

"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Last of the Prophets . . ."—
HOLY QUR-AN, 33 : 40. "There will be no prophet after me."— MUHAMMAD.

The **Islamic Review**

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(peace be upon him)

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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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JUNE, 1942 A.C.

[No. 6

A DECLARATION

I, (MR.) REGINALD GOODFELLOW, of "Brendon," Regent Street, Stoke-on-Trent, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Alláh (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 Alláh.

La iláha ill-Alláh Muhammad-un-Rasul-Alláh

[There is but One God (Alláh) and Muhammad is God's Messenger.]

Dated 14th April, 1941.

R. GOODFELLOW.

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"THE GARDEN OF PEACE"

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

(Continued from page 142 of the last issue.)

XVI

Still the snow prevails and the winter is cold ; and the patches of hard ice shine beneath the midday sun. Day follows day with cloud or cold or rain, but each day lengthens and lightens. Now in the dawn can be heard some brave birds singing, some bird that has faith in the coming of spring, though it appears not yet. Yes, indeed, everyday our hearts beat faster with hope as we travel towards the spring, as the Great Darkness rolls away behind us, as some thunder-cloud o'erpassed. In other spheres, too, hope brightens at this time. The dark winter of Injustice seems now at point to depart from the earth, long burdened by its oppression. The freedom of Abyssinia looms up in the future as the sure harbinger of the springtime of justice brought back by the desire, the resolution and the sacrifice of humanity. Even now from Africa, long styled the dark continent, leaps forth a light of victory, proclaiming to troubled Europe, to striving America and to watchful Asia the dawn of the deliverance of humanity, when man shall be free, when nation shall respect nation, when race persecution shall cease from the face of the earth, and God, even the one God, shall be worshipped.

Now again draws near the midnight hour. The clamour of the day has ceased. The howlings of hate and the noise of the rendings and blastings have subsided. The wild free voice of the night wind alone is heard. The Qur-án is set before me. I turn the pages in the name of God and with peace I read :
" And who forsakes the religion of Abraham but he

“THE GARDEN OF PEACE”

who makes himself foolish ? Most certainly We chose him in this world, and in the hereafter he is most surely among the righteous. When his Lord said to him : ‘ Submit,’ he said : ‘ I submit myself to the Lord of the worlds.’ And the same did Abraham enjoin on his sons, and so did Jacob : ‘ O My Sons ! Surely Allah has chosen for you the faith, therefore die not unless you be Muslims.’ Nay ! were you witnesses when death visited Jacob, when he said to his sons : ‘ What will you serve after me ? ’ They said : ‘ We will serve your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, one God only and to Him do we submit.’ This is a people who have passed away. They shall have what they earned, and you shall have what you earn, and you shall not be called upon to answer for what they did. And they say : ‘ Be Jews or Christians, you will be on the right course. Say : ‘ Nay ! we follow the religion of Abraham the upright one, and he was not one of the polytheists.’ Say : ‘ We believe in Allah and in that which has been revealed to us and in that which was revealed to Abraham and to Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and in that which was given to Moses and Jesus and in that which was given to the prophets from their Lord ; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit.’ ” (Qur-án ii : 130—136.)

XVII

When I think of the diversity of race now manifest over humanity in this world, how the European differs from the Chinese and the Chinese from the Arab and the Arab from the negro, I am brought up sharply by the realization that all these differences have long ago reached their maximum and that now a contrary process has set in, a process not of differentiation but

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of assimilation. In other words, the trend of estrangement of man from man by long periods of isolation brought about by inaccessible mountain carriers, wide rivers not to be crossed, rough seas not readily to be passed over and mighty deserts as prone walls between man and man in understanding, this period of estrangement has now given place to an era of reunion, when the members of the human family, so long separated, shall once again unite and recognize one another as indeed brothers of the same stock and stuff and destiny. Herein I am aware that I have so far made no mention of the prevalence of race persecution and race glorification which have so disastrously shown themselves on the continent of Europe within the last ten years. I have passed over these violations of human brotherhood because, in the long view, I cannot but regard them as temporary phases which will, happily for humanity, "pass away and leave no track behind."

Whatever obstructions and divergent tendencies may exist at the moment, I do believe in the approaching brotherhood of mankind, when, from closer knowledge and more frequent intercourse, the barriers of strangeness and hostility between race and race will be broken down and trampled underfoot. Then may we see the realization world-wide of the Islamic ideal of the essential equality of man in the sight of God, that men are blood-brothers of one family cared for and protected by one God of mercy and required by divine injunction to cast out pride in service, the most honoured being those from whom accrue most blessing to humanity at large. In the Qur-án it is written: "O ye men! surely We have created you of a male and a female and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful of his duty. Surely,

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Allah is the Possessor of knowledge, the Aware.” And again in the Book it is written : “ Help one another in goodness and piety and do not help one another in sin and aggression.”

XVIII

In the night a question rises up before me, “ What is the chief end and object of life ? ” or in other words, “ For what, fundamentally, was man created ? ” This question dances before me in the quiet and the darkness of night and an answer to it must be found.

Let us examine possible solutions in the hope of recognizing in due course the true answer. For millions and millions of mankind the *raison d'être* would appear to be “ to earn a living,” “ to avoid starvation.” But is this a conclusive or satisfactory answer ? Does it not, after all, amount merely to saying, “ The object of eating is to be able to eat ? ” This answer does not satisfy us. To earn a living is not the object of life. Thousands of persons, who have no occasion to earn a living, still do not for that reason relinquish life. If we said the object of life were enjoyment, were happiness, still millions go on living who have not worldly enjoyment and who seem not to seek happiness.

I fancy, too, that if all the difficulties of the material support of life were smoothed away, if to eat and drink and to satisfy all physical desires and to have without labour all bodily comforts and protection against the elements were readily available to one's use, I fancy that the object of life would not consist in the enjoyment of these.

When all were said and done, man, created by God, would still find his highest fulfilment in turning towards God in worship, in adoration, in gratitude, and in service of God. The thought of the Belovéd

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would still prove the deepest bliss and the worship of the One Merciful Lord the most worthy end of existence. And the verses of the Qur-án proclaim: "I am Allah the Seeing. This is a Book which We have revealed to you that you may bring forth men, by their Lord's permission, from utter darkness into light . . . to the way of the Mighty, the Praiséd One, of Allah, Whose is whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And woe to the unbelievers on account of the severe chastisement, to those who love this world's life more than the hereafter, and turn away from Allah's path and desire to make it crooked! these are in a remote error." (Qur-án xiv: 1—3.) And again the verses of the Qur-án proclaim: "I am Allah, the best Knower. These are the verses of the Book of Wisdom, a guidance and a mercy for the doers of goodness, who keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and are certain of the hereafter. These are on a guidance from their Lord, and these are they who are successful." (Qur-án xxxi: 1—5.)

