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BY THE LIGHT OF THE QUR-AN

"And He is the Supreme above His servants, and He sends keepers over you ; until when death comes to one of you, Our messengers cause him to die, and they are not remiss.

"Then are they sent back to Allah, their Master, the True One ; now surely His is the judgment and He is swiftest in taking account.

"Say : Who is it that delivers you from the dangers of the land and the sea (when) you call upon Him (openly) humiliating yourselves, and in secret : If He delivers us from this, we should certainly be of the grateful ones.

"Say : Allah delivers you from them and from every distress, but again you set up others (with Him).

"Say : He has the power that He should send on you a chastisement from above you or from beneath your feet, or that He should throw you into confusion, (making you) of different parties, and make some of you taste the fighting of others. See how We repeat the communications that they may understand."

WESTERN APPROACH TO ISLAM

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

The majority of Muslims are of the East : for them there needs no approach to Islam for Islam, its teaching, its theory, its practice is all about and around them. Islam undoubtedly is a religion out of the East.

But let us consider the point of view of a European born and bred man or woman who takes some interest in religion as a factor in social civilized life and in personal well-being and happiness.

If he is seeking a religion, the Western man (and the term "man" in this essay is used for convenient brevity to mean "man or woman"), the Western man must perforce turn towards the East, if he wishes to choose and to adopt the way of life of religion. For what religion is there whose roots are in the West ? What religion is there to-day which sprang from the mists and cloudy skies of the West ?

From the East there is the religion of Christianity, of Islam and of Hinduism.

Before making his decision let the men of the West study, however briefly, the fundamentals of these three Eastern religions.

With Christianity he will find that Jesus was an Eastern man and, though rejected of the Jews, himself a Jew. But now, considering religion, the man of the West must rise to a view-point from which he can say : "In matters religious, nationality is a thing indifferent, of no moment. What concerns us is the truth and benefit of the teaching proclaimed, and the manner in which it is carried out by the great body of people who profess it,"

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So let the Western man study the teaching of Jesus and he will find therein truth and nobility and the great ideal of a simple, selfless and lowly way of life, wherein is no violence, oppression, pomp or hypocrisy. But we venture to state that the Western man, having come to this happy conviction, will find himself at a loss when comparing the teaching and practice of Jesus with the manner of life and the outlook upon the universe of millions of nominal Christian church-goers. Where can we find in Christian civilization the moving spirit of him who said : "If a man smite thee upon the one cheek, turn thou the other to him also ; and if he compel thee to go a mile with him, go thou twain " ?

O West, where in such teaching is there sanction for thine obsession for engines of devilish destruction ?—for thy tanks and guns and bombers and flying bombs and rockets, yea, and atomic bombs ? When every thought is strained towards the destruction of thy brother, how can it be that thou art still the follower of the selfless Nazarene ?

It cannot be : and from his despair let the man of the West rise up and take hope again in the thought that there still are two religions worthy his study before he makes his final decision.

Let him then proceed to a consideration of the theory and practice of Islam.

Islam recognizes one God, Lord of the universe, Merciful, Almighty, Creator, Sustainer. The One Supreme Lord has sent many messengers, among whom, for our present purpose, we may mention Jesus, Moses and Muhammad. Many prophets were sent throughout the long history of human kind, but the message essentially was ever the same : "Worship God and do good." So therefore a true follower of Jesus and a true follower of

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Muhammad have but one and the same view-point of ultimate realities. "The one God is to be worshipped and his prophets have proclaimed the way of life, how in practical everyday affairs one may do well and justly."

At this stage in our explanation of true Islam the Western reader may well exclaim : "What, then, is the difference between Islam and Christianity ? Why not let the West abide in its professed Christianity ?"

The difference between Islam and Christianity is not one of fundamentals. The lapse of time has brought about what difference now exists. The original simple teaching of Jesus and the teaching of Muhammad are, indeed, the same. To follow the true teaching of Jesus is to find a way to God : to follow the true teaching of Muhammad is likewise to find a way to God. The difference of the two everyday religions is that, while the Christians of the Church worship Jesus and say that the man, the prophet, is God, the Muslims make no such claim in respect of Muhammad. Muhammad is the man, the prophet. He is the messenger of God : he makes plain the way to God ; but for himself, the Prophet Muhammad wears our own humanity. Our worship is due to God, not to God's messenger.

So we find that in the Qur-ân the way to God is made manifest without interpolation or biased corruption of man's interference.

After stressing the Unity of God we pass on to a second phase of excellence manifested in the teachings of Islam and in the everyday practice of Islam and that is the actual brotherhood of humanity. Islam proclaims (and practises) the truth that men are brothers, that nation should help nation, the pride of race to despise another nation is definitely wrongful, unjust, unwarranted and anti-social. In the Mosque various nations move and

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mix as one in worship of the One God and in friendliness to their human brothers. But do we not hear of race distinction between white and negro in America and of separate churches in India for Europeans and for Indians ?

In the West the mad rush of material civilization tends to make noise and speed and the piling-up of money an ever present obsession dwarfing the indestructible soul of humanity ; and it is just here that Islam binds up sore heads and hearts and attunes jangled nerves. For Islam, in the daily times of prayer, has appointed times of refreshment of the spirit, wherein ultimate values may be remembered and wherein the dust and sweat of the material turmoil of life may be periodically removed.

The question, after all, is not so much whether Islam is suited to Western civilization but whether Western civilization, culminating in two world wars and atomic bombs, is suited to Islam. The question indeed is not whether the religion of God can or cannot be fitted into a mechanized age of factories, strikes and national political antagonisms, but whether man himself, in pursuing this painful path of soul destruction, is not thereby outlawing himself from the manifested way of the One God.

In every heart there is the light divine. He who reads these brief words may therefore reflect and turn.

ALHAMDULILLAH ! .

THE MUSLIMS IN FINLAND

By Professor Martti Räsänen

The Turks living in Finland are most commonly known as Tatars, a name regarded as disparaging by some of those concerned. The Volga Turks (Kazan, Nizhni Novgorod, etc.), however, have no original name of their own; the majority professing Islam, prefers to be called Mussulmans, which in itself means the same as Muslims, while those professing Christianity call themselves Kirashan, a Russian word equivalent to Christian. On the other hand, the word Turk is needed in scientific literature for a much more extensive purpose, *i.e.* to cover the entire race and to replace the word Turko-Tatar (Ottoman, Tatars, Kirghiz, etc.) which was formerly used in the same sense. Therefore, it is justified and recommendable to use the word *Tatars* when speaking of the Volga Turks. It is true that the word does not originally refer to any Turkish people; the Chinese gave it to a Mongolian people whom they called Ta-Tar, and certainly without disparagement (according to Professort G. J. Ramsted the word means "a great nobility"). When these descendants of Genghis Khan invaded Europe in the thirteenth century and occupied vast areas of Russia, the main part of their army apparently consisted of Turkish tribes, a conjecture supported by the fact that the language of the Mongols has disappeared completely while that of the Turks has survived. Since those days the words Tatar or Tartar are prevalent in West European literature and refer to this Turkish

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people and its language. But even among the Volga Turks the word Tatar is not altogether unauthorised. When after the revolution of 1917, the National Assembly (Milli Shura) of the Volga Regions gathered in Kazan to found the autonomous republic of Volga-Ural, the question of a National name for the people of these regions was submitted for discussion. The opinions of the representatives, however, were divided between the names Tatar and Turk. The dispute resulted in the compromise of the compound word "Turk-Tatar."

