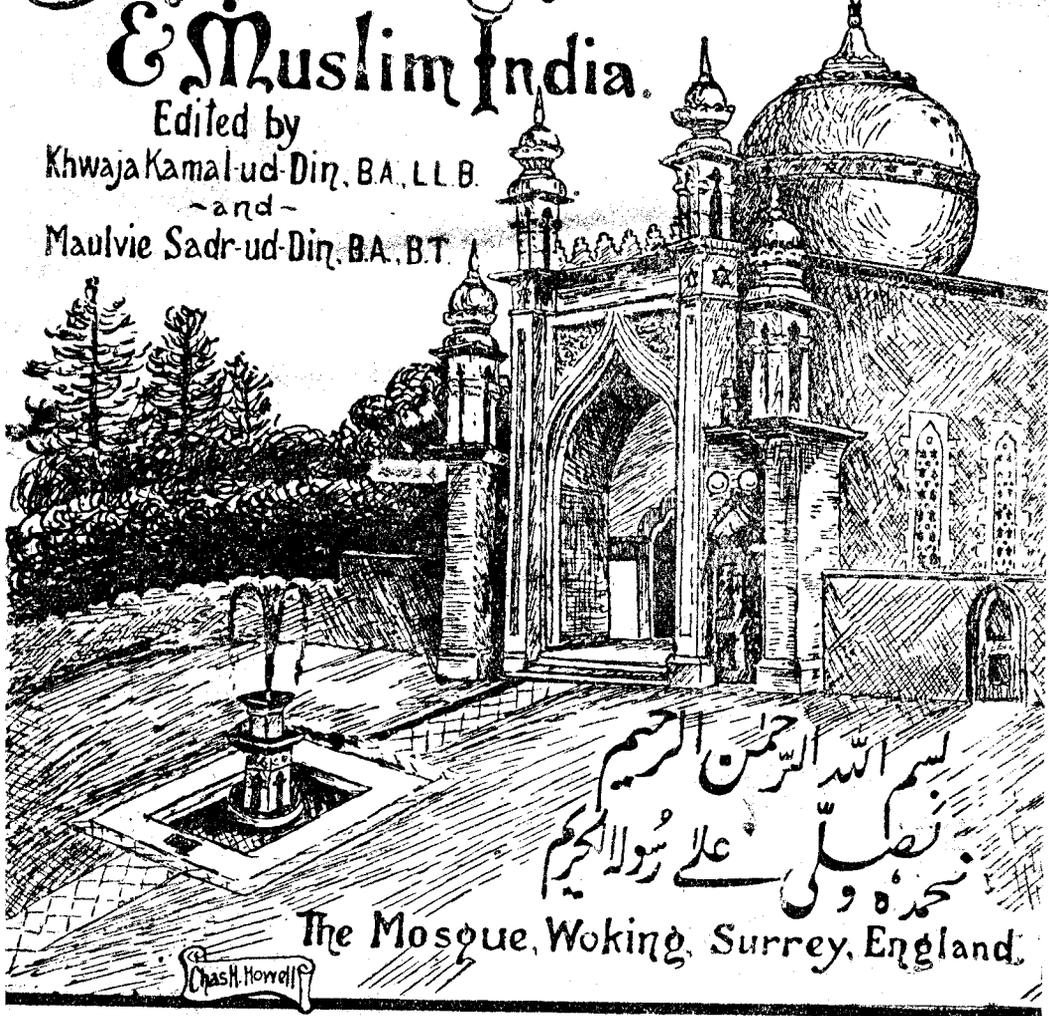


Islamic Review & Muslim India.

Edited by
Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, B.A., LL.B.
-and-
Maulvie Sadr-ud-Din, B.A., B.T.



The Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِہِ الْکَرِیْمِ

ISLAMIC REVIEW

AND

MUSLIM INDIA

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[No. 3

THE HOLY QUR-ĀN

With English Translation and Commentary, printed on high-class India paper, and bound in green flexible leather, *is now ready*. Price 22s.* Prospectus and sample pages sent free on application. Cloth-bound Edition, price 16s., postage extra. Prices in India: India paper, Rs. 20; cloth bound, Rs. 17. Apply in India to Ishaat-Islam Office, Nowlakha, Lahore.

Qur-ān Class.—We are sorry to note that, owing to the illness of the Imam, there will be no Qur-ān classes for the present. The students will be informed when the classes are taken up again.

Friday Prayer and Sermon.—At the London Muslim Prayer House, every Friday, at 1.30 p.m.

Service, Sermon and Lectures every Sunday at the Muslim Prayer House (111, Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate, W. 8), at 3.15 p.m., and at the Mosque, Woking, at 3.15 p.m.

