief features of the Islamic law of divorce, as dealt with in the Holy Qur-án, will be noticed under the particular verses dealing with them. Here I may state that the Islamic law has many points of advantage as compared with both the Jewish and the Christian laws as formulated in *Deuteronomy* and in *Matthew*. The chief feature of improvement is that the wife can claim a divorce according to the Islamic Law, neither Moses nor Christ conferring that right on the woman, though it is to be regretted that this very feature is the one that is not recognised in India. Another feature of Islamic law of divorce is that it is elastic and does not strictly limit the cause of divorce. In fact, if the civilised nations of Europe and America, who own the same religion, are at the same stage of advancement, and have an affinity of feeling on most social and moral questions, cannot agree as to the cause of divorce, how could a universal religion like Islam, which was meant for all ages and all countries, for people in the

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lowest grade of civilisation as well as those at the top, limit those causes, which must vary with the varying conditions of humanity and society? It may also be added here that, though divorce is allowed by Islam if sufficient cause exists, yet the right is to be exercised in exceptional circumstances. The Qur-án itself approves of the Holy Prophet insisting on Zaid not to divorce his wife, notwithstanding a discussion of a sufficiently long standing (Chapter XXXIII: 37). And the Holy Prophet's memorable words, 'of all the things which have been permitted to men, divorce is the most hated by Allah' (reported by Abu Dawud), will always act as a strong check on any loose interpretation of the words of the Holy Qur-án. There are cases on record (given by Bukhari) in which he actually pronounced divorce to be illegal."—Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, page 104.

- (d) "And the divorced women should keep themselves in waiting for three courses; and it is not lawful for them that they should conceal what Allah has created in their wombs, if they believe in Allah and the last day; and their husbands have a better right to take them back in the meanwhile if they wish for reconciliation; and they (women) have rights similar to those against them in a just manner, and the men are a degree above them (meaning physically), and Allah is Mighty, Wise." (II: 228.)

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"The period of waiting, or *'iddat*, forms the first condition in the Islamic law of divorce. But for cases in which marriage is not consummated, no period of waiting is necessary (as is clear from Chapter XXXIII:49). The period of waiting is really a period of temporary separation, during which conjugal relations may be re-established. This period of temporary separation serves as a check upon divorce, and it is the second point mentioned by the Qur-án. This is the best safeguard against a misuse of divorce for, in this way, only such unions would be ended by divorce as really deserve to be ended, being devoid of the faintest spark of love. Thus, while the Islamic law of divorce makes every possible provision for love to assert itself, it requires the dissolution of the marriage when it is proved that mutual love is not possible. The rights of women against their husbands are stated to be similar to those which the husbands have against their wives.

. . . The change in this respect was surely a revolutionising one, for the Arabs hitherto regarded women as mere chattels, and Islam gave the women a position equal in all respects to that of men, for they were declared to have rights similar to those which were exercised against them. This declaration brought about a revolution not only in Arabia but in the whole world, for the equality of the rights of women with those of men was never previously recognised by any nation or by any reformer; nay, it is not to this day fully recognised even among the most civilised nations. The

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woman could no longer be discarded at the will of her 'lord' but she could either claim equality as a wife or demand divorce. The statement that 'men are a degree above them' does not nullify the rights asserted in the previous passage, but refers to quite a different aspect of the subject as is made clear in Chapter IV: 34." (As explained above.)—Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, pages 104-5 and also Ameer Ali, *Mahomedan Law*, Vol. II, pages 529—566.

- (e) "Divorce may be (pronounced) twice; then keep (them) in good fellowship or let (them) go with kindness; and it is not lawful for you to take (away) any part of what you have given them, unless both fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allah; then, if you fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allah, there is no blame on them for what she gives up to become free thereby. These are the limits of Allah, so do not exceed them, and whoever exceeds the limits of Allah, these it is that are the unjust." (II: 229.)

A very important verse indeed!

"The third rule regarding divorce is that the revocable divorce of the previous verse can be pronounced only twice. In the days of ignorance, a man used to divorce his wife and take her back within the prescribed time, even though he might do this a thousand times" (as we have noticed above). "Islam reformed this practice by allowing a revocable divorce twice, so that the period of waiting in each of these two cases might

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serve as a period of temporary separation during which conjugal relations could be re-established. The fourth point is that the husband must make his choice, after the second divorce, either to retain her permanently or to bring about a final separation. The object of a true marriage union is indicated in the simple words: "keep them in good fellowship," and where, owing to dissensions, it is impossible to remain in "good fellowship," then the man must let the woman "go with kindness," and where the marriage has been a failure, "it is both in the interests of the husband and of the wife and in the interests of society itself that such a union should be brought to a termination, so that the parties may seek a fresh union. But even in taking this final step, the woman must be treated kindly. . . . The full payment of the dowry to the woman is the fifth rule relating to the Islamic law of divorce, and it serves as a very strong check upon the husband in resorting to unnecessary divorce. The dowry is usually sufficiently large to make divorce a step which can be adopted only as a last measure."—Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, page 106.

The sixth rule with regard to divorce is the right of the wife to claim a divorce. This is technically called *Khulá*. Among the religions of the world, it is one of the distinguished characteristics of Islam that it gives the wife the same right to claim a divorce as it gives the husband to pronounce one, if she is willing to forego the whole or part of the dowry. The case of Jameelah, wife of Sabit bin Qais, is one that is reported in numerous reports of the highest authority. Here it was the wife

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who was dissatisfied with the marriage. There was not even a quarrel, as she plainly stated in her complaint to the Prophet, "I do not find any fault with him on account of his morals (i.e., his treatment), or his religion." She only hated him; and the Holy Prophet had her divorced on condition that she returned to her husband the garden which he had made over to her as her dowry (reported by Bukhari). It is even said that the husband's love for the wife was as intense as her hatred for him. If, then, a woman could claim a divorce for no reason other than the unsuitableness of the match, she had certainly the right to claim one if there was ill-treatment on the part of the husband or for any other satisfactory reason; and among the early Muslims it was an established right. Even now it is a right which is maintained in many Islamic countries."—Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, page 106; Ameer Ali, *Mahomedan Law*, Volume II, pages 567-578.

"The words 'if you fear' evidently refer to the properly constituted authorities, and this brings us to the seventh point with regard to the law of divorce, *viz.*, that the authorities can intervene in the matter, and cases are actually on record in which a wrong done by an unjust divorce was amended by the authorities."—Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, page 107.

The last point to note in connection with the above verse (II: 229) is that Allah forbids anyone to go beyond the limits He has imposed and that, if either does so, then he or she is unjust.

(f) "So if he divorces her, she shall not be lawful to him afterwards until she marries another husband; then if he divorces her there is no blame on them both if they return to each other (by marriage) if they think they can keep within the limits of Allah, and these are the limits of Allah

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which He makes clear for a people who know." (II:230.)