But when did the Tatar come to Finland and from where? It is presumed that the first Tatars came either during or immediately after the Russo-Finnish War of 1808-1809 and apparently with the Russian Army. As a matter of fact, the registers of Mahkeme Ishären, *i.e.* the supreme Islamic organisation of Russia, in Orenburg contain information dating from 1830's of Tatars in Finland, of their families, of the names of children, of the wedded, of the dead, etc. A Tatar colony is reported to have been working at Suomenlinna, the fortifications in the gulf of Finland just outside of Helsinki. The colony disappeared, however, without leaving any trace of itself.

There has been an unofficial Islamic congregation in Finland for more than a hundred years. According to Hisametdin Hamidullah, an Imam by the name of Izzetullah Timurgali was active in Helsinki in 1887. He came from Kazan and his annual salary, as well as the rent for the meeting room, were paid by the Russian Military officials. Retiring on account of old age, he left his place to his son Attaullah. After this the Military officials discontinued to pay annual salary of the Imam and the rent for the meeting room. In 1907, the son followed his father to their native city Kazan in Russia.

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The majority of the Turks living in Finland to-day originated from the district of Sirgach (now Krasno-Oktjabrskirajon) in the province of Nizhni Novgorod (now Gorki). The surrounding country was largely populated by Mordvins and Chuvassies. The local Tatars owned but little land. In the autumn after harvest time the men were obliged to go to city in search of work. So for instance in Petersburg they earned livelihood as drivers, pedlars, and dealers in second-hand clothing. To Nizhni Novgorod they brought flax, clothes, and raw furs.

It was however not until in the last quarter of the nineteenth century that the first Nizhni Tatars came to Finland. Two men by the name of Alauddin Salavet and Yusuf Samaledin claimed to have been among the first arrivals. Soon the Tatars began to come in increasing numbers. At first the men came alone and only for a short time, but later they took their families with them. In the course of time they were granted the rights of citizenship, and so the first Tatars had finally settled down to stay. At present there are about 800 Tatars in Finland. They live in cities and towns; Helsinki, Tampere, Kotka, Turku, Rauma, Pori, Vaasa, Oulu, Kemi, and Kuopio. A few Tatars live in the country at such densely populated places as Varkaus, Jarvenpaa, and formerly at Terijeki. The Tatars in Finland are mostly prosperous dealers in clothing and furs.

When the Russian policy of repression in the beginning of the present century was at its worst, the Tatars as well as other foreigners from various parts of the Russian Empire were suspected of espionage for the Imperial Russia. The matter has later been investigated by Ibrahim Arifullah and he has arrived at the conclusion that the suspicions were to a great

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extént unjustified. As a matter of fact, only one Tatar had propagated the passing of a bill which proposed equal rights to Russians and Finns in Finland. The Tatars have, on the contrary, proved very reliable and have always been loyal to the Finns and have even done propaganda for Finland in the foreign countries. The Tatars in Turkey have written books about Finland and in numerous articles they have spoken favourably of the country (Abdullah Battal, Sadri-Maksudi, Hamit Zübeyr Kushay, Muss Bigey, etc.) Similarly, the Tatars who have later returned to their native country have spread knowledge of Finland.

In the district of Sirgach the homes of such Tatars as have been to Finland are much tidier than those in the neighbouring villages. The number of mosques varies from three to eight in each village. They were all one community of Muslims, but in 1905 they split into two opposing parties: the conservatives (Sul-Kadim) and the Progressives (Sul-Dzhadid). The strike originated in divergent opinions concerning clothing and school education, *e.g.* the education of girls. The women were not veiled, but the older women took care not to show their hair, because "the angels will fly if they see it." The younger generation, however, paid little heed to such conventionality. The Tatars who had been in Finland were mostly members of the Progressive party, and it is largely due to them that the school education of girls (Kizlar Mektebe) was effected.

The Tatars in Finland are all Muslims and in general they observe the decrees of the Qur-án, their sons are circumcised, they celebrate the Kurbanî Festival, Muhammad's Birthday, the Feast of Ramadzan and a few even close their shops on Fridays, the holiday of the Muslims. Food prohibited by the Qur-án, *e.g.* pork, is

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avoided by the Tatars. The wedding and funeral ceremonies are very much the same as those of the Finns, with the exception of religious rites, of course. Mosques have been at the most important places, and the services are regularly attended. The fasts and the five daily prayers prescribed by the Qur-án are, however, often neglected.

Already in 1905 when Finland was still annexed to Russia, Mulla Hakim initiated the idea of founding an Islamic congregation in Helsinki. The only result of his efforts was that the Muslims were officially promised the undisturbed right of holding their services. The congregation was finally founded in 1925, when the Act granting freedom of religion was passed by Parliament. But already somewhat earlier Abdullah Battal and Ibrahim had proposed that a Tatar educational society should be founded. Later on such a society, known as Finlandija Türkleri Birliği, was founded. The society has been very active in all fields of popular education. The children of the Tatars receive teaching in religion, their mother tongue and the history of the Turks. Otherwise they attend Finnish elementary schools, secondary school and some even continue their studies at the university. At first the elementary education of the Tatars was in the hands of Zakir Kadiri, the authority on the history of Tatars. His wife Sanije Ifvet has made herself known as an authoress and she has written plays for the amateur theatre of the society. Later these elementary school courses were arranged by Arif Rami in Helsinki and by Ibadullah Murtazam at Tampere. Courses lasting three months are arranged each summer. The lack of funds has not allowed the establishment of a regular elementary school. A Muslim secondary school has also been proposed but the idea has been given up, at least, for the time being. The

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activities of the society and its subordinate branch at Tampere comprise also of other fields of education in the form of lectures, festivals and theatre performances. Among the literature published by the society there are, for instance, five religious books. The Finnish translation of the Holy Qur-án (without explanatory notes) and Lord Headley's book "A Western Awakening to Islam" have been published. A Tatar elementary school has been founded and a special association to further the possibilities of establishing an elementary school by gathering funds for this purpose has been organised.