* The rise in the price of book-binding has compelled us to increase the price. We advise our customers abroad to send us 2s. 6d. extra, to cover insurance fee, and thus to secure the book against loss through enemy action.

NOTES

WE are extremely delighted to learn that Mr. Sadruddin, B.A., B.T., will be again with us soon to resume his work for the Mission. Those who had the good fortune of knowing him—a man of unflinching and charming courtesy and selfless devotion to the cause—can easily determine the extent to which the success of the Mission was due to him. Although he left us two years ago under urgent medical advice, yet after a very short holiday in India he has incessantly applied himself to the service of the community. We are looking forward with eager expectation to meeting him once more and benefiting from his valuable companionship and co-operation. We hope he will restart the Qur-án class, which has been in abeyance so long.

Regular Sunday meetings are being held at the London Muslim Prayer House. We are glad to announce that a new series of lectures on the important subject of "The War and Religion" has been inaugurated by Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall. In order to give the subject a detailed treatment he has divided it into various sections, and expounded them most learnedly one by one.

We give below a list of the various features of the problem, together with their dates.

- | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|-------------------------------|
| 26th January | .. | .. | Views of Two Religions. |
| 2nd February | .. | .. | Religion of the European War. |
| 9th February | .. | .. | The Prophet's Warfare. |
| 16th February | .. | .. | Jihad. |
| 2nd March | .. | .. | The Law of Life. |

23rd February, "Principles of Sacrifice," Mr. Dudley Wright.

Sunday afternoon lectures are being held as usual at the Mosque, Woking, speakers being Mr. C. S. Salman and Mr. Abdul Qayum Malik.

ADHESION TO ISLAM.—We are glad to announce the declaration of adhesion to Islam of an honourable lady whose interest in Muslim countries has for long been keen.

THE OBJECT OF LIFE

By MUSTAFA KHAN, B.A. (ALIG)

WHENCE are we coming, and where going to? And for what purpose? These are the questions which have invariably set sages a-thinking. But the human intellect has not been so far able to work out the problem. Philosophers have differed, and the variety of their opinions makes the question more intricate and complex. There are men who say that we are sent here as mere toys of nature, which plays with us and destroys us as a child destroys his playthings when he is tired of them. There are others who think that in the vast ocean of the shoreless eternity our lives are mere bubbles created by chance on the surface of water, only to disappear by the dash of a strong ripple, which gives birth to other bubbles; and so on.

Both of these views present a very gloomy aspect of human life. They mean that our life has no definite end, but we are only the creatures of chance or accident. We are aimlessly thrown here to live and die. We have no aim to fulfil, and no duty to perform. It is this idea that has been beautifully and tersely expressed in the following couplet: "Neither I am a blossoming branch, nor a shady tree. I wonder why the gardener planted me." But if this be the correct interpretation of our existence, the life could have no meaning. Do we toil and bustle for nothing? Do we come here without any responsibility? If this is the case there is no earthly reason why we should not put an end to this life and get rid of its worries. It is not worthy of a rational being to live aimlessly. But rational beings cannot live aimlessly. It is a fallacy. If they have no aim what is the use, on earth, of their reason? And if we ponder a little over the universe we will come to know that even the meanest creature of the world is working and fulfilling some object which is divinely ordained. The sun shines and gives heat and light; the moon sheds her bright rays which ripen fruits and harvest. The spring comes and gives blossoms to trees, the autumn sheds the golden leaves of trees, which by their death give life to the dead land. Thus even the decayed and the fallen leaves of trees are a source of animation to the earth. Do you think, then, that only man is walking here aimlessly? No; like all other creatures he has as great a task before him as is worthy of his life. The Holy Qur-án says: "We did not create heaven and earth, and what is between them, for sport."

This directly refutes the theory that the earth is a playground of nature. It is clear enough from the above-

quoted verse that everything in the world has a certain aim, which it fulfils; but another verse of the holy book is still clearer on the point: "To Him submits whatever is in the heavens or earth, willingly or unwillingly; and to Him shall they be returned."

The book of nature bears ample testimony to the truth of these words. Every atom of the world is playing the part assigned to it, and thus is contributing to the success of the GREAT CAUSE. The flowers wither after shedding their sweet smell; the birds sing their beautiful songs. But what is the part of man?

The holy book says: "I have not created the jin and the men except that they should serve Me." Man has, therefore, been created for the service of the Supreme Being. But it is plain enough that God does not stand in need of service just as we require the services of our attendants and servants. He is independent of all such requirements. Hence His service means the obedience to His laws and the active service to His creatures. Thus, the object of human life is to serve the cause of the universe, and to work for the good of all. What a sublime object!