"After the irrevocable divorce is pronounced, the husband cannot remarry the divorced wife until she has been married elsewhere and divorced, and this is the eighth point with regard to the law of divorce. The verse abolishes the immoral custom of *halalah*, a temporary marriage gone through with no other object than that of legalising the divorced wife for the first husband, a custom prevalent in the days of ignorance, but abolished by the Holy Prophet, according to a report which speaks of his having cursed those who indulge in the evil practice. There must be a genuine marriage and a genuine divorce. This restriction makes the third pronouncement of divorce very cautious, and, in fact, very rare, and this acts as another check against frequent divorce. Muir's remarks as to the hardship which this rule involves not only for 'the innocent wife' but also for 'the innocent children,' for 'however desirous the husband may be of undoing the wrong the decision cannot be recalled,' are totally unjustified, for the irrevocable divorce cannot be pronounced until a temporary separation has taken place twice and the experiences of both have shown that the marriage relationship cannot be continued. It should also be noted that the irrevocable divorce cannot be pronounced all at once. The special checks on divorce have already been mentioned, and it may be added here that the third or the irrevocable divorce would be very rare if the

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rules relating to divorce, as given in the Holy Qur-án, are observed. Cases are on record in which long years have elapsed between the pronouncement of the first and the second divorce. For instance, the case of Rakana may be noted, who first divorced his wife in the time of the Holy Prophet, then remarried her, then divorced her a second time in the time of Umar, the second Caliph, and finally in the time of Usman, the third Caliph."—Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, page 107.

"*Taláq*, or divorce, is strongly condemned by the Muhammadan religion, and it should not be resorted to unless it has become impossible for the parties to live together in peace and harmony, but once it is pronounced, it is upheld as valid, although there may be no good cause for it. It is described in a precept of the Prophet as 'the worst of all the things which the law permits' There are certain limitations imposed by the law upon the right of the husband to dissolve the marriage. The object of these rules is to ensure that the husband was not acting in haste or anger and that separation became inevitable in the interests of the husband and the wife and their children."—Abdur Rahim, *op. cit.*, pages 335-36.

I have dealt at some length with *taláq* by the husband against the wife, and *Khulá* or divorce by the wife against the husband. There are still left three other kinds of divorce which are recognised by the Islamic law:

The third kind of divorce is called *Mubarat*.

"*Mubarat* (in law) signifies mutual discharge from

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the marriage tie. Under the Sunni law, when both the parties enter into a *Mubarat*, all matrimonial rights which they possess against each other fall to the ground.”—

Ameer Ali, *op. cit.*, Volume II, page 578.

Thus, under *Mubarat*, if both the husband and the wife realise that the marriage has been a failure, they may mutually agree to separate, and this without the necessity of an intervention by the Qazi or Judge. This, again, is a power which places woman in a position of advantage, since in cases of discord she may persuade her husband to agree to a divorce by mutual consent. In a divorce by mutual consent, the husband cannot compel the wife to forego the whole or any part of her dower.

“A wife who has obtained a release from the marital tie by *Khulá* or *Mubarat* is entitled to maintenance during her *iddat*.”—Ameer Ali, *op. cit.*, Volume II, page 580.

JUDICIAL DIVORCE

The next form of divorce recognised by Islamic law is a Judicial Divorce. An Islamic marriage, originally valid, may be dissolved by a judicial decree in British India on the following grounds only:

- (a) Option of puberty (already discussed above).
- (b) Impotence of the husband existing prior to the marriage and unknown to the wife at the time of the marriage.
- (c) Renunciation by the husband of his conjugal rights expressed in any peculiar form.
- (d) Imputation of adultery by the husband against the wife; and known as *Laan* or imprecation.
- (e) Habitual ill-treatment and non-fulfilment of antenuptial engagements.

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(f) Other reasons satisfactory to the Court.

(a) We have already discussed, in some detail, the option of puberty granted to a minor either to rescind or confirm the contract of marriage entered into by the minor's guardian, subject, however, in British India, to the provisions of the *Sarda Act*.

(b) With regard to the impotence of the husband, it is quite clear that a wife may claim a judicial divorce on the ground of her husband's impotence, proved to have existed at the time of the marriage, provided that she did not then know of it, and that it has not been since removed, but not, if she knew of its existence at the time of the marriage, nor if it commenced only after the marriage had been both contracted and consummated. The divorce must remain suspended for a year after decree, in order that it may be ascertained whether the defect is removable. In the case of *Mohammad Ibrahim v. Altafan*, 83 I.C. at page 27, the validity of the substantive rule about impotence was discussed and the principle was confirmed.

(c) With reference to the imputation of adultery made by the husband against the wife, and known as *Laan*, the law says that, if a husband falsely charges his wife with adultery, she will be entitled to plead for a judicial divorce, without prejudice to any proceedings for defamation which she may institute against her husband and independently of the result of any such proceedings. According to pure Islamic law, a man who has imputed infidelity to his wife, without being able to bring four worthy eye-witnesses to the very fact, may be called upon either to withdraw the imputation in which case he incurs the Qur-ánic punishment for slander, viz., 80 stripes, or to confirm it by oath, in which case she must be called upon either to admit the truth of the imputation, or to deny it on oath. By admitting her guilt she renders herself liable to the punishment of

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hundred stripes with certain other disabilities. On her denying it and setting her oath against that of her husband, it becomes the duty of the Qazi (Judge) to believe her, and to pronounce a judicial divorce, unless the husband divorces her on his own account.

The Allahabad High Court has held that a Muslim wife can sue her husband for divorce on the ground that he falsely charged her with adultery (see the case of *Zafar Hussain v. Ummatur Rahman*, decided in 1919 in 41 *Allahabad* at page 278, and also *Rahima Bibi v. Fazil* reported in 1926 in 48 *Allahabad* at page 834).

(d) With regard to ill-treatment, it is now quite clear that the Courts in British India, following the decision in *Kelly v. Kelly*, *I.R. 2 Prob. and Divorce*, 59 (1870), do not now require proof of actual violence for a valid defence to a suit for restitution of conjugal rights. Legal cruelty will be sufficient, or such ill-treatment as would create a reasonable apprehension in the wife's mind that there would be danger to her life, health or safety, if she returns to her husband.

When actual physical violence is resorted to by the husband against the wife, she would be entitled to claim a divorce from him, and this principle of law has been consistently enforced by the Algerian Courts.

(e) I have already submitted that a wife would be entitled to claim a divorce from her husband if he commits any breach of antenuptial or post-nuptial agreements. The limitation imposed upon such conditions is that they should not be opposed to the general policy and spirit of Islamic law.