The question of alphabet has caused some dissension. The older and more conservative generation clings to the Arabic alphabet to which they are more accustomed since childhood. This is also the alphabet (adopted) in the books published by the society, in spite of the fact that in modern Turkey all literature in Turkish is printed in the Latin alphabet. For this reason, many modern-educated Tatars order Turkish literature and newspapers from Turkey in order to overcome difficulties in reading. The Turkish peoples of Russia also use the Latin alphabet, but a gradual change into the Russian alphabet is in process.

The Tartars in Finland came, as has already been pointed out, mainly from the province of Nizhni Novgorod where they are called Mishär. These people are believed to have intermingled with the now extinct Meschara tribe which appears in Russian chronicles and which is supposed to have been a Finnic people. Of other Turkish people professing Islam, there are in Finland, at least one Turkoman, three Kirghiz, some Azerbaijanis and, as wives, several Bashkir women.

RECRUD CENCE OF MEDIAEVAL CHRISTIAN FANATICISM

By Maulvi Aftab-ud Din Ahmad

It goes without saying that a Christian's religious psychology is a huge complex. The most mysterious part of it is that the mystery of his own psychology is not known to him.

He abhors a man of religion resisting anything, however evil, with force. He hates the religion of Muhammad because it attaches glory to such chivalrous acts of resistance. His standing charge against the Holy Prophet is that he wielded the sword, even if it was only in self-defence. And yet in his heart of hearts he has a lingering admiration for the Crusaders of the Middle Ages. I am not talking of a Roman Catholic but of a Protestant, even a Presbyterian ; not of an untutored layman but of an enlightened priest preaching in a New York Church and so recently as in 1945.

All this time we were under the impression that the Protestant Church rejected the Crusades and denounced the spirit underlying them, and this to be consistent with the spirit of absolute non resistance preached on behalf of Christianity. Leaving aside the question that the practical conduct of Christendom in the matter of non-resistance has always made the world suspect its sincerity of profession we are to-day surprised with the open confession by the Protestant Church that even this Church never believed that the crusader's spirit and action were wrong. Thus Rev. J. V. Moldenhawer, preaching in the First Presbyterian Church, New York city, has the following illuminating remarks to make on this vital question—vital because it involves ultimately the life, safety

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and peace of the whole world. We are quoting at length so as to convey the real significance of this address of a clergyman and more so because the address was delivered at a time when the world was getting tired of warfare. This is in reality an attempt to set the stage for a new kind of warfare in the name of religion. This is what this clergyman has said :

Begin¹ then with the modern habit of disparagement whenever the Crusades are mentioned. They are spoken of frequently as a peculiarly effective illustration of Christianity gone wrong by being at once sentimentalized and brutalized ; this is an epitome of what was wrong with the Christianity of the Middle Ages. The misunderstanding of the Middle Ages began with Protestantism. And this was natural enough, for early Protestants had real reason for their attitude. Their descendants summarily underestimated all Mediaeval Religion, its art, literature and life. We are just beginning to recover from that wholesale disparagement ; and the misunderstanding that has spoiled for a long time a proper appreciation of the Middle Ages was specially effective when dealing with the Crusades specially because their aim was never attained, they did not succeed ; and their achievements were actually blackened by grievous faults and crimes, including, *e.g.*, the persecution of the Jews. Let us take those faults for granted and admit the badness as part of the record with its tales of vice and greed and wholesale cruelty and loot.

But the Crusades are still there in the record ! How can we explain this great movement on the part of European Christendom ? The constant harping on the black misdeeds leave the whole movement unexplained. You do not explain the French Revolution by condemning it. Now the Mediaeval man, with all his faults, was not without intelligence nor without ideals. He was often coarse and cruel ; he was almost incredibly superstitious. And Chaucer bears witness that the Mediaeval man knew all that concerning himself. But he did take seriously the Christian doctrine concerning Jesus Christ our Lord and His Commandments. Charity and self-sacrifice were his ideals of character and he had

¹*The Moslem World*, July 1945.

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in this matter both devoutness and devotion. He did naturally and enthusiastically feel a deep love for the Saviour. That is what Christianity was to him specifically. Christ was the world's Redeemer who had suffered all manner of bitter pain, and the Death on the Cross, for us men and for our Salvation. Everything in Mediaeval worship was woven about that central figure and His deeds. His suffering and His death. The recent biography of Margery Kempe, and her writings, are eloquent proof.

They loved to express their love for Him who died on the Cross, by pilgrimages to the Holy Land, the scene of the Crucifixion. We may note this in the opening stanzas of the Canterbury tales. Here, in the person of Thomas Becket, was a saint who in a noteworthy manner had suffered for standing for Christ's authority in the teeth of the very powerful authority of the world. The Crusades were to regain the Holy Place, par excellence Palestine, and in that land Bethlehem and Jerusalem, from the hand of the Saracens. They thought of a land, so holy for its associations with the blessed life and death of the Son of God. Shakespeare's Henry IV is a drama with an absolute fidelity ; and it is deeply interesting that (about 1600) Shakespeare should have apprehended so vividly the Mediaeval devotion :

Therefore friends

As far as to the sepulchre of Christ,
Whose soldier now, under whose blessed cross
We are impressed and engaged to fight.
To chase these pagans in those holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter cross.

Mediaeval Christians also felt deeply any contempt of Christ—and any hostility to Him. So when we remember what had happened to that holy land and the holy places, especially Jerusalem, in the hands of the Saracens, we can better understand the Crusades. Even the ill-treatment of pilgrims was insignificant except as it stood for the Mohammedan contempt for Christianity. Every returning pilgrim who had any sort of a story to tell, fanned the flame of a resentment already fiery, with religious devoutness and enthusiasm.

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So only can we account for the roar of acclaim that followed the Pope's preaching of the Crusade and that of Peter the Hermit : "It is *the will of God*." The Crusades were popular and Christian in a sense as no other war had ever been before. The masses and the leaders too were convinced. Unless we admit their sincerity we understand nothing ! Here was a complete enthusiasm of faith and of action both rooted in the essential Christian doctrine of Christ's deity as Redeemer ; with love and reverence for all that expressed this truth ; and vigorous hostility to His enemies and to everything that showed Him disrespect. They may have been rather simple-minded in their diagnosis as to who and what were for Christ, and who and what against Him. But they knew He had friends and foes and they meant to stand fast as His friends.

The Crusades were at once the most serious and the most spectacular expression of the Mediæval consciousness of this basic opposition between Christianity and Islam. And on the basis of this fact the movement was amply justified. The terrible fact was that in the occupation of Palestine by the Saracens they saw an insult to Christ. It was a threat to Christendom. *I can find nothing more admirable in the martial side of Christian history than the story of a pure Crusader.*¹ Please do not be both offensive and ridiculous by saying there was no such Crusader. There were thousands of them, brave and fearless for their cause. Such was Jakeline de Maile, a Templar who died through mere refusal to surrender when he stood alone ringed round by some five hundred Saracens.