XIX

To-day has been a blessed day with plenty of work, with the delicious caress of the south-west wind, with gleams of sunshine at times, with the bird singing the hope of spring and, in the garden, my wife planting little pine trees, pledges to the promise of spring. Abroad, too, Europe and Asia thrill to the capture of Benghazi. Indeed, it must be that the whole world turns from her troubled nightmare to watch the bright gleam that is the dawn of a happier age.

How might an empire be founded upon the oppression of law-abiding Ethiopia, unjustly stifled by devilish onslaught of gas? From its unjust foundation, lo, the Empire totters and the spirit of liberty, transcending the greed and brutality that planned her

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slavery, rises as the phoenix with gleaming triumph. Surely, the Arab world must rejoice at the overthrow of the African Tyrant !

So from temporal manifestations of the Divine Will, of Allah Who most certainly commandeth justice, one's thoughts turn to things eternal, to the reality that is both Beyond and Ever-present. Amid the sacred verses of the Book that makes manifest, of the Qur-án, that holds guidance for humanity, I read in the night these words : “ And if We make man taste mercy from Us, then take it off from him, most surely he is despairing, ungrateful. And if We make him taste a favour after distress has afflicted him, he will certainly say : ‘ The evils are gone away from me.’ Most surely he is exulting, boasting ; except those who are patient and do good, they shall have forgiveness and a great reward.” (Qur-án xi : 9—11). “ Now surely the curse of Allah is on the unjust, who turn away from the path of Allah and desire to make it crooked ; and they are disbelievers in the hereafter. These shall not escape in the earth, nor shall they have any guardians besides Allah ; the chastisement shall be doubled for them ; they could not bear to hear and they did not see. These are they who have lost their souls, and what they have forged is gone from them. Truly, in the hereafter they are the greatest losers. Surely, as to those who believe and do good and humble themselves to their Lord, these are the dwellers of the Garden, in it they will abide.” (Qur-án x : 18—23).

(To be continued.)

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THE QURANIC CONCEPTION OF STATE

BY DR. HAMIDULLAH

It was a remarkable phenomenon when the Arabian peninsula, which was at no time in history brought under one sway, came to recognize unanimously the spiritual and temporal overlordship of the Prophet Muhammad. This tremendous achievement in anarchic Arabia was the result of but a decade's endeavour. All this was done under the guidance of Divine revelations, a collection of which we possess in the form of the Holy Qur-án. If one studies closely the Prophet's life, one will have little difficulty in agreeing with the remark of his wife that the Qur-án is the mirror of his character (كأن خلقه القرآن). Therefore, the conception of State which he had and which he imposed on his followers may easily be traced in the verses of this sacred Book.

It is significant that the Qur-án not only refers to the stories of the prophets of bygone ages but also recognizes their validity in so far as they are not expressly abrogated by the Qur-án itself. In other words the *sunnah* of ancient prophets is also binding upon the Muslim community unless the contrary is laid down in the Book or the traditions. See for example :

“Those are they unto whom We gave the Scripture and the command and the Prophethood. But if these people disbelieve therein, then indeed We shall entrust it to a people who will not be disbelievers therein. Those are they whom God guideth ; so follow their guidance.”
(Qur-án 6 : 89, 90. Cf. also 42 : 13).

The Imams Bukhari and al-Tirmidhi have recorded that the Prophet followed the practices of the people of the Scripture rather than the pagan Arabs in matters in which he had received no direct revelations.

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The same is true regarding the affairs of State.

In the history of the development of human society the State is rather a late institution. According to the Quranic chronology, Adam, the first man, was also destined to play the role of the lieutenant or agent (khalifah) of God on earth. As the father of the only human family, he had no rivals in that position. The generations that followed lived in disunion and impiety. Therefore, according to the Qur-án, prophets were sent among them to serve as intermediaries between God and men, and to point out to them what the will of their Creator was and exhort them to do good and to abstain from evil. The role of well-wishers and disinterested counsellors, which these prophets played, did not in fact concern any State but only communities, apparently devoid of any political superiors. It was not States which were then replaced one by another, but one people gave place to another people (قوم). Of course, the Qur-án does not neglect their economic and social activities but mentions them only to remind men of the beneficence of their Lord and their duties towards Him.

It is since the time of Abraham that the Qur-án shows any notion of the personality of sovereign in human society. The sovereign possessed and exercised the power of life and death over his subjects (*vide* 2 : 258). With Joseph, however, the idea of State attains a higher degree of development. In his days (12 : 30) there were kings and ministers and State prisons.

From the Quranic description of the life of Moses, we learn that this great leader of the Israelites had designs of establishing a State but he was disappointed in his own people and was forced to wait until a new generation trained under him took their place before conquering the Promised Land. The Pharaoh of the

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time of Moses is represented as a veritable king who ruled with the help of a minister and with the advice of a council of elders. The Quranic description of the functioning of this Council leaves the impression that it did not take hasty resolutions, nor give orders thoughtlessly. It stood rather for indulgence and moderation even in the case of innovators. Moreover, even a commoner seemed to possess in those days a certain political education, as for instance when a man reproached Moses that the latter was becoming a tyrant instead of a reformer and a benefactor to his folk. (Qur-án 28 : 19.)

The story of Talut (King Saul) in the Qur-án has a singular interest. The Israelites had been defeated by their enemy and driven out of their country. Their desire for vengeance induced them to ask their Prophet to select a king under whom they would wage war against their enemy.

“Bethink thee of the leaders of the Children of Israel after Moses, how they said unto a Prophet whom they had : ‘Set up for us a king and we will fight in Allah’s way.’ He said : ‘Would ye then refrain from fighting if fighting were prescribed for you ?’ They said : ‘Why should we not fight in Allah’s way when we have been driven from our dwellings with our children ?’ Yet, when fighting was prescribed for them, they turned away, all save a few of them. Allah is aware of evil-doers.

“Their Prophet said unto them : ‘Lo, Allah hath raised up Saul to be a King for you.’ They said : ‘How can he have kingdom over us when we are more deserving of the kingdom than he is, since he hath not been given wealth enough ?’ He said : ‘Lo, Allah hath chosen

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him above you, and hath increased him abundantly in wisdom and stature. Allah bestoweth His sovereignty on whom He will. Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.' ” (Qur-án 2 : 246-247.)

Among other significations, this passage shows that knowledge and sagacity, together with physical culture, and not riches or birth, are the requisites of a king. It shows further that the Israelites of that epoch recognized a distinction between Church and State. Nevertheless, David and Solomon, the immediate successors of Talut (Saul) possessed the spiritual rank of a prophet as well as the temporal power of a king.

As for David, the details of his life in the Qur-án are very important, for, they mention particularly the duties of the king, the most prominent of which is the administration of justice.