(f) Coming now to the last item, *viz.*, Divorce to be granted for reasons satisfactory to the Court, I may mention that the cases decided by the Algerian Courts show that a wife is entitled to a divorce from her husband for the following, among other reasons:

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- (a) When the husband leaves her without any means of subsistence.
- (b) When he deprives her of her raiment.
- (c) When he forces her to beg for her living.
- (d) When he allows her to suffer from starvation or want.
- (e) When he quits the conjugal domicile without making any provision on her behalf.
- (f) When he forces her to labour at work of a kind which is considered degrading to a woman in her position.
- (g) When he does not provide her with a habitation.
- (h) When he has several wives and does not treat them all equitably.
- (i) When he treats her habitually in a cruel manner.
- (j) When he is in the habit of beating her or threatening her with bodily injury.

It has also been held by the Algerian Courts that the wife has the right to apply for and obtain a divorce when a husband habitually insults her parents or her other relations, or lives an infamous life, or associates with women of evil repute, or attempts to force her to lead an immoral life and take up her abode with prostitutes, or introduces a concubine into the conjugal domicile, or threatens to kill her, or beats her or disposes of her property, or makes her life miserable by cruelty of conduct even when it does not amount to actual physical ill-treatment. An incident may be cited of a judgment of the Qazi of Algiers, upheld by the Supreme Court, which throws considerable light on this branch of the subject. The husband, in the case referred to, had beaten his wife so severely that he wounded her in two places. Before the Qazi, he urged that he inflicted the beating because she allowed a stranger to visit her during his absence.

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The Qazi, after examining the wounds, declared that, notwithstanding the wife's adultery, the husband had exceeded his correctional powers, and that therefore, the woman was entitled to a divorce."—Ameer Ali, *Personal Law of the Mohamedans*, pages 380-81.

It has also been held by the Algerian Courts that the Qazi has the power of granting a divorce to the wife for incurable insanity of the husband supervening after the marriage.

ZIHAR

I shall now deal with the right of a wife to claim a divorce if the husband consistently subjects the wife to gross and wild expressions and constantly compares his wife with his mother or sisters, or any other female relations within the prohibited degrees, provided always that the injurious assimilation or comparison was made with intent to repudiate his marital obligations towards the wife so that the person of the wife would become unlawful to him. This is known as *Zihar*. Under Islamic law, the wife is entitled to ask for a dissolution of the marriage if the husband commits the offence of "Zihar" or "injurious assimilation," unless he formally expiates the sin in the manner prescribed by Law.

TAFWEEZ

I shall now refer to the doctrine of *Tafweez*. *Tafweez* may be defined as a power delegated by the husband to the wife to divorce herself under certain contingencies. This authority by the husband to the wife is not revocable and the wife may, at any time after the happening of the contingency, repudiate herself in the exercise of the power and the divorce will then take effect to the same extent as if the *talâq* had been pronounced by the husband. She may exercise this power even after the institution of a suit against her for restitution of conjugal rights.

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To sum up, the principles of the law of divorce in Islam are as follows:

- (a) Islam recognises the necessity of divorce, as it is indispensable for the maintenance of healthy society and the general happiness of human relations.
- (b) Islam does not give unfettered power to the husband to divorce his wife. Various forms of restraint have been placed on the exercise of such power by him.
- (c) The true spirit of Islam is against the exercise of this power without sufficient cause. The Prophet's condemnation of easy divorce deters to this day those who would like to flout the law.
- (d) For the first time in human history, Islam gave to the wife a corresponding right to divorce herself from her husband in cases where their life is one of continued misery.
- (e) Islam, then, gives the wife the right of divorce for impotence existing prior to marriage, for *laan* or imprecation, for legal cruelty, for actual physical violence, for incurable insanity, for imprisonment, for desertion, for infidelity, for breach of any of the stipulations in an ante- or post-nuptial agreement, for Zihar or injurious assimilations and for any other satisfactory reasons which would prove that her life is one of continued misery with her husband.

It must be noted before we close the Chapter on Divorce that, in all cases where an irrevocable divorce has taken place at the instance of either the wife or the husband, the agreed dower must be paid, if not already paid. The wife must undergo the prescribed period of *Iddat* or purification; that during the period of *Iddat*,

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the wife is entitled to maintenance from her husband; that the husband continues to be responsible for the maintenance of his children according to law.

So much for the laws of divorce in Islam.

IS ISLAM A BORROWED FEATHER ?

BY KHAN BAHADUR AL-HAJJ B. M. K. LODI

PART IV

WAS MUHAMMAD FIT TO BE AN *INSPIRED* PROPHET OF GOD?

The next question will be: Was Muhammad fit to receive a *divine* inspiration? In other words, did he deserve such a sacred and responsible trust as that of a divine revelation? Let us hold the answer in abeyance for a few moments, because, in order to answer the question with that degree of certainty which would satisfy a non-Muslim, we have to ascertain if the pre-mission life of Muhammad was so righteous, so remarkable and so exemplary as to warrant a presumption that he possessed the necessary qualifications to attaining what they call the "cosmic-conscious" stage in life, a stage sufficiently mature for him to be selected as a Prophet of God. What are these qualifications? Dr. R. M. Bucke, the author of "Cosmic-Consciousness" has, after considerable research work and personal experience, enumerated them as follows:

- (1) He must be a male.
- (2) He must be between the age 30 to 40.
- (3) He must possess a highly-developed intellect.
- (4) He must possess high moral quality and an exalted moral nature.
- (5) He must be of a superior and exceptional physique.
- (6) He must be of a charming personality and exceptional beauty of build and carriage—of exceptional handsome feature.

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- (7) He must be of good health.
- (8) He must be of strong sympathies.
- (9) He must possess a warm heart.
- (10) He must have courage.
- (11) He must have sweetness of temper.
- (12) He must have exceptional magnetism.
- (13) He must have a strong and earnest religious feeling.
- (14) He must have no fear of death.
- (15) Illumination occurs generally between early spring and late summer, that is, in about May and June (Muhammad's first revelation was in May. *Vide* page 145 of the learned author's book.)
- (16) The immediate precursor of "cosmic-consciousness," that is, "self-consciousness," must have appeared in mid-life of the person here and there.
- (17) "A man who had had the cosmic sense for even a few moments only will probably never again descend to the spiritual level of the merely "self-conscious" man, but he will still feel within him the purifying, strengthening and exalting effect of that divine illumination, and many of those about him will recognise that his spiritual stature is above that of the average man."
- (18) Every man who enters into the "cosmic-conscious" apprehensions is at first more or less excited, the person doubting whether the new sense may not be a symptom or form of insanity. He is greatly alarmed. (Muhammad's name is particularly mentioned here by the learned author.) He asks himself: "Does what I see and feel represent reality?"*

*We agree with the author so far as the fact of apprehension is concerned. This apprehension, however, is not due to any confusion with regard to the true nature of the experience but arising out of the realisation of the huge responsibility which it entails. The natural timidity of human nature, realised in the fullest in the light of the truest knowledge ever given to man, causes this shrinking in face of the most serious of all tasks.—Ed., I. R.