*They were not only, I say, heroic ; they were right. And if only the war could have been waged with united Christendom behind it, they would have wiped out the Moslem peril ; they might even have so mauled the Moslem power that its aggressiveness would have been lost for good.*² This is the root of the matter. They knew the enemy of the Faith for what he was ! And they took up arms against him ! And by so doing they gave a shining and honourable name to all causes which for their essential goodness inflame men's hearts and make them risk their lives for the Cause and against its enemy. That is the meaning of Crusade. And the fact that

¹Italics are mine.

²*Ibid.*

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the word has been at times unworthily used does not change the case in the slightest degree, any more than a man swearing to a lie substracts from the holiness of the Name of God."

Are we to understand then that the Crusades came to be disparaged on the practical principle that it is no use weeping over spilt milk? As a corollary to this, are we further to suppose that had the Crusades succeeded in their object the Protestant Christian world would never have emphasised on the principle of non-violence as there would have been no need for it in that event? The principle of non-resistance to evil, naturally, would appear to have its sanction not so much in the example of Christ as in the practical necessity of discarding principles which did not work in practice. Peaceful propaganda, however false and malicious, served to work in advancing the cause of Christianity in the world, because Muslims came to sleep over this matter at a certain point in history. But Muslims now seem to be wide-awake, as they were in the beginning of their history, in the field of peaceful preaching also. This fresh appeal to brute force is, therefore, quite understandable. But the Christian Church must be aware, as much as we are, that this time the sword wielded will go to kill as much the Saracens and the Turks, as the members of the Anglo-Saxon race. Islam and Christianity have no more between them that old line of racial demarcation. Side by side with the Eastern Muslims will be found ranged on the side of Islam a large number of members of the Anglo-Saxon race. For all we know, if God forbid, it comes to that, this recrudescence of Crusades may take the form of a civil war within the nations of the West. We are practically sure, however, that the nations of the West will not have the madness to revive, at the instigation of its mad priestly class, a savage expression of religious fanaticism after its decent burial so long ago.

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It would seem that this cry of the Christian Church is a cry of utter despair. There is an Eastern proverb: a man becomes conscious of his physical power when he sustains a defeat in arguments. Defeated in the fields of logic and philosophy the Christian clergy feels absolutely unable to contain themselves. They have frankly discarded their mask of cultural decency and are out to prepare their followers for a resort to force to crush the faith of Islam. It is regrettable, no doubt, in the extreme, but in a way it speaks of their intelligence. They have sensed, and very rightly too, that Islam though, vanquished politically in the world outside, is appearing as a power in the very citadel of Christianity. And they have also realised that the only blow that can be dealt to it now is the physical. It is a legacy of all opponents of truth and we do not grudge our adversaries in this. We must remind them, however, that physical blows have been the lot of Islam from the very beginning and that every time it has received such blows it has become stronger, spiritually and morally just as much as physically.

JESUS THE SON ON MARY HIS BIRTH AND DEATH

BY KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from Vol. XXXIII, p. 385)

THE ISLAMIC SOURCES

THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE HOLY QUR-AN

The Christian critics of Islam rely upon the following verses of the Holy Qur-án as evidence of the fact that the Holy Prophet borrowed his teachings from some followers of other faiths :

Those who disbelieve say : This is nothing but clear enchantment.¹

Nay ! say they : Medleys of dream, nay ! he has forged it ; nay ! he is a poet ; so let him bring to us a sign as the former (prophets) were sent (with).²

And those who disbelieve say : This is nothing but a lie which he has forged, and other people have helped him at it, so indeed they have done injustice and (uttered) a falsehood. And they say the stories of the ancient—he has got them written so these are read out to him morning and evening.³

And certainly we know that they say : Only a mortal teaches him. The tongue of him whom they reproach is barbarous and this is clear Arabic tongue.⁴

All these verses are of Makkan origin, and convey that the Makkan idolaters, like the modern Christian critics, were puzzled as to what they could liken the Holy Qur-án to. They first of all called it a *Sihir*, a skilful eloquence and therefore an enchantment, because notwithstanding their opposition to it, it had an attraction for them. But then it also contained prophetic utterances which could not be explained away by mere eloquence ; so they describe it as *medleys of dream*. When, how-

¹ The Holy Qur-an, XI. 7.

² *Ibid.*, XXV : 3-5.

³ *Ibid.*, XXI : 5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, XVI : 103.

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ever, they come across descriptions of things unseen, they attributed them to the imagination of the Holy Prophet and out of spite described him as a madman⁵ or alternately as a *poet*. Soon they discovered that there was a set purpose behind it all inasmuch as it proclaimed the ultimate triumph of the Holy Prophet and his followers and the annihilation of their opponents ; they, then, styled it as an intentional forgery and asked for a proof in support of it. To support their charge, they alleged that someone else was teaching him. The Holy Prophet used to proclaim his mission openly. They knew him intimately and watched his movements closely ; and yet they could not advance their case beyond vague platitudes and mere conjectures. They like the Christian critics of Islam, found it "impossible to penetrate the mystery in which this subject is involved." And why ? Rodwell gives an explanation, if an explanation it be, that it was in "secrecy" that the Holy Prophet "received his instructions." To admit, in the same breath, that there were "no secrets about his life," and to allege that it was done in "secrecy" is to confess that there is no evidence in support of the allegation.

These verses, however, form the basis of the charge, and I must, therefore, examine them more carefully. The mere mention of these allegations in these verses, has been taken as establishing their truth. But this proves nothing, because the Holy Qur-án, as the context shows, refutes these allegations. If we analyse these verses, we find that the Makkan idolaters did not know who the man was, but they knew that he was not one of them neither an idolater nor an Arab. The denunciation of their idols by the Holy Prophet could not but lead them to this conclusion. The reference to "the stories of the ancients" indicates that they took this man to be a Jew or a Christian of non-Arab origin. That is why they

⁵ The Holy Qur-an, LXVII : 2.

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styled his tongue as "barbarous." The word used is 'Ajami' which signifies a non-Arab in general and a Persian in particular. Again, as already stated, all these verses are of Makkan origin, and it is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that such a man should have been associated with the Holy Prophet both at Makka and at Madina, or in other words throughout his prophetic career. The issue is thus narrowed down ; and we have to scrutinize in this light, and in keeping with the historical facts, the various names suggested by various writers on Islam ; and this I propose to do now.