(a) “. . . And David slew Goliath ; and God gave him the kingdom and the wisdom . . . ” (Qur-án 2 : 251.)

(b) “ We made his kingdom strong and gave him wisdom and decisive speech.” (Qur-án 38 : 21.)

(c) “ O David ! Lo, We have set thee a viceroy in the earth, therefore judge right between mankind and follow not desire that it beguile thee from the way of God. Lo, those who wander from the way of God have an awful doom for as much as they forget the Day of Reckoning.” (Qur-án 38 : 27.)

“ Solomon was David's heir.” (Qur-án 27 : 16.) Although the son succeeded the father, yet for the Qur-án it was not a question of the right of inheritance ; the grace of God was the only source of power.

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One of the most illuminating passages where the functioning of government is described, is the one in which the story of the Queen of Sheba is narrated :

“ She said : ‘ O chieftains ! pronounce for me in my case. I decide no case till ye are present with me.’

“ They said : ‘ We are lords of might and lords of great prowess, but it is for thee to command ; so consider what thou wilt command.’

“ She said : ‘ Lo, kings, when they enter a township, ruin it and make the honour of its people shame. Thus will they do. But lo, I am going to send a present unto them, and to see with what (answer) the messengers return.’

“ So when the envoy came unto Solomon (the King), he said : ‘ What ? Would ye help me with wealth ? But that which Allah hath given me is better than that which He hath given you. Nay, it is ye and not I who exult in your gift. Return unto them. We verily shall come unto them with hosts that they cannot resist, and we shall drive them out from thence with shame, and they will be abased ’.”
(Qur-án 27 : 32—37.)

The necessity of a code of laws for a community has always been recognized. The *kitab* of which so much is mentioned in the Qur-án as having been given to the prophets, literally means the prescription. Again, as soon as the Israelites arrived safe and sound out of the territory of the Pharaoh, God favoured Moses with engraved tablets of laws and enjoined upon the Israelites to hold fast to them.

Moreover, the Qur-án has condemned, on several occasions, the unjust and unjustifiable acts of oppressive kings. (Qur-án 18 : 80, 28 : 4.) And one thing which

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is most striking in the narratives of the Qur-án is that the king seems to possess far greater importance than the State ; the idea of the king is predominant and that of the State is only incidental.

We have so far confined our investigations to the State in ancient times. It does not mean, however, that nothing can be gathered about the Muslim State which the Prophet was establishing with so much difficulty. A classified treatment of its material may be helpful.

It must be noted that the Divine origin of all authority is never lost sight of but the notion of the Day of Judgment has not been without its effect on the exercise of otherwise inevitable autocracy. Again, if sometimes territory has been mentioned by the side of power it seems to have been incidental rather than essential.

“ Say : O God, Owner of sovereignty, Thou givest sovereignty unto whom Thou wilt and Thou withdrawest sovereignty from whom Thou wilt. Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt, and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt. In Thy hand is the good. Lo, Thou art able to do all things.” (Qur-án 3 : 26.)

“ He it is Who hath placed you as viceroys of the earth and hath exalted some of you in rank above others, that He may try you by (the test of) that which He hath given you (Qur-án 6 : 166.) And We have given you, *i.e.* mankind, power in the earth, and appointed for you therein a livelihood.” (Qur-án 7 : 10.)

But Prof. Nallino of Rome has no hesitation in believing that the Muslim institution of *bay'at* or fealty to the monarch on his accession to power is a sort of Social Contract. He says :

“ Le fait de conférer la dignité de calife est considéré, par les juristes comme un contrat, posé entre

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celui qui accepte la charge et la cummunauté musulmane ; ce contrat n'est parfait que s'il y a eu la bai'ah ou acte d'hommage de la part des représentants de la communauté." (P. 11, Notes sur la nature du califat en général et sur le prétendu Califat Ottoman, Rome, 1919.)

The word 'bai'ah' itself means a contract ; and technically it signifies the offer of fidelity and allegiance on the one part and the acceptance of this offer on the other. (*vide* Qur-án 48 : 10, 18, 60 : 12.) In other words, the authority of the monarch depends upon, if not actually emanates from, the consent of the public.

Although the Muslims believe as an article of faith the impeccability of the Divine Messengers, (عصمة الأنبياء) nobody ever admitted that the successors (Khalifahs) of the Prophet had possessed the same privilege. It is for this reason that the principle the king can do no wrong was never accepted by the Muslims. They boast of the fact that even the Prophet himself was subject to the same common laws of human relationships and heard against his own person many a case of tort and civil obligation.* His impeccability was confined to the deliverance of the message of God and the mission of Islam. In other respects, he was a man and was always considered as such.* Politically he was a member of the Muslim community and subject to the same laws.

ALLEGIANCE

The importance of obedience to authority has been emphasised in the most unequivocal words in the Qur-án :

"O ye who believe: Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those from amongst you who

* It should be noted that sinlessness عصمة is a different thing from being above mistakes. Of course, even in worldly matters if the Prophet takes any step under Divine revelations that step has to be considered as above errors.—Ed., I. R.

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are in authority; and if ye have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger if ye are in truth believers in God and the Last Day. That is better and more seemly in the end." (Qur-án 4 : 59.)

"And if any tidings, whether of safety or fear, come unto them, they noise it abroad, whereas if they had referred it to the Messenger and such of them as are in authority, those among them who are able to think out the matter would have known it." (Qur-án 4 : 83.)

The obedience to the person of the Prophet has more frequently been emphasised, sometimes in an authoritative way and sometimes in persuasive terms. Hence it was that there was so much craze in later times to compile the traditions of the Prophet. For instance :

"And whatsoever the Messenger giveth you, take it and whatsoever he forbiddeth, abstain from it." (Qur-án 59 : 7).

"Verily in the Messenger of God ye have a good example to imitate for him who looketh unto God and the Last Day, and remembereth God much." (Qur-án 33 : 21.)

"O ye who believe : Obey God and His Messenger and turn not away from him when ye hear him speak. And obey God and His Messenger and dispute not one with another lest ye falter and your wind* (strength) depart from you but be steadfast; lo, God is with the steadfast." (Qur-án—20 : 20, 46.)

In his book on the Caliphate, Arnold has rightly acknowledged that this one-sided emphasis on the duty of the subjects without the correlative duty of the

* This is a nautical metaphor. Your wind will depart from your sails means in fact your strength will disappear.

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ruler did not turn a Muslim monarch into a tyrant, thanks to the notion of resurrection and the peculiar character of Muslim law. Nevertheless in not a few passages has this duty of the ruler been emphasised in the Qur-án :

“Unto this, then summon (O Muhammad). And be thou upright as thou art commanded, and follow not their lusts, but say : I believe in whatever scripture Allah hath sent down, and I am commanded to be just among you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. Unto us our works and unto you your works ; no argument between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and unto Him is the journeying.”
(Qur-án 42 : 15.)