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- (19) The person having this experience eventually believes in its teachings.*
- (20) A change in the appearance of the subject of illumination amounting to a veritable "transfiguration."
- (21) He shows enormously greater capacity for learning and writing.

The learned author has mentioned as many as 32 divines, from Moses down to the present, who fulfilled all the above conditions; and he has included Muhammad in the category. That in Muhammad all these qualifications and conditions remained fulfilled to the very letter, nobody—not even his worst enemy or critic—would dare deny. A number of books there are before the readers which have been written on the life of Muhammad, both by Muslims and non-Muslims who made Islam their life-study and who are, therefore, the most competent to write, and the readers can see for themselves that on no single page of these books would they miss without marking and admiring one or other achievement of Muhammad—mental, physical and moral—the cumulative effect of which was so great as to invite—as it were—the Divinity to offer him the mantle of Prophethood.

Besides, it is well known to students of religion that *cave-life* and *fasting* have been the precursor of prophethood—a preliminary training and grounding, a preliminary testing, by the Providence, of the man whom He was going to select as His Messenger. It is a period of probation; it is, in the words of Rodwell, "the period of mental depression and reassurance previous to the assumption of the office of public teacher." The history of every prophet known, including Muhammad, is replete with the above characteristics of pre-prophetic life. As familiar instances, *Moses*† and *Jesus*‡ fasted for 40

*His faith in these teachings is so deep that it becomes a part of his nature, and this, from the very beginning, is caused by the very nature of the experience.—Ed., I. R.

†Exodus, 24:18.

‡Math., 4:2.

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days previous to the receipt of their respective revelations. We have it that the Buddha starved fasting and neglected his food before he attained the "Buddhi." Similarly did Muhammad fast and live a life of seclusion and meditation in a wild and lonely cave before he received the illumination.

In conceding that almost all the necessary virtues of a *prophethood* were possessed by Muhammad in abundance, as, for instance, Sale does in page 29, *Preliminary Discourse, English Translation*, a few non-Muslim writers have ventured, but in vain, to attribute Muhammad's qualifying state (number 18 of the aforementioned list) to an "epileptic fit," "ecstatic trance," "mental excitement" and so on and so forth. But none of them has yet been able to base his conclusions on any evidence of a biographical or historical character. Muhammad's health was excellent and free from any such blot. Had there been any defect of that kind in his health, it would have incapacitated him from being entrusted by Providence with such a great and sacred office as Prophethood, nor would he ever have been included by learned psychologists, like Bucke, in the category of inspired souls. That Muhammad had a mental or physical defect is only a *surmise*, a *conjecture* of the critics, not a fact that could stand or ever has stood the test of proof. It is a perverse version of a prejudiced mind. In the opinion of Margoliouth, "the secret of the power exercised by the Book (the Qur-án), of course, lay in the mind which produced it."* If so, the mind of Muhammad ought to be sane and sound, and never subject to fits and trances or to diseases of excitable nature bordering almost on insanity, in which case his utterances could only be disordered, crazy, senseless, furious, rash and dangerous to society. In his book,

* Introduction : Translation of the Qur-an, by Rev. J. Rodwell.

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Practice of Medicine, Dr. Ostler says of *Epilepsy* as follows:—After the attack, the patient may be dazed a few seconds and perform certain automatic actions which may seem to be rotational. As mentioned, impressing is a common action, but all sorts of odd actions may be performed.” Were any of these symptoms found in Muhammad? Supposing, for argument’s sake, that Muhammad was ever subject to this epileptic condition of the mind, does it appeal to common-sense that he could have ever produced a Book of the kind which critics themselves have characterised as “one of the grandest books ever written,” “a book which is a miracle of purity, style, wisdom and truth,” a book that “occupies an important position among the great religious books of the world,” “a book exercising through all ages a most potent influence,” a book containing “pure, elevated and benign precepts and thought and expression;” a book with a praiseworthy conception of divine nature,” clothed in “a language sublime and magnificent,” a book “of literary production,” and thereby “enforcing a reverence” and so on? Never. The fact is that the state of the mind of Muhammad in question is the very condition of “Cosmic-Consciousness” when “the expression is curt, because the inspiration is powerful, the adjuration is pathetic; God speaks, and the man falls out of sight.”* In addition, the body profusely perspires and the mind gets extremely alarmed and fearful. The actual condition is truly described by Lane† in the following words:

“After long, solitary broodings, something used to move Muhammad all of a sudden with frightful vehemence, and, on the coldest day, terrible perspirations would break out all over his body. When the terror

* Page 27, “History of Arabic Literature,” by Clement Huart.

† Page 100, Introduction: “Selections from the Qur-an.”

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ceased, it seemed to him as if he had heard bells ringing 'the sound whereof seems to rend him to pieces,' as if he had heard the voice of a man, as if this had been written in his heart. Such was the agony he endured that some of the verses* revealed to him well-nigh made his hair turn white."

This was exactly the condition of Muhammad as narrated by Muhammad himself.†

Extraordinary are the above circumstances, whose evidential value, testifying to the *divine* origin of the Qur-án, cannot be overrated. The real disability which the critics of Islam seem to be labouring under in appreciating the mind and body of Muhammad, as described above, is much of a nature that could never be appreciated save by those who have realised it themselves, or who have had an opportunity to witness in person another's experience like the companions of the Prophet, or who have made a special study of the subject, like Bucke, Whiteman, etc. If so, a frank confession of their inability to handle the subject—if not silence on the subject—would certainly have been very graceful on the part of the critics. Instead they have betrayed a wantonly hostile mind. Nevertheless, we have from them glimpses of a conscious mind, a few unconscious words of appreciation, a few reluctant praises.

For instance:

- (1) "At a later period of his (Muhammad's) career, no one would venture to doubt the divine origin of the entire Book."—*Rodwell.*‡

* Chapters XI, LVI and CI of the Holy Qur-an.

† Sahih-al Bukhari, "Kitab-al-Wadu."

‡ Preface to the Translation of the Qur-an.