WARAQA was a resident of Makka. He was an Arab, and was acquainted with the Jewish scriptures. He had forsaken idolatry, but was neither a Jew nor a Christian. He had never come in contact with the Holy Prophet ; but when he learnt, through his cousin *Hazrat* Khadijah, of the Call at the Cave of Hira, he at once declared his faith in the Holy Prophet as the Prophet of God. He, however, died soon after. Speaking of Waraqa, Muir says :—

To the family group (of converts to Islam) it is hardly necessary to add Waraqa, the aged cousin of Khadijah, because he had already died before Mohammad had entered upon his public career.¹

MARY THE COPT, it is alleged, supplied to the Holy Prophet the details, as given in the Holy Qur-án, about Jesus and Mary. She, it is asserted, knew of the Christian dogmas from the Apocryphal Books then known in Egypt and subsequently narrated them to the Holy Prophet. To begin with there is no foundation for the belief that Mary the Copt was well-versed, or even acquainted, with this branch of religious literature. But even if this be conceded, the question of the Holy Prophet being tutored by her is too ludicrous to be considered seriously. Those who contend otherwise merely exhibit their utter ignorance of Islamic history. The chapter of the Holy Qur-án called *Maryam* (Mary)

¹ Muir, *The Life of Mohammad*, 56.

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contains the first revelation about Jesus, his mother and the Christian dogmas. This chapter was revealed in the fifth year of the Mission. It is on record that Ja'far, the leader of the first batch of the Muslim emigrants to Abyssinia, recited the relevant portion of this chapter before Negus,¹ the Christian King of Abyssinia when a deputation of the Quraish urged him to expel the Muslim refugees from his country. It is evident, therefore, that these portions were revealed seven years before the *Hijra*,² ; and Mary the Copt was sent by the Maquaqus of Egypt to the Holy Prophet at Madina in the seventh year of the *Hijra*, i.e., fourteen years after the revelation of this chapter. The allegation is, therefore, either based on gross ignorance of the Islamic history or due to a wilful perversion of truth.

SUHAIB, son of Sinan, is suggested by Muir as the person from whom "it is *probable* that Mohammad gained *some* acquaintance with Christianity."³ I quote Muir himself to depict the character of Suhaib :

His home was at Mosul or some neighbouring village in Mesopotamia. A Grecian band having made a raid into Mesopotamia, carried him off while yet a boy to Syria, perhaps to Constantinople. Bought afterwards by a party of Bedawin, he was sold at Mecca to the Chief, Ibn Jud'an, who gave him freedom and protection..... By traffic he acquired considerable wealth at Mecca, but having embraced Islam, being left by the death of his former master without a patron, he suffered much at the hands of the unbelieving Koraish..... At the general emigration to Medina the people of Mecca endeavoured to prevent Soheib's departure ; but he bargained to relinquish his whole property that they might let him go.⁴

And for what did Suhaib suffer persecutions and part with his property ? Not that he might continue to be the sponsor of a forgery. Is it conceivable that a man who willingly suffers and foregoes his all to follow a

¹ Muir., *The Life of Mohammad*, 92.

² *Ibid*, 66 (Italics are mine)

³ *Ibid*, 371

⁴ *Ibid*., 66-67.

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homeless refugee would blaspheme the name of God and be a party to a fraud on humanity? The character of Suhaib and his eventful life are in themselves guarantees against his being guilty of any such charge.

SALMAN, the Persian, is suggested by Dean Prideaux¹ and he bases his conjectures on the word *Ajami*. But both Muir and Sale differ with him. Salman was of a good family of Ispahan; and, in his younger years, left the religion of his country. He went to Syria, where he was advised by a monk of Amuria to go to Arabia, where a Prophet was expected to appear at that time, and who would re-establish the religion of Abraham. Salman performed the journey and met the Holy Prophet at Kobá, a suburb little more than two miles to the south of Madina, where the Holy Prophet had halted for a few days in his flight to Madina. The first real mention of Salman in the Islamic history occurs in connection with the entrenchment of Madina.² Thus it is obvious that he was never with the Holy Prophet at Makka before the Flight and could not, therefore, have been the person referred to in the Holy Qur-án.

QAIS or Kos, the Bishop of Nijran, to whom the Holy Prophet is supposed to have talked while on his first journey to Syria, is also mentioned. This journey was undertaken by the Holy Prophet at the age of twelve. It is sheer nonsense to suggest that a boy at this age could learn anything about religion and recollect and repeat at the age of forty what was narrated to him about thirty years before.

SERGIUS or Boheira, a Nestorian monk, is generally supposed by most of the Christian writers on Islam to have been the man, with whom the Holy Prophet, at his tender age had held a conference at Bosra, a city of Syria Damascena.³ How much could any monk have

¹ Prideaux, *Life of Mohammad*, 31.

² Ibn-Hisham, 136.

³ Prideaux, *Life of Mohammad*, 35. See also Marraci, *de Alcor*, 37.

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taught in a few days, to one still so young, and who could not talk any language but his own, is a question which the Christians have failed to consider and much less answer. Sale rejects the suggestion and says :

I find not the least intimation, that he (Sergius) ever quitted his monastery to go into Arabia (as is supposed by the Christians) and his acquaintance with Mohammad was too early to favour the surmise of his assisting him in the Koran, which was composed long after.¹

Thomas Carlyle found it impossible to support this Christian charge.² Muir rejects it as puerile.³ Davenport belies the allegations *qua* Salman and Sergius as being based on utterly baseless conjectures and says :

The statement that Mohammad composed the Koran by the aid of a Christian Monk and Abdul Salman, a Persian Jew, refutes itself, for it is not to be credited that the excellence of the Arabian language should be derived from two foreigners of whom the one was a Syrian and the other a Persian.⁴

The names of Yasir, Jabar, Khobeib, Habib, Aish or Ya'ish, 'Addas and Zaid have also been suggested. All these were slaves, who had been freed. They were among the early converts of Islam, and as such the brunt of the wrath of the Quraish had fallen upon them, because they were weak and poor and had no patron or protector. They, however, in spite of the most cruel persecutions and the most trying torments did not recant. They could have apostatized and thus avoided being tormented, but they preferred to face death rather than renounce their faith, even in words. They died in the cause because they believed in the Holy Qur-án as the word of God, which said :

And think not (of) those who are killed in Allah's way as dead, nay ! they are alive (and) are provided sustenance from their Lord.⁵

(To be continued.)

¹ Sale, *Translation of the Koran*, 204.

² Carlyle, *Hero and Hero-Worship*, 71.

³ Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 21.

⁴ Davenport, *Mohammad and the Koran*, 50.

⁵ The Holy Quran.

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BY M. A. SAMAD

THE persons who nowadays are spoken of as Hindus, but who in early days were always called as Gentus—and historians styled them as Aryans—are said to have migrated some four thousand years ago from some place in Asia Minor and settled down in the North of India in the district known as Aryavarta. But before they could settle down peacefully as an agricultural class, they had to carry on a continual warfare with the original inhabitants of the place, whom they finally succeeded in driving to the south or reducing to permanent serfdom. The open, healthy surroundings and abundance of food gave them enough time to indulge in philosophical speculations and called forth from them many a hymn in praise of elements or other manifestations of Nature which sent them timely rains to fertilize their lands and brought them good crops.

In the Holy Qur-án it is written :

There is not a nation but a prophet has gone among them.