“Then verily We shall question those unto whom (Our message) hath been sent, and verily We shall question the messengers.” (Qur-án 7 : 6.)

Again, the interests of the state must have a priority over private interests. (*vide* Qur-án 8 : 27, 28, 9 : 24.)

“O ye who believe : Betray not Allah and His Messenger, nor knowingly betray your trusts.”

“And know that your possessions and your children are a test, and that with Allah is immense reward.”

It may incidentally be remarked that patriotism in Islam partakes of a politico-religious unity and not of a geographical or ethnological nationality whatsoever:

“O mankind : Lo ! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the best in conduct. Lo, God is Knower, Aware.”
(Qur-án 49 : 13.)

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“The believers are naught else but brothers.”

(Qur-án 49 : 13.)

“And hold fast, all of you together, to the cable of Allah, and do not separate. And remember Allah’s favour unto you, how ye were enemies and He made friendship between your hearts so that ye became as brothers by His grace ; and how ye were upon the brink of an abyss of fire, and He did save you from it. Thus Allah maketh clear His revelations unto you, that haply ye may be guided.

“And there should spring from you a party who invite to goodness, and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency. Such are they who are successful.” (Qur-án 3 : 102, 103.)

It goes without saying that Islam disclaims any class distinction on account of birth.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

This is a primary duty of the sovereign ; he must be impartial and just and administer justice tempered with mercy. (*vide* Qur-án 16 : 90 ; 4 : 58, 135 ; 5 : 8 ; 16 : 40.)

The non-Muslim subjects ought to be given juridical autonomy, and if they appeal to the Muslim courts, they should receive justice and equity (*vide* Qur-án 5 : 42, 50.)

PARLIAMENTARISM

The ruler must conduct public affairs in consultation :

“And consult with them upon the conduct of affairs. And when thou art resolved, then put thy trust in God. Lo ! God loveth those who put their trust in Him.” (Qur-án 3 : 159.)

“Now whatever ye have been given is but a passing comfort for the life of the world and that which

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God hath is better and more lasting for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord and those whose affairs are a matter of counsel, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them." (Qur-án 42 : 36, 38.)

Nevertheless, it is to be observed that the power of veto seems to have been retained by the ruler: (*vide* Qur-án 6 : 117.)

LEGISLATION

The Qur-án recognizes the validity and the binding character of all that the Prophet said or did (Qur-án 53 : 3, 4 ; 59 : 7.) This rendered the task of the Muslim legislator easier. For the Prophet himself practised and allowed discretion and analogical deduction in matters not expressly provided for in the Qur-án. Although the Qur-án and the Hadith (traditions) could not be abrogated by *qiyás* (or analogical deduction) yet enough margin was left for individual interpretation, and the recognition of the possibility of a Mujtahid, (one exercising the right of private judgment) committing mistakes (المجتهد يخطئ ويصيب), in other words, the permission of replacing one deduction by a later and better one, rendered Muslim law sufficiently elastic and it continued to be so, until degeneracy befell later Muslim juris-consults who themselves disclaimed any power of *qiyás* or deduction as against the deductions of the classical juris-consults.

RULES FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE STATE

It may be considered strange that one should find in the Qur-án germs of international law and provisions for the guidance of the State in times of war, peace and neutrality, but we have to remember that the Prophet himself was responsible for the creation of a State out of the anarchy prevailing in Arabia and the unification of the Arab tribes under one sole

THE QURANIC CONCEPTION OF STATE

authority in order to make them the world's greatest conquering and colonizing nation. He dispelled from their minds their inferiority complex, and inculcated healthy ideas of superiority and self-consciousness.

“Ye are the best people that hath been raised up for mankind.

Ye enjoin the right conduct and forbid the wrong.” (Qur-án 3 : 110 also 3 : 19, 85.)

“Sanction is given unto those who fight, because they have been wronged . . . those who, if We give them power in the land, establish worship and pay the surplus tax (*zakat*) and enjoin kindness and forbid iniquity.” (Qur-án 22 : 39, 41.)

“And fight them until mischief (*fitnah*) is no more and religion is all for God.” (Qur-án 8 : 39.)

“And We have not sent thee O Muhammad save as a comforter and a warner unto all mankind ; but most people know not.” (Qur-án 34 : 28.)

Perhaps it was this consciousness that inspired the Muslim idea of moulding the world into the kingdom of God. The idea of *jihád*, as may be gathered from the above and all other relevant passages, has not been to exploit and plunder people reluctant to agree to any of the choices in the triple formula of Islam—submission or sword. On the other hand, it is considered a sublime duty, though arduous, to help fellow human beings to return to the right path, and civilize them. It was a selfless burden cheerfully borne for the sake of God and humanity. There are numerous commandments in the Qur-án concerning what may be called public international law or the conduct of the Muslim state in times of war, peace and neutrality. A detailed study of this is not possible here but mention may be

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made of such varied subjects as reprisals (2 : 190—95) observance of treaties (9 : 7) defence (4 : 75; 22 : 39—41) sympathetic wars (8 : 72) threatened infraction of treaties (8 : 58), religious tolerance (2 : 256; 109 : 6, 62, 3 : 64) non-Muslim subjects (9 : 29) treatment of prisoners (47 : 4; 76 : 8—9) grant of asylum (9 : 6) conquered territory (7 : 10) peace (8 : 61), neutrality (4 : 88—91, 59 : 11—12, 94, 60 : 8-9) etc., etc.

NATIONAL WEALTH

“ . . . So that it may not circulate (only) between the rich among you.”—(Qur-án 59 : 7.)

This is the key-note of the Quranic policy concerning national wealth. Hence the distribution of wealth among all classes has been emphasised in all economic laws of Islam. The institution of a surplus tax (*zakat*) and the restrictions on the power of testamentary disposition of one's property in order to safeguard the rights of near relatives, the declaration of the statutory rights of the poor in the state income, and, above all, the prohibition of usury all tend to the same objective.

PUBLIC MORALS

Religion and politics are two distinct spheres. They cannot be unified. At the same time, it is true that their separation has done incalculable harm to humanity. Islam has found out and successfully practised a formula of reconciliation, *viz.*, although each of them appertains to a different sphere of activity, the source of both should be the same, that is, the Qur-án, the Hadith and justice, equity and good conscience.

POLITICAL NOMENCLATURE

Islamic polity has borrowed the terms *ummah* and *millah* (political community) and *khalifah* and *imam*

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head of the politico-religious community from the Qur-án. (Qur-án 42 : 8 Ibn Hisham Sirah, p. 341, article 2 of the text of the constitution of the first Muslim political community drafted by the Prophet himself; the text of this important document is also to be found in Abu Ubaid's *Kitab al Amwál* recently published in Egypt, p. 517 and as for the word *khalifah*, see 38 : 27 and for *imam* 2 : 124 etc.)