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- (2) "The earlier Suras and the earlier Chapters testify in every verse to the mental exaltation of the Prophet and to the Prophetic inspiration."—*Palmer*.*
- (3) "By some strange intuition Muhammad succeeded in finding one form of Monotheism."—*Lane*.†

How the *first* intuition, the *first* revelation, manifested itself is this: Not despairing of the irreligious conditions of his country, Muhammad felt in his innermost heart that he was destined to realise the Truth and impress it on the people. Accordingly, his heart was, as admitted by foreign writers too, searching for and pining after the Truth. He spent many a solitary and fasting day in a solitary and wild cave in the Mount-Hira,‡ near Mecca, and his heart was eventually illumined. How well is it put by H. G. Wells,§ a modern historian: "When the mind grapples with a great and intricate problem, it makes its advances, it secures its position, step by step, with but little realisation of the gains it has made, until suddenly, with an effect of abrupt illumination, it realises its victory." One *Blessed* night|| in the month of Ramadán (the month of fasting with Muslims) in the year 610 A.D., when "divine peace rests on creation, and all nature is lifted up towards its Lord," a mighty call, a divine call to read comes to Muhammad from the Heavens during one of his solitary sojournings at the cave. He fell in a trance, and he had, in the words of the late Right Honourable Syed Ameer Ali, "a vision of the celestial ministrants who are believed to form the

* Page, 61, **Introduction, English Translation of the Qur-an**, Volume VI, Part I, of the S. B. E. Series edited by Max Muller.

† Page 78, **Introduction, Selections from the Qur-an**.

‡ The Mount is since known as the Mount of Light.

§ Page 260, Volume I, **The Outline of History**.

|| Holy Qur-an, XLIV : 3: **Blessed** became the darkness that followed the disappearance of true knowledge, was removed by the Divine light of revelation. The night is also called **The Grand Night**, or **The Night of Power**, vide Holy Qur-an, XCVII : 1.

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medium of intercommunications between God of Heavens and the man on earth." He also heard a voice say: "Oh! Muhammad, recite these verses." "God's voice is stronger than the voice of thunder." That the "Father of Truth chooses His own Prophets, and He speaks to them in a voice stronger than the voice of thunder," is what Professor Max Muller has said. Muhammad, therefore, got confused, excited and alarmed at the unusual phenomenon in his consciousness, a sudden change from "Self-consciousness" to "cosmic-consciousness."* Nevertheless, he collected his courage and replied: "I am not one who can read—I have not learned to read." The call and answer were repeated *thrice*, and the third was a terrible command:

"Read in the name of thy Lord,
Who createth man from a clot,
Read, thy Lord is the most bountiful,
Who teacheth by the pen,
Teacheth man that which he knew not."

(The first five verses are of the 96th chapter of the Holy Qur-án.)

It was then that Muhammad was able to recite as required. When he awoke from the trance, the words remained "inscribed" upon his heart. It is this episode that constituted Muhammad's "first flash of Prophetic inspiration," the first of the revelations of the contents of the Qur-án, and the first word of God, that was put into the heart of the Prophet, which was enlightened for the purpose. The revelations continued to appear from time to time, and as their necessity arose, and were completed in the course of a long period of 23 years of Muhammad's mission—13 years in Mecca and 10 years in Medina. At every time of fresh revelation, his body and mind underwent a change as already explained.

There is one other matter which the readers must consider before they sit in judgment on the opinion of

* Pages 1—5, *Cosmic-consciousness*, by R. M. Bucke.

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the critics. The Christians ask us to believe that *Peter* had a trance in which he "saw heavens opened,"* etc., that *Paul* had a vision in which he saw Jesus and many other things, that *John*,† the Divine, saw "heavens opened" with certain marvellous phenomena, and that, for Jesus himself, when he was baptised, the heavens were "opened unto him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove," etc.‡ Will it then be too much for *them* to believe that Muhammad's trance was not an epileptic fit, but a similar divine vision? No more arguments need be advanced in order to discard the opinion of these Christian critics as being entirely partial and prejudiced, and let there be no more hesitation to conclude with a moral certainty and with a scientific exactness that *Muhammad was, like his predecessors, an inspired Prophet, and that the Qur-án is the word of God revealed through Muhammad, and not his own word.* Is it conceivable that an illiterate Arab of the 6th and 7th Centuries A.D. was, or could ever have been, the author of the Qur-án? Could he ever have had the originality, the necessary knowledge and capacity to compose that wonderful Book, *wonderful* because, even the discerning and carping intellects of Europe have failed to account for the appearance of a Book like the Qur-án. It is, in the words of Sale§ "inconceivable that a person who could neither write nor read should be able to compose a book of such excellent doctrine and so elegant a style." Is it not a mystery? Is it not a *miracle*, as claimed by Muhammad himself? (*Sahih al-Bukhari: Kitab-ul-Qur-án.*) No miracle is ever wrought without *divine* help. It is, in fact, the *Superhuman* Divinity that is the author of Miracles, and *not human* beings. So, are we not justified in holding that it is the

* The Acts X—10—16.

† Revelation.

‡ Matthew, III : 16.

§ Page 30, Preliminary Discourse of his English Translation of the Holy Qur-an.

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Divinity that is, and ought to be, behind the Qur-án, and not Muhammad?

What we have hitherto presented before our readers is a mere synopsis of the considerable literature on the subject, and this is considered sufficient to produce in the minds of non-Muslim readers a correct impression of the fitness of Muhammad for Prophethood and of the Divinity of the Book—the Qur-án.

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[C. 570—632]

BY MR. W. BASHYR-PICKARD, B.A. (CANTAB.)

Over four hundred millions of the world's inhabitants are followers of the religion of Muhammad. The importance of Muhammad, therefore, needs no further emphasis. His life is indeed remarkable. Within its range of some sixty years, the whole gamut of human experience seems to have been played through, from poverty to riches, from failure to success, from friendlessness to unquestioned power, from persecution to kingly authority. By inspiration he awoke religious life in the East in a humanity sunk in the depths of ignorance and profligacy. During the years 609—632 the light of faith flashed out from the sincerity of his heart and heralded one of the mightiest movements that have ever influenced the history of the world.

"Allahu Akbar! La ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul Allah!" "God excelleth in greatness! There is no god but the One True God! Muhammad is the Messenger of God!" The cry from the minarets echoes down the centuries. In these words for over thirteen hundred years the glory and greatness of God have been extolled throughout the East. In these words the heavenly reminder has been proclaimed, and a continual respite sounded amidst the daily hubbub of human affairs.

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Now, we may well ask, What sort of a man was it that awoke and cleansed the East, that in roughly a score of years in Arabia produced the greatest religious revolution known to history?

Muhammad was born in or about the year 570 A.C. He came from the nobility of Arabia. His family belonged to the tribe of the Quraish, and his descent has been traced back to Ishmael and Abraham. The Quraish were the hereditary keepers of the ancient shrine of Mecca, the Ka'ba, visited by Abraham and Ishmael. So, from birth, Muhammad was associated with an important centre of religious worship, though at that time Mecca was steeped in the grossest idolatry.

His father, Abdullah, the son of Abdu'l Muttalib, died before Muhammad was born, while his mother, Amina, died a few years later. Muhammad, at the age of six, was thus left alone in the world, an orphan bereft of both father and mother.