So, God, being *Rabb-ul-Alamin*, the Creator, Nourisher and Evolver of all the worlds, sought to guide these people, the Aryans, as well by sending them prophets, whereby they may gradually evolve along definite lines. But there being no proper means of preserving intact the Message of God, it could not long retain its original purity, and disintegration soon set in degenerating finally into what has come to be known as *Brahminism*. But says the Holy Qur-án :

Whatever revelation We abrogate, or cause it to be forgotten. We bring one better than it or like it.

Bhagvad Gita also says the same thing

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Whenever there is decay of dharma, O Bharata, and there is exultation of irreligiousness, then I myself come forth.

Accordingly, after the first Message had been lost, a fresh revelation was sent to them through another prophet. But in India there has been a tradition that one cannot remain a prophet for long without being raised to the dignity of Godhood, nor can a revelation long resist being absorbed in Brahminism. So this sort of thing went on—a fresh revelation came, flourished for a time, then met the fate of the previous revelations, human interpolation crept in, and it finally became absorbed in Brahminism. Now, it is this Brahminism which is running on under the name of Hinduism ; and the Hindu religious books must have contained in their original form true revelations from God, but now they have become mixed up with much that is base and unworthy. These books are divided into two sections according to the periods of their revelation, the Books of the Vedic Period and Books of the Epic Period.

Now, to begin with the books of the Vedic period—the earliest Revelation that came to the Aryans is contained in the Vedas. According to the Hindus, they are divine and eternal, and consequently possess the highest and an altogether indisputable authority. Swami Vivekananda says about them :

Its date has not been fixed, can never be fixed, and according to us, the Vedas are eternal.

However, all scholars are now agreed upon the point that these collections of hymns were compiled at different periods during the course of the development of the Indo-Aryan civilization in its earliest stages. The dates assigned to them by different scholars range between 4000 B.C. and 1200 B.C. There are four divisions of the Vedas, the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, and

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the Atharva Veda. Hardly anything is known of the Rishis (prophets) to whom they were revealed except their names, and these are but incidentally mentioned at the beginning of the different Vedic mantras.

The hymns of the Rig Veda represent the expression of the burning curiosity of the primitive Aryan mind aroused by the extremely novel and wonderful surroundings in which it must have found itself when the Aryans entered and settled down, first in the beautiful plains of the Punjab, and subsequently in the fertile regions watered by the Ganges and the Jamuna. The verses represent hymns to a number of gods and goddesses who personify the main forces of nature. A study of the Rig Veda will show that while individual gods are adored and the various phenomena of nature are attributed to them, we also find therein theistic, the pantheistic and the monistic tendencies in juxtaposition with the more usual and predominant polytheistic notions. This will incidentally show the extent to which the changes were made.

The Sama and the Yajur Vedas, which were compiled at a later date, are not very different from the Rig Veda. The former contains a selection of hymns from the Rig Veda which were meant to be sung according to certain fixed melodies for the propitiation of the deities and the latter (Yajur Veda) also contains verses of the same Veda (Rig Veda) arranged in the order in which they were to be recited during the performance of sacrifices. The institution of sacrifice in the Vedas is introduced in the belief that the gods and goddesses could be propitiated with the offering of flesh and blood of animals sacrificed, and their fearful wrath thus averted.

The Atharva Veda belongs to a much later date and represents a type of religion very different from that of the Rig Veda. The religion of the Atharva is even inferior

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to that of the Rig Veda, being full of all kinds of superstition and baser forms of worship.

The greatest difficulty met with in the case of the Vedas is that the language in which they are written is now obsolete and what we should call "dead" ; no one in India speaks it or understands it. The Vedic verses are susceptible to contradictory interpretations, they have given rise to innumerable sects, which differ from each other even in the fundamentals of their religion, while they all receive their inspiration from the same books. The translation of the Vedas given by one class of Hindus is condemned by the other. At best the Vedas are, like the Old Testament, only history of a tribe with the mention of religion and its accessories as a matter of incident. The late Maharishi Debendranath Tagore, sometimes head of the Brahmo Samaj, said about them that

Venerable as the Vedas might be as relics of a former age, they contained so much that was childish, erroneous and impossible as to make their descent from Divine source utterly untenable.

Before passing on to the examination of the other books of the Vedic period we may finally sum up our opinion of the Vedas by saying that they contain a great deal of what is childish and foolish, though very little of what is bad and objectionable. Some of its parts ascribe to the gods sentiments and passions unworthy of the deity, such as anger, revenge, delight in material sacrifices ; they likewise represent human nature on a low level of selfishness and worldliness. Many hymns are utterly unmeaning and insipid, and we must search patiently before we meet, here and there, with sentiments that come from the depth of the soul, and with prayers in which we could join ourselves.

The next in importance to the Vedas in the books of Vedic period are the Brahmanas and the Upanishads. But

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as they are nothing more than commentaries on the Vedas, we shall not consider them at length ; although the Hindus classify them among the *shrutis* or the revealed books. The Brahmanas are written in prose and for the most part explain the meaning and application of the Vedic hymns with reference to the performance of sacrifices. With regard to age they all date from the transition from Vedic civilization and culture to the Brahmanic mode of thought and social order. Each of the four Vedas has its own Brahmana, and they differ from one another according to the subject-matter of the Veda to which each of them is attached. It may safely be said about the Brahmanas that they were never revealed books like the Vedas but were originally written by the Brahmins to explain the new religion that they had set up for their own personal aggrandizement, after having introduced changes and interpolations into the Vedas. They gave them the authority of revealed books in order to gain for them blind obedience.

The Upanishads form appendices to the Brahmanas and represent progressive transition from ritualism to abstract thought. Whereas the Brahmanas dealt with the ritual and sacrificial part of the Vedas, the Upanishads are commentaries on the philosophical part. Most of the Vedic verses are primarily hymns to the various deities and the philosophical implications are only to be deduced from their contents. But as we pass from the Vedas to the Upanishads the speculation becomes primarily subjective. The nature of 'self' is the main theme of the Upanishadic philosophy. But as there are hopeless contradictions, and a number of verses are susceptible to conflicting interpretations, we can never consider ourselves on safe ground in passing a final judgment on these books. At best they are only interesting as treatises on philosophy, and

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have no practical or even strictly theological value.

Next come the Puranas. They are said to have been written to popularize the religion of the Vedas, and are in the popular language of those times, that is the modern Sanskrit. The Puranas are also considered as revealed books like the Vedas, and are said to have been written simultaneously with the Vedas. The Vedas too attest to the truth of the Puranas. In the Atharva Veda we find the following notice about them :

Verses and songs and magic hymns, puranas, sacrificial text—all the celestial gods whose home is heaven, sprang from the residue.¹

Similarly, in the Rig Veda a mention is made of them :

So by this knowledge of Purana Yajna our fathers were raised up to Rishis.²

Thus Puranas comprise of the history of the creation of this universe, the history of the early Aryan tribes, and life-stories of the divines and deities of the Hindus. All these are narrated in the mythological form and are no better than the ancient Greek and Roman mythologies—wherein the gods are represented clothed in base human passions, marrying and procreating, and indulging in drinking revelries and lascivious acts involving even the mortals in their nefarious activities.