SUCCESSION TO POWER

With the term *khalifah* (caliph) we come to the most thorny question of succession to power in Islam. This is the crucial point on which two important parties of Muslims have been diverging for over 1,300 years and which has divided them into two hostile camps. The Islam which was preached by the Prophet did not say, much less insist upon it as an article of faith, as to who should succeed the Prophet when he died. But unfortunately just the opposite has been the case. Extremist views have prevailed in both the rival camps. A new note has been struck recently which deserves serious attention on both sides. The Sunnis and the Shiahs both agree that Hazrat Ali did not historically and chronologically succeed in power to the Prophet; both agree that Hazrat Ali was the immediate successor of the Prophet in spiritual affairs.* Now the question whether Hazrat Ali had the right to be the immediate political successor of the Prophet is a matter for academic discussion and not a problem of practical politics.

* All the Sufi schools of thought like the Chishtiah, Qadriyah and the Suhrawardiyah receive their authority from the Prophet through Ali directly without any other intermediary.

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FROM THE CROSS TO THE CRESCENT

BY ABDUR RAZZAQUE SELLIAH

(Continued from page 149 of the current volume.)

Now let me take another view of the general attitude of the worshippers when they come to the church to attend Divine worship. To tell you the real truth it is next to impossible to really worship God in a Catholic Church. I know many will not agree with me ; but when they know for themselves the kind of atmosphere and company that surrounds them they would perhaps admit the truth of my statement. In the first place the Catholics are permitted to freely mingle among men and women and take their places as they like in the church. A wife and husband with the family may occupy one of the pews, on the other hand a couple of young lads may be seated in another ; and yet in a third two " sweethearts " may be together. Further " love-stricken " or " disappointed hearts " may come " by appointment " to such and such a pew to exchange their passions of love and glances, etc. Smart young fellows in the " Sunday suits " and young lassies in their " latest frocks " making an exhibition of those parts of the body which must be hidden in an atmosphere of solemnity, bathed with such fragrance and scents that makes one's head turn, would fill in the pews at random and thus make up a congregation of worshippers. One could notice that some eyes in the congregation shoot out in all angles and directions, often making circles and semi-circles under some pretence or other. Often " knee-knocking " and such other tactics go on in silence, conveying their silent messages during the Holy Mass, and, more often than not, at the time of the " elevation " of the Sacred Host, when the whole congregation is expected to kneel with bowed heads, one may see a couple of heads fully and

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opportunistically raised, surveying and feasting their eyes on some attractive faces and doing a little "spotting." All these may undoubtedly be shocking revelations but facts are facts, however unpalatable. All Catholics may deny this with curses and emphasis, but the criterion of judgment remains. Now amid such settings how can any man think of worshipping God as He ought to be worshipped? To me it was really impossible, and the Catholic form of assembling for worship is more of a barrier to concentration and prayer than any help. It is something like a cinema or theatre. Under such circumstances how can one really be expected to be sincere and thoughtful in worshipping God? Moreover, the priest would go on with the service in Latin and I could go in for anything. There was no feeling of unity in worship which is very essential in congregational worship. It seemed that I was worshipping independently of the priest, and the priest of me, although we were at one and the same service under the same roof. To be frank if one is in the prime of one's youth and happens to be seated next to a girl of an equally youthful age, with all the modern devices of attracting the opposite sex, it would be sheer hypocrisy not to admit that one's thoughts are on *her* and not on God for one moment. Suppose you find that you are sitting next to some important personage, you will always be thinking that the eyes of the church are fixed on you, and really such things do happen. Another is that if you are not in time to get a good seat in the church, and have to content yourself by the side of a beggar, or someone a bit better than him, you can be sure of being laughed at after the Mass, and this unpleasant thought keeps you thinking and making you uneasy the whole time. And so on and so forth. Volumes could be written on "Sunday attractions," but it is not my purpose to vilify anybody,

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but to state facts as I have experienced them. Mere lip service, rituals, and magnificent ceremonies, with the clanging of bells, are good enough to feed the tender minds of kids, but a thinking man, or woman, needs a worship far superior to this, as wood and clay cannot produce the effects that true worship demands. Whatever form of worship one may observe, one should have one thing in view and that is the desire to have a vision of God, or to come to a point where he could realize Him in this world. All the world knows that this Being called God is invisible, and so how can an Invisible Being be visualized through pictures, statues and decorated altars? Searching for stars far-flung out of visibility from this world through a telescope is no argument, for we know that these things exist in material shape, but to get a glimpse of God through pictures, statues and the like is simply absurd. The realization of God, which is after all the actual aim of worship, cannot be achieved through painted window panes, statues, etc., but requires different channels altogether. Lastly, the complete loss of unity in the worship of God among the Catholics was most distasteful. While the Mass is in progress you could see some kneeling down with bowed heads, others comfortably seated and bowing their foreheads on to the pews in front of them, still others kneeling on one leg, while the other is used as a rest to steady themselves; yet some others standing on one leg, leaning against pillars and so on and so forth in fifty different angles and ways. In short, there is an absolute disregard of the attitude of respect that must be adopted in the House of God. The "big bugs" do not want to mix with their humble brethren, and while the big man is comfortable in a well-cushioned pew the humbler man may have to keep on kneeling on the bare floor with tiny grains of sand often piercing his

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aching knees. The Catholic worship has nothing by way of action that creates a spirit of humility in him. The spiritual experience of the man who sits in his chair, and that of the man who rests his back on the seat and forehead on the pew, must indeed be different to each other, in the same way as the experience of the man who stands on one leg will do to that of the other who kneels on the bare floor. Such people will have little or no experience of true humility, much less realize the actual meaning of prayer and worship.

I may now leave this matter here and tell you how Islam taught me what real worship is.

NAMAZ OR THE MUSLIM WORSHIP

“Prayer like charity is as old as humanity itself, but Islam has given it a new meaning. Its object is not to glorify God by repeating His praise, for God is above such necessities, and does not want such service, so the Qur-án tells us. In saying our prayers on Muslim lines we are doing the best service possible to ourselves. In adoring God we are reminded of the ways which will make us, too, an object of adoration. To glorify God is, in Islam, to edify oneself,” so says the late Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the founder and at one time the Imam of the Woking Mosque, England. He has very beautifully expressed the real meaning in a nutshell, and I am afraid it cannot be improved upon. But I shall tell you how this most perfect worship reacted on me. In the first place to a Muslim the whole world is his mosque. There is no injunction that his worship must be offered in a building only. If necessity compels him he can just as well say his prayers in a cathedral, Hindu or Buddhist temple, or even upon a tree if the circumstances so demand. This is one advantage a Muslim has over his brothers of other denominations. Ere he settles down to prayer he has to perform his ablutions,

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or external purifications, as a preliminary to his devotions. Of this I shall speak later. The Muslim worship has no vain or purposeless formalities. All that he needs is a clean place, or a prayer mat, on which he offers his prayers. Before he commences, he has to realize what he is about to do. He knows it is a matter absolutely serious and he has to prepare himself mentally for the task of worship. It is related that when the Caliph Ali was about to say his prayers, he often said that he was about to undertake a task which the heavens and earth refused. Prayer in Islam means the "awareness" of God's immediate presence about you. "Woe unto those who are unmindful of their prayers" is the warning of the Holy Book of Islam. Again it says: "Worship God as if you see Him, for although you see Him not, He sees you." To a true Muslim these are not mere words. They are pregnant with truth.