Muhammad was now taken care of by his grandfather Abdu'l Muttalib, who, however, died before two years had elapsed. Muhammad then passed into the guardianship of his uncle Abu Talib, who soon developed a deep affection for the lad and would have him sleep by his bed, eat by his side and go with him whenever he walked abroad. The depth of mutual affection between the lad Muhammad and his uncle Abu Talib was soon after this put to an open test. Abu Talib was about to make a distant journey to Syria. The prospect of such a lengthy separation from his kindly protector so distressed Muhammad, then twelve years of age, that Abu Talib decided to take the lad with him to Syria. The journey, which lasted several months, gave Muhammad his first impressions of the outside world, and must have brought him into contact with men of different races and varying religious beliefs.

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Another incident of external interest occurred during the youth of Muhammad. The valley of Mecca and the surrounding country became involved in a sacrilegious war, arising out of a dispute between two Arab tribes, the Quraish and the Beni Hawazin, at the annual fair of Ocaz. Muhammad attended his uncles of the Quraish, but his part in the actual conflict seems to have been confined to gathering up the arrows of the enemy as they fell and handing them to his uncles.

Some part of Muhammad's youth, like that of David of old, was spent as a shepherd tending the sheep and goats of Mecca upon the neighbouring hills and valleys; but whatever his pursuit and whatever the duties or transactions that fell to his lot, he discharged them all with such an honourable sincerity as to win for himself, by common consent, the title of *Al-Amin*, the Trustworthy.

It is also everywhere historically agreed that the youth of Muhammad was one of singular purity and modesty. When one considers the profligacy rampant at that time in Mecca and throughout Arabia generally, the merit of Muhammad must in this respect shine the more brightly by sheer contrast. Endowed with a refined mind and delicate taste, reserved and meditative, he lived much within himself and, not covetous of wealth, it seems that the quiet and retired life he was living in the family of Abu Talib was well suited to his disposition.

Abu Talib, however, was by no means wealthy. He therefore suggested to Muhammad the advisability of earning his own livelihood by taking charge of the caravan to Syria of Khadija, a wealthy and distinguished lady of the Quraish. Muhammad readily complied, and under his guidance the Syrian caravan was conducted so successfully that Khadija was delighted. Muhammad's serious bearing and personal charm, moreover, made so

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deep an impression upon the lady Khadija, then a comely widow forty years of age, that shortly afterwards in 595 their marriage was celebrated, Muhammad being at that time twenty-five years of age.

Although Khadija was fifteen years older than Muhammad, the marriage proved fortunate and happy, more perhaps by mutual esteem and affection than by the solace of children; for, although two sons and four daughters were born of the union, Muhammad lost all these children in his lifetime with the exception of one daughter, Fatima, who was married to Ali.

During the lifetime of Khadija (she died at the age of sixty-five, when Muhammad was fifty years old), Muhammad, although in the prime of life and living in a country where polygamy was customary, remained strictly faithful and devoted to his one affectionate companion and wife, the staunch-hearted lady Khadija.

At Mecca, after the death of Khadija, Muhammad married Sauda, a widow, and later at Medina Ayesha, the daughter of his faithful companion, Abu Bakr.

As to the personal appearance of Muhammad, from various sources we gather that he was a little above middle height, his figure spare but handsome and commanding with broad chest and finely moulded neck. His head was unusually large with a broad and noble brow. His hair was thick, jet-black and slightly curling. His beard was thick and bushy. His eyes were large and intensely black and piercing, made more lustrous by long, dark eyelashes. His face beamed with intelligence, and his expression was pensive and contemplative.

In 605, some years after the marriage of Muhammad with Khadija, the necessity arose for rebuilding the Ka'ba, the sacred house at Mecca. The requisite material being provided, the Quraish jointly undertook the work. In the course of construction a

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serious dispute arose as to who should have the proud privilege of laying the sacred Black Stone in position in the wall of the Ka'ba. The much prized honour was hotly contested by the various families of the Quraish. At the height of the dispute Muhammad, then about thirty-five years of age, entered the court and was chosen as arbiter. Spreading his mantle upon the ground, he placed the sacred stone thereon and bade one from each of the four contesting divisions of the Quraish to come forward and take each a corner of the mantle and lift the stone thus. This was done; the stone was raised, and Muhammad with his own hand guided it to its place in the wall of the Ka'ba. Honour was thus shared and peace established.

Deeply religious by nature, Muhammad would often retire to a cave at the foot of Mount Hira, some three miles north of Mecca, and spend days at a time in prayer and meditation. Upon one occasion, when the world was thus set aside, the call came to Muhammad, the call that was to overthrow the gross idolatry of Arabia and to restore to the East the brightness of the religion of Abraham, the belief in the One True and Only God, the Merciful, the Mighty, the First and the Last.

Muhammad at first listened with fear and trembling, but at length, putting his whole trust in God, he accepted the call to declare the Unity of God, to overthrow idolatry and to revive the ancient lustre of true religion, consisting in the worship of God and the service of humanity, faith and good deeds, submission to God and the practice of brotherhood towards humanity.

But the task before Muhammad was well-nigh superhuman. His own tribe, the Quraish, were the chief upholders of the gross idolatry of Mecca. It is said that the idols worshipped at that time in Mecca numbered as many as three hundred and sixty-five. In the

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face of the bitterest opposition, persecuted, stoned, insulted and his very life in danger, Muhammad, undaunted, continued to denounce idolatry and to proclaim the mercy and magnificence, the power and punishment, the wisdom and forgiveness of the Eternal, the One Creator, the One Upholder of all humanity, of all existence.

Converts came slowly. First his own devoted wife Khadija. Then followed Abu Bakr, a Meccan notable, wealthy and influential, whose soundness of judgment commanded great respect amongst his compatriots. Ali, the Prophet's cousin, and Zaid, a liberated slave, were also two of the earliest converts, while at the end of the first three or four years of Muhammad's prophetic mission, the converts to the Faith probably numbered nearly forty.

Then the period of persecution set in more sharply, and in 615 it was found necessary for a band of the Muslims (as the followers of Muhammad were called) to flee for safety into Abyssinia, where the emigrants were well treated. But the persecution of the Quraish became hotter than ever, and, in the following year a second detachment of Muslims fled from Mecca and sought refuge with the Negus of Abyssinia. Muhammad himself remained at Mecca, the object of continual invective and abuse. The Quraish endeavoured to make the influential Abu Talib abandon his nephew Muhammad; but Abu Talib remained staunch, and continued to give Muhammad his protection.