A Muslim is, then, expected to be a faithful devotee to the laws of God and an honest worker in the cause of mankind. He ought to work in all branches of human activity which may contribute to the happiness and prosperity of the world. He should study science, and disclose the various properties of matter in order to make it useful for his fellow beings. He should investigate the laws of nature which govern the atomic world in order to conquer it for the general well-being of humanity. He should do his best to redeem mankind of all sorts of servitude—mental, physical, and political. In short, a Muslim is expected to live for others and not for himself. He is religiously enjoined to serve mankind without any idea of compensation, as he has been created for this. His motto, therefore, is to serve for the sake of service, and not for any reward.

THE GREAT HEREAFTER

By EL FAROOQ (LORD HEADLEY)

THE idea of the culmination of all our thoughts and aspirations is of such vast importance to every living soul that no words can touch the fringe of its magnitude—no mind-picture of glorious form and colour can even indicate the possible loveliness and grace of the final merging of our souls with the Infinite.

THE GREAT HEREAFTER

That consummation devoutly to be wished, and, as Pope has said,

Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies—
O'er-looked, seen double by the fool and wise—

is born in us and yet is more exquisite and distant from us than the rose-fingered glory of early dawn when viewed from the lofty snow-clad peaks of the Himalayas. The spirit-world is in our complex nature so inseparably blended with swiftly coursing blood that the amalgam defies human analysis. But it is there all the same, and it is futile to attempt to separate that which God has joined with infinite care and infinite love. For simile we know that we can analyse the constituents of milk—that blessed fluid which gave us all our first strength—but no chemist has yet succeeded in producing the real article by any combinations of water with the well-known and recognized constituents.

Now, how to arrive at the Great Hereafter? Priests have from the earliest times arrogated to themselves the functions of leaders or guides to heaven, and they have always let it be thoroughly understood that as professional "sky-pilots" they alone could conduct the erring one in the straight path. They have from the very first gone on the assumption that man was a poor fool who could very easily be taught to believe almost any weird dogmatic statement with respect to the future state, or any other state for the matter of that. They have ever pretended that they held the keys of heaven, as well as that particular lamp which could alone illumine the path to the better land.

At the same time they have been perfectly well aware, as educated men, that the keys of heaven are already in the hands of every created human being, and that the Great Creator ever speaks to every soul out of the leaves of the trees, the clouds of the sky, the mighty rushing of the wind, and that still small voice of conscience, within the very being, which tells of right and wrong, of goodness and badness, and of love and hate. Those innermost whisperings of the soul of man need but the slightest explanation or direction, and the assistance necessary should be forthcoming without the costly intervention of priest or parson, or indeed any devil-dodger of any denomination. Far be it from me to hint that vast benefits have not been secured by the ministrations of the band of worthy men who have devoted their lives to the improvement of the condition of mankind and the direction of thoughts from sordid everyday surroundings to a contemplation of that future which matters so very much to us all. No, I would not detract from any of the gratitude we owe to professional sky-pilotage, but I would draw very serious attention to the fact that with very few exceptions these well-paid permanent officials of

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the preliminary box-office of the greatest show we can conceive *are educated men*, holding University degrees, and I do say with every confidence and all due respect that *it is impossible for them really to believe that salvation really depends upon a belief in, say, the Divinity of Christ, the Trinity, the Sacraments, or the avoidance of what they are pleased to quite gratuitously dub "deadly sin."* Not one in a thousand of these well-educated gentlemen really believes in his heart of hearts (which God Almighty can even now see into and judge) that a man will be damned if he is unable to "think of the Trinity" in a particular way any more than he would be damned for *thinking* that it might be breakfast-time. What, in the name of all that is fair and square and above-board, can it matter to God what any one *thinks* of the Trinity, or of Trinity House either for the matter of that? What God does certainly (so I humbly opine and truly believe) examine and long for, is a right spirit within all His creatures, a longing for Him and His grace, and the existence of that love for others which can alone bring real satisfaction to the dwellers on this earth. It is "duty to God and neighbour" which is everything—nothing whatever matters in comparison to that. The whole duty of man is contained in these five words, and yet the monks of old, with devilish cunning, devised all sorts of specious complications, about as genuine as the cheese of which the moon is made: and, mark you, *they did this solely for the purpose of gaining and retaining a secure hold on the people, so that they could be sure of making a good income out of the fees which their "Church" allowed them to charge for explanations.* How well they have established this spurious authority is shown by history, and how well they have retained their hold on the credulous is common knowledge. The Christians look to their priests and those monuments of useless extravagance, the bishops, to guide them, and they are idolators pure and simple, for they worship the Virgin Mary, whom they blasphemously call "the Mother of God," and her saintly son, our Lord and Prophet Jesus Christ. I often wonder what our Lord, whose estimate and animadversions on the subject of Pharisees and hypocrites are delightfully refreshing reading, would say if he could come to life again on this earth and witness the shocking taking of God's name in vain and the awful blasphemies of the so-called Churches!