(To be continued)

THE CROWN OF HUMANITY

BY RABI'AL KARIM, M.Sc.

(Continued from p. 144 of the last issue.)

THE HUMANITY OF A SUPERMAN

Hazrat Muhammad was the highest glory of humanity. He was not the son of God nor an incarnate of the Supreme Being—and in that lay his success, ability and pride. The trumpet of truth that he has sounded and the standard of religion that he has unfurled are everlasting objects of pride and reverence for mankind.

Man, on the one hand, had forgotten God the Greatest and Highest, while on the other he lost his own vast and great self and lowered himself greatly

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by placing His dues at the altar of false deities. Like the tempest that tears and shatters the dark black clouds and brightens both the heavens above and the earth below, Hazrat Muhammad drove away the doubtful wrong ideas gathered in so many centuries and illumined the self of both God and man.

While on the one hand he has proclaimed, "There is none to be worshipped save the one Supreme God" on the other hand he has declared to the fallen mankind in the clearest possible terms "(O man) I am nothing but a man like unto thee—*Ana Basharum Mithlukum*—I am not a deity, nor an incarnate but am the Servant and Apostle of God."

This message of Hazrat Muhammad is the proclamation of the greatest triumph of man, the highest and noblest gift to mankind by a Superman. It has ushered in a new era in the realm of human thought, and opened a new chapter in the annals of humanity. Before his advent man humiliated himself and gave expression of the powers latent in him, but insignificantly. So long those in whom man found force and power, those who charmed them with their nobility and generosity or becalmed them with their presence and strength—had been made deities by men and left far from themselves. Man never thought supermen as belonging to his own species nor even claimed them to be men and as such got no opportunity to find an ideal in them for his own upliftment.

But Hazrat Muhammad removed this erroneous notion of mankind for all times to come. By declaring himself to be the servant of Allah (God) and a man, and by mixing with the public in their everyday affairs, he had it imprinted in their hearts that a redeemer of mankind cannot but be a man—he is not above and beyond the range of humanity, but is the highest

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and noblest specimen of the species. He whose message has stirred the hearts of millions and millions of people to embrace his religion, whose timely help and service has soothed the anxious hearts of thousands in affliction and trouble, who has passed his life almost in starvation with vast wealth at his command, at the movement of whose fingers crowns and sceptres of kings have tumbled down, and whose divine spirit kindled in the demons of the Arabian desert such a religious fervour and zeal that they were transformed into a great and living race and illumined the vast stretch of land between the Atlantic and the Pacific with religion, learning and culture, was but a man—nothing more than a man. His relationship with man and his verbal assertion that he was a **man** have elevated the human mind to the highest sphere, thereby developing the latent faculties in man so long lying dormant. Man was able to recognize his own self after a long and weary time and thus gained what he had lost before.

True, Jesus, Buddha and Chaitanya taught men good morals by preaching love and piety. But they regrettably crippled the spiritual life of man in keeping silence about the One who should be worshipped by man and thus in a way they suffered great men to assume the position of deities. Hazrat Muhammad too gave precepts of love and forgiveness not merely by words but showing glowing examples of those ideals in his own life, but he did even more than this. He blew into the winds the imaginary thrones of supermen and bringing them all down to the plane of humanity, he pointed above and proclaimed: "O men! There is none to be worshipped save and except Allah, and none is superior to you save Him." This great message has taken such a deep seat in man's heart, has raised

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him to such a height, has kindled the fire of his soul to such a blaze, and uplifted his life to such a high plane—that there is nothing in human history to compare with it.

Man has been termed God by the vedantist Shankaracharya. Even without discussing what he might have meant, it may be safely asserted that by saying so he has not proclaimed the triumph of humanity. He has only stated that everything is an expression of the Supreme Being. He has plunged the separate existence of mankind. In his protest against the atheistic Buddhist religion he has gone to the other extreme and has proclaimed the omnipresence of God in such a strain that it has wiped off the separate existence of the created. His “Sohom” (I am He) and “Ekamebadwitiyam” (there is no Second except One) are not clarion calls to humanity, nor are they triumphal shouts of man’s victory. By proclaiming man’s identity with God he has in reality paralysed the spiritual progress of mankind, rather his doctrine might tend to lower human faculties inasmuch as being God himself, no sin is sinful for him, no vice remains vicious to him. While on the other hand his progress is arrested because one who himself is the last and the greatest, who has none superior to him, where would he find the fulfilment of his struggles and what will he achieve thereby? What can his advancement mean? He has no inspiration for struggle, no joy in meditation, no zeal for diffusion. He has been thrown far, far away from humanity by identifying himself with the Supreme Deity.

No, human mind will not accept this. Man cannot leave aside the delight of rising higher and higher in his progress towards Eternity. He must have Some one, matchless and peerless above him as his Superior.

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And in the endless attempts, devotions and meditations to have Him lies the noblest development of humanity. In the attraction from the Higher than the highest which so mysteriously and perpetually draws man's mind towards himself calling it unceasingly to persistence and meditation of Him, who is so near and yet out of reach, while the heart knows no rest till it realised Him in the continual trials and untiring seeking after Him—the most Beautiful, the most Radiant Truths. In all these the human heart blooms more and more delightfully and the soul smiles more or more brightly as it proceeds in time.

It may be said without taking into account the complexity of philosophy in Shankaracharya's words that man can revere such an ardent and wise devotee of the "Sohom" cult but can never embrace him as his own. He has no contact with the flow of the life of the universe. He may be an ideal to the world, forsaking hermit dwelling in a cave but his life and doings cannot water the root of human social life. He is no redeemer of mankind. Man's life has nothing to do with his gifted kingliness.

But Hazrat Muhammad was not merely the glory of humanity. He is the symbol of the day-to-day natural life of man—'A fiery mass of life cast up from the bosom of nature herself.'