The Quraish then announced a ban of outlawry against Muhammad and his family, the Hashimites. The ban remained in force for some two or three years, and brought in its train much suffering and hardship by the state of blockade and social ostracism under which Muhammad and his relatives were compelled to live. In 619 the ban was removed, but in the same year

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Muhammad sustained a severe loss in the death of his faithful wife Khadija, while the following year saw the death of Muhammad's great protector, Abu Talib.

The Prophet's position in Mecca thereupon became critical. His followers, though devotedly attached, were but a handful against a host, and the greater part even of them were now in Abyssinia. Muhammad, hard pressed, resolved to make trial of Tayif, a city of importance sixty or seventy miles east of Mecca; but there met only with insults, stones and imprecations. With blood flowing from both his legs, he was obliged to flee from the obdurate, idolatrous city. But though clouds were so dark, the persistence of the Prophet in preaching Islam (submission to the will of the One True God, even the religion of Abraham) had not been without effect. Some pilgrims from Medina had heard and been converted. In 621 they plighted themselves to Muhammad by the first pledge of Aqaba, thus,

"We will not worship any but the One God; we will not steal, neither will we commit adultery, nor kill our children, nor bring false accusation against others; nor will we disobey the Prophet in anything that is right."

This was followed the year after by a still greater success from Medina, some seventy-three men and two women swearing allegiance to Muhammad by the second pledge of Aqaba. The Muslims at Mecca now began in small parties to emigrate from that city of persecution to the more hospitable atmosphere of Medina, and soon the Prophet was left at Mecca with but two companions, Abu Bakr and Ali.

The Quraish now thought to make an end of Muhammad. They laid siege to his house in an armed band, ready to fall upon him in a body as he came forth. But Muhammad received news of the plot beforehand, and secretly escaped with Abu Bakr under cover of

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night to the cave of Thaur, three miles distant from Mecca. The next day the Quraish, finding themselves balked in their intent, made an extensive but fruitless search for Muhammad, who, upon the third night, quitted the cave of refuge and set out for Medina on 20th June 622 A.C. This was the Hegira (flight), and from this date begins the Muslim Calendar.

Medina now became the city of Islam. Muhammad was welcomed there. The Muslims soon established themselves in the city, and amid scenes of general enthusiasm built in Medina the first Mosque in the history of Islam.

But the Quraish were not satisfied even with the departure of the Muslims from Mecca. They seemed determined to use their utmost endeavours to exterminate the Muslims. The course of the next ten years is consequently marked by bitter hostility and continual warfare between the idolaters in Mecca and the Muslims in Medina.

In the second year after the Flight, the Quraish, with a force of some 1,000 strong, advanced upon Medina. Apprised of the attack, the Muslims, numbering a mere 313, left their city to engage the advancing enemy. A decisive battle was fought at Badr, only thirty miles from Medina but two hundred and twenty miles from Mecca. Viewing the disparity of the opposing forces and seeing the Muslims outnumbered by three to one, Muhammad was filled with deep anxiety. Before the battle, therefore, he retired for a moment with Abu Bakr to his hut and engaged in earnest prayer. Then the battle began. The Meccans were defeated with heavy loss, and many notable chiefs of the Quraish were slain on the field.

The victory of Badr greatly inspirited the Muslims, but the Quraish fled only to renew a more desperate attack the following year, when, three thousand strong,

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they advanced to Uhud, some three miles north of Medina. Muhammad led the Muslims forth from Medina to repel the attack, and once again his forces were outnumbered by the enemy by three to one. To make matters worse, with the enemy already in sight, Abdullah ibn Ubay, with his three hundred followers, deserted. Thus the forces remaining with Muhammad were reduced to seven hundred. The fighting was fierce; the fortune of battle fluctuated for some time; the Muslims sustained heavy losses and were compelled to retreat, but the stout resistance they had offered gave the Meccans no heart to pursue their advantage, and they withdrew their armies from the field.

It should be noted that in both these battles Muhammad was upon the defensive, fighting against an aggressor, who had come from a distance to fall upon and exterminate the Muslims.

Two years later, the Quraish, with allied tribes, made a yet more ambitious attack upon Muhammad and the Muslims. With an army of some 24,000, they advanced and laid siege to Medina itself. But, after a month's efforts, not succeeding in breaking through the defence, the Meccans became exhausted. Their provisions ran short, and, discomfited by tempest and hurricane, which demolished their tents, Abu Sufyan, the Meccan commander, gave the order to retire.

The truce of Hudaibiya was now proclaimed. Muhammad made pilgrimage to Mecca and, in an atmosphere of general peace, Islam gathered strength and numbers.

After some years tribal feuds broke out again, and Muhammad and the Meccans found themselves once more arrayed in opposing camps. But now the Muslims were strong. Muhammad advanced upon Mecca and obtained a bloodless victory, the Meccans surrendering without resistance.

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This was the final triumph of Islam. The sacred house of the Ka'ba was purified of idols, polytheism was overthrown and before long arose an Arabia united in the worship of the One True God.

In the tenth year after the Flight, in an atmosphere of peace from which every vestige of idolatry had been swept away, Muhammad donned the pilgrim's garb and went up to Mecca for his last, his farewell pilgrimage. He invoked the blessing of God upon the Holy Temple at Mecca. Then, having performed the ceremonies of pilgrimage, he went in procession to Mina and Arafat, where he concluded his prayer and recitation with the Qur-ánic verse,

"This day have I perfected your religion for you
and fulfilled My favour upon you and
chosen Islam to be your religion."

Returning then to Mina, Muhammad addressed the vast concourse of pilgrims in a memorable speech upon the sacredness of life and property and domestic obligations.

In the year 632, having seen the complete success of his prophetic mission, having magnanimously pardoned his bitterest enemies and won respect and affection upon every side, Muhammad died at Medina in the house of his devoted wife Ayesha. His last thoughts, his last words were still of heavenly things, as he whispered prayerfully, "Lord! . . . Eternity in Paradise! . . . The blessed companionship on high!"

So passed away from the affection and devotion of his followers the figure of the great Arabian Prophet. In persecution and hardship, he had shown unshakable steadfastness and reliance upon God. In success, he dealt mercifully with his conquered enemies and at the height of his power and affluence did not abandon the great virtues of simplicity, frugality and urbane kindness of disposition towards high and low equally.

SAYS THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD :

His greatest reform was the overthrow of idolatry, while, amongst other salutary measures, he limited polygamy, forbade adultery, usury, gambling and the use of intoxicants. He abolished infanticide, discouraged slavery and proclaimed the essential brotherhood and equality of mankind in the sight of God, irrespective of race or class.

The followers of Muhammad have added their quota to the culture of the world. In Spain and throughout the East they developed an architecture of great beauty. They founded universities (Cordova, Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus) and fostered centres of learning. They kept alight the torch of civilisation during the dark ages. They preserved something of Greek philosophy and did much to develop medicine, chemistry, astronomy and mathematics.