Now we come to the books of the Epic period. These cover the Ramayana and the Mahabharata including the Bhagvad Gita. The Manusmriti also belongs to this period.

The Ramayana is the great epic poem of India which narrates the stories of the Hindu hero Rama, the King of Ayodhya, and who in the later part of the work is described as the incarnation of Vishnu. Rama must have been

¹ Atharva Veda, XI : 7, 24.

² Rig Veda, X : 130, 6.

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a God-inspired man and consequently one of the prophets but as his story was composed even after that of the Mahabharata, although it belongs to a much earlier date, many indecent and mistaken doctrines were added, and Rama himself² was made a God-incarnate. The religion of the Ramayana is distinctly polytheistic. We have therein the Vedic gods with Indra as their chief. The new divinities of Kāma, Kubera, Kārtikeya: Gangā, Lakshmi and Umā, the wives of Vishnu and Shiva, deified animals like Sesa the snake, Hanuman the monkey, Jāmbavat the bear, Garuda the eagle, Jatāyu the vulture, and Nandi the bull, receive prominent mention. Sacrifice is the mode of worship. Though Vishnu and Shiva maintain their pre-eminence, the worship of snakes, trees and rivers is also to be met with.

The Mahābhārata is the most important work of this period from the philosophical point of view. Besides the Bhagvad Gita, the Moksadharma and the Anugita are quite interesting to a student of philosophy. The epic as a whole narrates the story of the great war between the two branches of the royal family of Bhāratas—the Pāndavas and the Kauravas. It is believed by scholars that the present Mahābhārata is an enlarged edition of an earlier work called the Bhārata. In addition to the Vedic gods, Durā, Pasupati, and Krishna find prominent place and give rise to the Sākta, the Pāsupata and the Vāsudeva-Krishna cults respectively. The doctrines of karma and transmigration of soul are fully recognized throughout the epic.

The Bhagvad Gita or the Lord's Song is a part of the Bhisma Parva of the Mahābhārata. It is a dialogue between Krishna and Arjun, one of the five Pandavas, on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, as reported to Dhritarastra by Sanjaya. Notwithstanding the fact that there are in

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the Bhagvad Gita many passages and doctrines distasteful to the Muslims, Krishna has been generally accepted by the Muslims as a prophet. The indecent incidents in which Krishna is depicted to have had a share can be ascribed to false accusations, or to misrepresentations of a really innocent behaviour ; whereas the many distasteful and almost hateful doctrines ascribed to him can easily be shown to be an after attempt on the part of the Brahmans in order to deify Krishna and raise him up as an incarnation of Vishnu, and to engulf the religion founded by him into Brahmanism.

Krishna was, then, a prophet who came down for "the protection of the good, for the destruction of the evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing dharma"; who founded an ethical monotheistic religion, flung aside the authority of the Vedas and declared war upon the sacrificial systems of the Brahmana, which was a great source of their income. Even Shankaracharya (8th century C.E.) refers, at a time when the Bhagvatas (the original religion of Krishna) had long since been absorbed in Brahmanism, to the animosity of the sect to the Vedas. But, as I said before, in India one cannot remain a prophet for long without being raised to the dignity of Godhood, nor can a religion long resist being absorbed in Brahmanism. In course of time, a great web of folk tales and legends grew up around the name and person of Krishna. From the founder of a religion and a tribal hero he was raised to the pedestal of Godhood and the ground was thus prepared and the way opened for the Brahmans to identify him with Vishnu, as had been done in the case of Rama before.¹

¹ For a detailed discussion on this point please read *Bhagvad Gita—A Criticism* by F. K. Khan Durrani.

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Notwithstanding all these shortcomings and distortions of the original work by the Brahmans, the Bhagvad-Gita can safely be said to be the best and the most interesting book of the Hindus, and contains many a surprises for a student of philosophy.

Now we come to the code of Manu. The Manu Smiriti is primarily a code of Dharmashastra. The code dwells at length on the duties of the four castes (varnas), and the four orders of life (ashrams). The four castes are the Brahmans or the priestly class, the Kshatriyas or the warriors, the Vaishyas or the traders, and the Shudras or the untouchables, the slaves. This caste distinction, dependent upon birth and parentage, has given rise to the most cruel and invidious social order ever known to the world. A Brahman is born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and no matter how base and unworthy he may turn out to be, he gets the greatest veneration and the best of everything; the distinction of performing religious rites and sacrifices and interpreting the scriptural texts being exclusively his. On the other hand, the Shudras as a class are condemned to eternal serfdom and are cut off from all the amenities of life—their very shadow is deemed sufficient to pollute things! The reader can form his own idea of the brutal and inhuman system promulgated in the Manu Smiriti from the following few quotations:—

If a Shudra should give a word of advice to a Brahman, he shall have burning hot oil poured into his mouth.¹

If a Vedic mantra should chance to fall into a Shudra's ears, the Shudra shall have molten lead poured into his ears; if it is uttered by his tongue he shall have his tongue cut off; if he should take it by heart, the heart should be torn into two parts.²

¹ Manu Smiriti, VIII : 272.

² *Ibid*, XII : 1,

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If a Shudra talks rudely to a Brahman, kill him.¹

If a Kshatriya or a Vaishya should talk rudely to a Brahman, they shall have their tongues chopped off.²

If a Shudra insults a Brahman with any limb, he shall have that limb cut off. If he seats himself along side of a Brahman, he shall have his buttocks chopped off.³

Then further on while describing the four (ashramas) or the orders of life, the code of Manu also deals at length with the position of woman. A woman's position in relation to a man is like that of a Shudra in relation to a Brahman. The poor thing is condemned to eternal bondage and servitude. There is nothing in the world which she can call her own, not even her own person ; for it is written

In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead, to her son ; a woman must never be independent.⁴

Him to whom her father may give her, or her brother with the father's permission, shall she obey as long as he lives, and when he is dead, she must not insult his memory.⁵

Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife.⁶

It is the nature of woman to seduce man in this world ; for this reason the wise are never unguarded in the company of females.

For women are able to lead astray in this world not only a fool, but even a learned man, and to make him a slave of desire and anger.⁷

¹ Manu Smriti, VIII : 267.

² *Ibid.*, VIII : 270.

³ *Ibid.*, VIII : 281.

⁴ *Ibid.*, V : 148.

⁵ *Ibid.*, V : 151.

⁶ *Ibid.*, V : 154.

⁷ *Ibid.*, II : 213-214.