He who has on the one hand crossed the bounds of the universe and reached the Presence of the Creator, who has helped man to immortalise himself drinking deep from the fount of the Elixir of spiritual upliftment, who has declared "My message is the religious doctrine, my action is my belief and my condition is truth,"—has toiled for his livelihood after a week's starvation, has been oppressed most cruelly, has recited the name of Allah at the risk of life, has grieved in

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heart at the death of his only son, has carried the load of an old woman, served his own servant without restraint delighted in friend's marriage and solaced him in grief. Who among mankind has shown such strength? In his work man has got the best inspiration and the world its noblest ideal; and the heart of man has swelled with unmitigated pride and felt the thrills of the joy of progress. The human mind trifled with for so many ages was filled with self-confidence and found time to look at the throne of nobility and glory.

The man who called death a mystery forgot that the mystery of life is so deep, complex and astoundingly *perilous* that the mystery of death is nothing in comparison to it. Man has no escape unless and until he has solved the problems of life. Hold to live a life of virtue and piety in this world full of so many cares and anxieties, so many diseases and dangers of death, so many illusions and passions, so many selfish motives and cravings, so many temptations and deceits; how to baffle and surpass all these and to do his duty to his parents, children and family duty to his great society and still greater, state and, above all, to commune in his heart with the True, the Beautiful and the Merciful—these are the acutest problems of human life. It is in view of this difficulty that Vivekananda, one of the greatest thinkers of India, has said: "It is no use speaking words of religion to a hungry man. First appease his hunger, then speak to him about religion."

In fact it is comparatively easier to take shelter in death when baffled and worn out in the long and weary struggles of life, when the human mind fails to achieve what it strives for. Neither is it very difficult to find rest in a solitary hermitage far away from the bounds of society when one is unable to contend with the evil and vice that rage amidst and ravage mankind. But to a universal man this kind of defeatism is some-

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thing unnatural. Man will have to live in society and in homes. This is ordained for him and in this must lie his manliness. It is more difficult to live than to die. Every moment of worldly existence is a fierce bloody warfare with sorrow and impiety. To win the battle—not to avoid it—is the sign of a greater strength. It is glorious and natural, however heavy the task may be.

Hence man's natural religion and noble aim should be the solution of the problems of his life by the light of piety and virtue. And he who has assisted man in achieving this aim and has shown him the glory of religion by solving the problems of his own life, is the true saviour of mankind. The lives of Jesus, Buddha, Shankaracharya and Chaitanya may be bright in wisdom but this particular side of their lives is dark. They might have given no valuable precepts regarding these but the lessons of their own lives do not teach us anything. The worldly man may regard them, love them, place their words of love as precious gems on their heads, but cannot take them as their ideals and follow them. They might tell us what to do with a leper lying on the wayside, but their lives do not teach us any lesson of how to procure one's food honestly among wants and temptations, how to win the pleasure of the Almighty by refreshing the heart of a loving wife—how to conquer one's avarice of amassing an immense fortune, when there comes a chance to gain it, in an easy but a wrong way—how to extinguish the fire of vengeance and forgive a life-long enemy, lying at one's mercy, with words of love—how to meditate on the Ever-Merciful Creator, even when surrounded by beautiful maidens and unbounded wealth—how to remain calm and cheerful and to speak words of consolation to the bereaved wife when their only child dies—how to feel happy in the Will of the

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Omnipotent when lying diseased and bedridden with starving wife and children in tattered rags—in these day-to-day and natural needs of life we do not get any light from their lives. How to conquer vice and woe in every sphere of life and purify it by imparting to it the charm of love and weal, and sanctify the heart by immersing in the thought of the Most High—these are the things which man's mind is always anxious to know from the struggles and successes in the lives of great men and thereby find guidance in them. But when we look towards the other great leaders of mankind we find no answer to these questions.

Only the names of two supermen come to our mind as the ideal of man's natural religious life. One is Shri Krishna and the other the great Prophet Muhammad. Both of them were men living in society, acted in the national lives of their respective peoples, and in that state instructed them how to walk on the paths of piety and virtue. Their words if analysed come to the same—practise sacrifice living in the midst of earthly affairs and do your duty to the world as it goes. Their teachings may be alike but the inspirations from their lives greatly differ.

The life and character of Shri Krishna is so much wrapped in mystery and legends, that it is simply impossible for man to extract his real self from the life of a deity he is believed to have even as a child, far less to follow it. Some learned and scholarly Hindus have even denied his human existence in their attempt to explain the spiritual idea of his *Rashkila*.* In the opinion of these Shri Krishna is the symbol of the spirit of life of the universe or the Supreme Being who is attracting the whole creation towards Himself and who is the greatest treasure in the hearts of all creatures. Well a life that is mystified as far as that

* His mysterious pranks with the women of the village, he lived in.

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can never inspire the general run of mankind.

Yet if the Shri Krishna as depicted in the Geeta be taken as a real and living man, he can never be the ideal or redeemer of mankind. If he actually existed he can only evoke our wonder and despair; he is not one to be followed, not one who can be of any help to us as man of the world, because he expressed himself as an incarnate of God. As a matter of fact man has actually cast him aside thinking him an incarnate. "He came to rescue the honest and destroy the wicked and would come to establish religion in ages"—are his sayings and so his actions are only freaks of a deity, they are not the monuments of glory and nobility of mankind.

On the other hand, the life and character of Hazrat Muhammad is not obscure in the mist of imagination or folklore. It is clear, bright and vivid in the searching rays of historical truth. All the events of his daily life can be described as minutely as it is humanly possible to do. His daily meals, the length of time he took rest, the words he spoke to different men and women and even the days when he spoke them—all these can be ascertained in their details. The letters which he sent to foreign rulers are still preserved. The very dress he wore can still be found in some Muslim homes. Nothing in these is a poet's fancy but has been X-rayed in the light of historical researches and proved true. Hundreds of years have merged into eternity but even now his blood flows in the veins of Muslims. The nature of his food and dress can be traced in the lives of hundreds of Muslims. Even now his sweet, refreshing, solemn message ring deeply in the hearts of Muslims in their acutest troubles,—the oppressed and afflicted Muslims in want even now and will ever think of that worldly poor great man's pride in poverty and find strength for endurance. He has shown the best and

AN AT HOME AT THE MOSQUE

most glowing example to man of how to perform serenely all the religious functions living in the family, stricken with want and poverty—how to do good to others living in contentment in the struggle for existence and thus to meditate on and establish communication with the Merciful Creator of the universe.

(To be continued.)

AN AT HOME AT THE MOSQUE

On Sunday, 21st September, 1941, an At-Home was held at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, to welcome our new brother and sister in Islam, Mr. Osman Tatton and Miss Khalida Grey and to introduce them to other members of the steadily increasing community.

Miss Grey and Mr. Tatton were first brought to Islam through the efforts of our enthusiastic friend Mr. Muhammad Abdullah Warren of Winchester, who accompanied them on their first visit to Woking. It was a warm sunny afternoon and we were able to spend the whole of it out of doors in friendly conversation. After tea Mr. Warren addressed those present and in his talk impressed on all British Muslims the necessity of acting as a common and united body in order that their voice might be heard in matters affecting the future of Islam in this country and elsewhere.