The Qur-án (the Sacred Book of Islam) has remained undimmed in its pristine beauty and sublimity for over thirteen hundred years and has been translated into many different languages.

SAYS THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD :

Men are doing a good action as long as they are waiting for the moment to do it.

Perform your prayers in your dwellings and do not make tombs of the same.

Let your life, your fortune and your honour be as sacred to you as this earth.

O Lord! O God! Thine is the Praise! Frequent, pure and blessed Praise!

When Muhammad rose during the night to pray, he would say: "O God! Thine is the Praise! Thou art He Who protects the heavens, the earth and all they contain. Thine is the Praise! Thou art the light of the heavens, of the earth and of all that they contain: Thine

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is the Praise; Thou art the Lord of the heavens, of the earth and of all that they contain. Thine is the Praise! Thou art the Truth, Thy meeting is the Truth, Thy promise is the Truth, the Prophets are a Truth, Muhammad is a Truth: To Thee do I give myself up, in Thee do I believe, in Thee do I place my support, to Thee do I repent, to Thee do I struggle, and it is Thou whom I take for judge. Pardon me what I have already done, what I shall do later, what I have done in secret: 'Thou knowest all that better than I—what I have done in public: There is no divinity apart from Thee; there is no god but Thee.'

Fasting is a sedative: he who fasts must have no impure thoughts and must not be rough-mannered: if anyone attacks and insults him, let him say ten times: "I am fasting, I am fasting." I swear by the name of Him Who holds my life in His hands, the forgiveness from the mouth of him who is fasting is more pleasant to God than the perfume of musk: God has said: "To fast for My sake is to give up eating, drinking and the satisfying of your passions because of Me. For all his good actions shall I give a tenfold reward to him who fasts."

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 Pre-measurement 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

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All the Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DEAR BROTHER IN ISLAM,

Peace be on you

With the advent of the year 1940, with the blessings of Allah, *The Islamic Review* is going to enter the 28th year of its existence. This fact, by itself, is an impressive one in the field of English religious journalism. Knowing as you do the rather light way this sacred duty of journalism is still treated in the East in general, it is a matter of great thanksgiving that for the last 27 years this paper, in spite of all its various difficulties have never faltered in its regular appearance. Sure as the day comes at the end of the night, *Islamic Review* has appeared at the end of each month.

Praise be to Allah!

Religion as you know, when it is deeply felt, tends to be narrow and fanatical—a spirit extremely repugnant to a world of culture. On the other hand, a liberal attitude towards religious matters tends to soften the ardour of religious zeal. To keep the balance between these two extremes, is indeed capable of rare performance. *The Islamic Review* was to appeal to the cultured West and hence it had to exhibit the broad policy of tolerance. And yet it had, by the grace of Allah, been showing persistent ardour of faith and courage of conviction, which alone can draw outsiders to any religion. As a matter of fact, of late, the optimism shown in these pages, on behalf of Islam, in face of the hopelessness of the present day chaos, is remarkably noteworthy.

It is the hard fate of a preacher to be a little thick-skinned. Personally very sensitive, we have, for the sake of duty, to show the opposite quality

in repeating the same argument over and over again, changing, perhaps, the form of it from time to time. The reason is two fold. First, repeated hammering of any truth is essentially necessary in the process of driving it home to the world of humanity, notoriously dull in this matter. Secondly, while our adversaries repeat the same untruths about our religion we have no other alternative but to repeat the replies, if our objective is to antidote the evil effects of enemy propaganda. So, whatever some of our weaker brothers may feel in this connection, you know very well that our course in this matter, is the sanest under the circumstances. The Review has evoked the criticism of some of its patrons for repeating certain things '*ad nauseum*.' Indeed, it has done so in the spirit of a kind of martyrdom. It needs make no apology for it, it is not ashamed of it. On the contrary it is proud of its own suffering in this connection.

In assessing the value of this journal, we must always remember that it is first and foremost a missionary paper. The thousands and millions of non-Muslims that have been enlightened about Islam through its services, are by themselves a sufficient testimony to its success in the venture. To all these persons scattered all over the globe this humble monthly has been the only instrument of introduction to the faith of Islam—an achievement of no small dimension—praise be to Allah. It is very seldom, however, that one finds a missionary paper maintaining a dignified intellectual and literary standard as well. When we say this we have in our view the whole world of religious propaganda. In presenting a certain point of view, people, whether in the East or in the West, generally overlook the literary and intellectual sides of the presentation. The Review can not be too thankful to Allah that in its long course of missionary activity and career of controversy, it has never seen any lapse in its policy of persistent intellectualism and decent literary style. It is for this reason, that far

from being treated just as a missionary paper, it is considered as an authoritative document on Islamic view point, not only by writers of eminence but also by the leaders of active anti-Islamic movements.

As we have urged so often, the Review should be taken more as a missionary paper to be shown to the uninformed, than as anything else. Every Muslim is an unofficial missionary of Islam. If Muslims have ceased to feel like that it is to their own detriment. The Review was started with the object of reviving this sinking missionary spirit among Muslims and to provide them with an instrument, with which they can carry out this sacred duty in a manner befitting the present age. For good or for bad, to talk of religion in an open society or even in drawing rooms has become rather out of manners. And yet every thinking mind, urged by the spirit of the scientific age, has been feeling an uneasiness about religious doctrines not able to bear the light of scientific criticism. It is to devalue human nature to think that it can permanently remain free from religious thoughts. If not always, at least in spare times, every intelligent human being does try to solve the mysteries of existence. No such person can be averse to considering the view point of the other man if offered in a presentable way and if the procedure conforms to the standards of decency recognised at a given time. Seen from this point of view the Islamic Review is potential with enormous services as yet unexplored by the Muslim community. Once we have made up our mind to use it as an instrument of Tabligh (or propagation) in the fullest sense of the term, it will reveal possibilities unsuspected yet. Our subscribers should consider themselves as a part of the Mission, of which the journal is the organ. If we, of this Mission, explore avenues for the introduction of the Review in uninitiated and unenlightened circles, so should our subscribers in their own individual ways. This will advance the

cause of Islam in a far speedier way than we have had the goodluck of witnessing so far.

May we not forget that we are engaged in a serious campaign! We have been carrying on this campaign for the last 27 years, with results too patent to be mistaken. We have been trying to sow the seeds of a new order, which was to follow an apprehended crisis. The crisis has come at last. It is the fag end of our struggle, and its most serious stage too. Should we fail in our perseverance just at this moment, we shall have seen the futility of our efforts of the last 27 years, and been deprived of an achievement glorious beyond description. May Allah will it otherwise! May He give us and our patrons added vigour to augment the resources of this patent instrument of Islamic constructive power. May the Review be read by millions during the next year where it is done now only by thousands. May His name be glorified at the last!

AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

EDITOR

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