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A wife, a son, and a slave are devoid of property. Whatever they acquire becomes his whose they are.¹

It has been shown above that none of the books revered by the Hindus as the books of God remained without human adulteration in the form of additions and subtractions. Many of these have disappeared totally, and all have suffered much from human hands. The result is that in their present form they contain much that is objectionable and absurd, and can no more serve the purpose for which they were revealed—to work out the self-unfolding of man, all his potentialities seeking actualization. The late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din aptly pointed out that

If to work out the hidden faculties of the human mind is the object of religion, then the Book of God, or in one word, Religion, should enlighten us upon the following things :

1. Human capabilities and capacities.
2. The way to work them out.
3. The relationship between God and man for the accomplishment of that object.
4. The relationship between man and the nature around him.
5. The relationship between man and man.
6. The way to work out these relations.
7. The life after death.²

I need not say anything more about the sacred books of the Hindus. Let their adherents think for themselves whether the faith they believe in gives them sufficient light on these questions. If Hinduism, and the Hindu religious books, fail to educate us on these points and have become mixed up with much that is not divine,

¹ Manu Smriti, VIII : 416.

² Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, *Towards Islam*.

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then the Divine Rule of supply and consumption must operate, and find its manifestation in a fresh Revelation. "If religion came to man through Revelation how can we appreciate its very beauties when the revealed words do not reach us in their original shape? If God once cared to make His will known to us through words revealed to prophets, why should He keep silent when His very will has become dimmed and befogged for its true appreciation through human tampering? If He is now the same God as He was in the olden days, and if His interest in us has not become slack, He must send us a new Book if the old scriptures have lost their pristine beauty."¹ This Book is the Holy Qur-án, "a healing and a mercy to the believers," revealed so that "thou mayest make clear to them that about which they differ,"² occupying a unique position of "verifying what is before it of the book and a guardian over them."³

This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion.⁴

¹ Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, *Towards Islam*.

² Holy Quran, XVI : 64 :

³ *Ibid*, V : 48.

⁴ *Ibid*, V : 3.

A TIMELY AND PRAISEWORTHY RESOLUTION.

It is one of the happy signs of the times that Muslims all over the world are gradually becoming aware of the insidious encroachments of the materialistic West on the faith and religious fervour of spiritual humanity. A recent conference of Indian Ulama (The All India Jamiatul-Ulama-i-Islam) which met in Calcutta in the first week of November, passed a very significant resolution dealing with the current social movements, all Western in origin. The importance of the subject is plea enough for reproducing *in extenso* this rather exhaustive resolution which reads as follows:

The All-India Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam Conference, Calcutta, expresses its disapproval of the economic schools of thought and systems which are based on the modern materialistic civilization and as such are fundamentally opposed to Islamic principles. The Jamiat particularly condemns the system and school of Economy which is technically termed as Capitalism and which is based on interest, gambling, monopoly, profiteering and accumulation of gold and silver in the hands of the few and the economic ruination and strangulation of the vast majority of the people. Similarly, the Jamiat disapproves of Marxist Communism because on the one hand it is based on the atheistic creed and on the materialistic interpretation of life and history and on the other it advocates an unnatural and complete equality of a kind which is bound to crush human personality and destroy individual liberty and growth and which has proved impracticable even in Communist Russia and has therefore been discarded in practice.

The All-India Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam Conference declares that Islam is equally opposed to the social systems of Capitalism, Marxist Communism and racial Fascism, because they are all based on Godless, non-religious and non-moral

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materialism and seeks to reduce man,"the vicegerent of God on earth, to the position of brutes.

In contradistinction to these systems, the Jamiat is the champion and advocate of the independent and distinct system of Islamic Economy which is based on the principles of the unity and universal "Rabubiat" of Allah, 'Rabbulalameen' (God, the Creator, Cherisher, Sustainer and Evolver of all Creatures) and which seeks to ennoble, raise and free humanity from the low status of animality.

The first and foremost principle of the Islamic system of Economy is that it has grounded the "Ma'ash" (worldly or material economy) of man on his "Ma'ad" (spiritual and eternal values of the Hereafter) and seeks to achieve complete evolution and fruition of his whole complex self in its entirety. The Islamic Economy is not based on the impossible equality of stomachs but on the equality of hearts and souls of men. It also guarantees the just and harmonious sustenance, nourishment and development of all men in society according to their diverse innate capabilities, equipments and needs. It declares all absolute properties to belong to God, the Creator, Sustainer, Cherisher and Evolver of all the worlds and regards different kinds of goods as only trusts from God. Men are responsible to God and society for adopting right methods of production, distribution and consumption and to respect the limits of God.

The State and Society in Islamic Economy is responsible for the just sustenance and total development of all men comprehending their development in this world and the Hereafter.

The resolution hardly needs any comment. It is clear and emphatic in stating Islam's attitude towards the presumptuous one-sided social movements springing from time to time from the Godless West and indicates the determination of Islam to meet them with its own invincible spiritual equipment. We congratulate the sponsors of the Jami'at on the very timely lead they have thus given to the Muslims on a question which is more important than any other that has confronted the world within recent history.

REVIEW

Wisdom of Prophet Muhammad. By *Mohammad Amin Bar-at-Law*. Published by *Lion Publications, Lahore*, 1945, pp. 185. Price Rs. 2 or 3 Shillings. To be had from the *Muslim Book Society, Aziz, Manzil, Brandreth Road, Lahore*.

The book contains a choice collection of dissertations by eminent writers of various nationalities and creeds that together go to establish the claims of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah upon him) to be the Prophet of God. Each chapter is devoted to a particular misunderstanding current among the non-Muslims, relating to the Faith of Islam. But while the reader is given the necessary clarification he is not made to feel that he is reading something that has been a subject of controversy.

As such it may be regarded as a new kind of contribution to the Islamic polemics.

Neither is the author's own contribution of a mean order. His Open Letters to eminent non-Muslims of the world are both impressive and appealing. His writings breathe a spirit of persuasiveness coupled with a genuine love for those who do not believe.

The book will be particularly useful for those numerous people of the different religions of the world who have particularly lost faith in religion itself as a result of the free scientific thinking of the age.

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, or to the Editor, *The Islamic Review*, Azeez Manzil, Brandreth Road, Lahore, India.]

ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word "Islam" literally means : (1) Peace ; (2) the way to achieve peace ; (3) submission, as submission to the Master's will is the only way 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-an. 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-an, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number : Belief in (1) Allah ; (2) Angels ; (3) Books from God ; (4) Messengers from God ; (5) the Hereafter ; (6) the Premeasurement of Good and Evil ; (7) Resurrection after Death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress ; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. State after death is a counter-part of the spiritual state in this life.

The sixth article of Faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination ; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number ; (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad ; (2) Prayer ; (3) Fasting ; (4) Almsgiving ; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Makka.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of all the worlds, the Friend, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has

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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 paternal 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.

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