It was a very happy gathering and great pleasure for all to meet Miss Grey and Mr. Tatton who, we pray, will be firm bastions of Islam in this country and an example for the thousands whose eyes are gradually being opened to the countless beauties and all-embracing universality of the mighty religion of Islam.

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CORRESPONDENCE

HAMPSTEAD,
LONDON, N.W. 3.
18th July, 1940.

DEAR SIR,

I have read with interest the report in the *Psychic News* of your recent address to a Spiritualist gathering in London and, with even greater pleasure, your letter of reply printed in this week's issue of the same paper.

As a Spiritualist, I am labouring in my own humble manner for just those ideals which your statement contains. Therefore, I am in total agreement with your opinions.

The Movement named "Spiritualism" contains the essence of all the most beautiful Truths and Teachings as demonstrated to the world by the lives and works of such Masters as Jesus the Christ, Moses, Muhammad, Krishna, Buddha and Confucius. With this wealth of spiritual knowledge, it is indeed painful to find the average Spiritualist immune to the practicability of the teachings to which they have access. They are in far too many instances "hearers" only of the "Word" and do not seek to mould their lives in accordance with the "Word."

It is perfectly true that the majority feel that membership of the Movement and regular attendance at meetings ensure for themselves a free "passport" in the future life. One continually meets the person who is blithely content to seek nothing beyond demonstrations of psychometry and clairvoyance.

In these days it is sadly difficult to get people to think for themselves. Spiritualists are certainly no exception and, in company with their more orthodox friends, are quite satisfied in mind when that which should be their own personal responsibility can be shed upon the shoulders of another.

Your letter foresees the dawn of the era when Islam and Spiritualism will work together for the regeneration spiritually of mankind. I shall welcome the day when the Qur-án takes its place beside the Bible in the Spiritualist Services, and my prayer is that the dawn of that day may not be far distant.

I believe strength and peace can only come to the State and the individual when the spiritual principles taught by the Masters are realised to be universal, practical and applicable to daily life. When this understanding is attained and practised, we shall cease to "cast pearls before swine."

Believe me, sir, I am,

Yours faithfully,
J. E. J.

CORRESPONDENCE

TO
THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

HOME FORCES:
October 20, 1940.

DEAR SIR,

I last wrote to you nine days ago but I feel that I must write to you again. In reply to my first enquiry to you, dated September 26, you sent me the excellent book "What is Islam?" a copy of the August *Islamic Review* and some literature. I hope that you will be pleased to know that I have diligently studied all that you sent me and have already half re-read the book which has given to me so much guidance and so convincingly answered many of my queries and doubts. I unhesitatingly pronounce that I have never read a more beautiful teaching than what your simple-worded literature has unfolded to me. Because of my busy days it has been mostly by night that I have turned to your literature for inspiration and I never fail to feel spiritually elevated and at peace with God when I have laid it down. I cannot but come to the conclusion that the sudden and marvellous change in my spiritual life during the past five weeks has come about in accordance with the Divine Will. I feel the influence of God in all my daily activities and am filled with a sense of Divine ennoblement. I am already beyond any doubts at all that I am destined by the Divine Will to become a Muslim and as such to continue throughout my life. My true description of myself at present is that I am indeed a Muslim in all but actual fact; my knowledge about the Faith is very limited, I know, and this I shall most certainly remedy, but I do know what my God has told me to do. You will understand me when I say that your Faith fills every moment of my existence. I have your Declaration form for an intending Muslim and am carefully keeping it.

On Friday, October 25, I shall return to my home in London on my seven days' leave after an absence of exactly six months. I regard this as a great opportunity to progress along the right path. My parents, as you may have guessed, are daily in the greatest peril but my new Faith has given me a serene trust in God which is to me an immeasurable blessing. I have resolved that from my home next week I shall send you my annual subscription for the *Islamic Review* which I hope to receive wherever I may go and also to send you postal orders for books I shall need for my immediate requirements.

Any correspondence which you may send to reach me between these dates I beg you to address to my London home, otherwise my address is as on my letter heading. I shall not rest at all now until I am a Muslim in the truest and strictest sense and have become an official and recognised convert. Should my regiment go out East in the near future and I go as a full and complete Muslim, the vast and wonderful opportunities open to me will be obvious. My main object in addressing this letter to you is to impress upon you the sincerity of my belief and my readiness and eagerness for acceptance into the Brotherhood of Islam, the True Religion of God and all men.

I look forward to hearing from you within the next few days.

Yours respectfully,
G. E. SMITH.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

To

THE IMAM,

THE MOSQUE,

WOKING.

HOME FORCES :

March 28, 1941.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

Assalam Alaikum !

It is three weeks to date since I last sent a letter to the Mosque and, if I can truthfully say that I have progressed, even just a little, since then, along the path to which the faith has guided me, I am humbly grateful. I now have not the slightest doubt of the great, immeasurable possibilities which lie ahead for Islam, and I am fully convinced that in the Holy Qur-ân, the Glorious Fount-head of our Faith, I have found the True Word of God. My heart tells me so. I could not express my profound thanks to Allâh in this letter to you, or in words, for every day makes my thanks and gratitude greater and greater. I have received the favour of Allâh and the Divine Light of Truth while serving in the British Army for several reasons clearly apparent to me. In short, every day, regardless of circumstances, I become more deeply aware of the great favour and blessing I have received. May I become worthier of them ! My duty is plain and clear to me and I know that I need never lose this Divine Guidance throughout all difficulties and troubles, for I have found the Great Friend of all things. My brothers at Woking are constantly in my thoughts. How I wish that we could meet much more often ! I would like you to know as well what marvellous inspiration I have received from even a slight acquaintance with the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and all the prophets). The facts of his life, his behaviour and unflinching sense of duty to God for years in the face of relentless persecution, have fired me, as they must all who recognize his Divine Messengership, with an ardour greater than I have ever known. Surely if one human being ever fulfilled his duty to God and mankind it was Muhammad. All criticisms against Islam I have ever read shrink to insignificance once I have examined them in the Divine Light of Truth. It is very plainly our duty to pledge our whole lives, as did our Prophet, to maintaining and spreading our glorious faith—Islam, the religion which alone does not fear but welcomes criticism and examination. We clearly see to-day and it will soon be even more apparent to all that while other religions struggle feebly to justify their continuance, Islam will draw fresh strength and vigour each day. Islam alone, of all the religions, has nothing to fear from the march of progress.

Yours sincerely,

G. E. SMITH.

WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its technique. 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) Alms-giving; (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

ISLAMIC REVIEW

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 saying 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.