The Athanasian Creed, that monument of monkish trickery, contains such blasphemies as these:—"Perfect God, and perfect Man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting; Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood. Who although he be God and Man: yet he is not two, but one Christ. . . . One altogether; not by confusion of

THE GREAT HEREAFTER

Substance: but by unity of Person." Again:—"The Father is made of none: neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another. But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal. So that in all things, as aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity. . . . This is the Catholic Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." There is a great deal more in this precious "creed" (*Credat Judeus Apella!*), but I will not waste more of my paper on it. It is indeed a mercy that there is only *one* of these precious "holy ghosts" moving around—*three* of them would be altogether unbearable.

If we are to believe the recorded history as handed down to us, Christ was not always "perfect" in his conduct: he frequently lost his temper in an unjustifiable manner: for instance, when he turned the money-changers out of the Temple and when he cursed the helpless tree which turned out to be barren when he wanted a nice luscious meal of juicy fruit. The more experienced and far more considerate Prophet Muhammad would never have been guilty of such childish petulance: He, Muhammad, would probably have said in similar circumstances: "The poor tree is dead; never mind, God will provide us other means of quenching our thirst; we will wait His good pleasure." If I myself had been tramping under an eastern sun all day—as, indeed, I often have in India—and I had found a tree as disappointing as Christ's particular fig-tree, I *might* have said (I don't say I *should*): "Why, . . . it, the wretched tree is as sapless as a broom-handle." And had I done this I am sure God would not have punished me for the excusable lapse from strictly drawing-room language. Christ's followers seem to have rather overrated the value of a good many of his sayings, which were often the reverse of wonderful so excessively commonplace were they. But he gave the messages from God: he gave the prayer divinely taught, and he gave the Sermon on the Mount; and if he had only given these he would have done enough. His insolence to his parents on several occasions and his intolerance and hasty temper were indications of a poor state of health and a lamentable want of self-control: compare this with the noble and chivalrous conduct of the Holy Prophet of Arabia, and the contrast stands out with marked prominence.

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But to return to our priests. These personal conductors of unattached souls have from the very first recognized the enormous value of that great asset "humbug," and have found it pretty easy to bamboozle credulous persons—especially women, who are always ready to swallow whole any balderdash which a man in a nightgown chooses to throw at them from a place called a pulpit, or "cowards' castle" as it has been sometimes called.

The Muslim Faith, "Islam," or obedience and surrender to God and beneficence to all one's fellow-creatures, recognizes no necessity for "go-betweens": no need of prophets, priests, virgins, or saints as intermediaries. Each human being can approach the Mercy Seat of God outside what he can obtain direct from his Maker. Sacraments, the Divinity of Christ, the Trinity, and all the rest of the sacerdotal camouflage with which the Christian Churches obscure the presence of Allah, are but as mists rising out of the swamp of monkish tomfoolery.

Islam says, "Do your duty to your God and to your neighbour, and you need no further introduction or recommendation to the Almighty." The extremely unsatisfactory and unfair expedient of shedding the blood of an innocent man in order to propitiate an angry God is looked upon as childish by the Muslims. As I have often said before, it is grotesque to worship a deity who, because something goes wrong and sin creeps in somewhere, becomes so incensed that he kills his only son in order to propitiate himself; or, since some people say that Christ was or is God, the Supreme Being has to commit suicide because He has left out something from his calculations! It always reminds me of a spoilt schoolgirl smashing in the waxen face of her best doll because some of the sawdust has come out of one of its legs.

No wonder that our men prefer playing golf to going to church; it is not that they are more irreligious than of yore, it is simply that they are better educated and that they therefore don't want to sit in a building to have their intelligence outraged without so much as a chance of calling in question the statements made with such assurance by the smug saver of souls at £500 or £600 per annum.

Contrast all this with the Islamic practice: any earnest Muslim can conduct a service in the Mosque. To be sure we have an Imam who from experience or zeal is well qualified to conduct the service, but he is not a *necessity* to the Mosque any more than is the man who calls to prayer. We all love our own dear brother who conducts our services, whether he be the Khwaja Kamaluddin or Sadruddin, but we don't think anything very dreadful will happen if either or both of them happens to be away and one of the congregation has to conduct the service.

TOLERANCE

The Christian clergy have made themselves very much the objects of pity by the absurd manner in which they have invented what they, and they alone, have been pleased to call "deadly sins."

They talk about the very natural coming together of two healthy young people of opposite sex as a "deadly sin." Now, I should be very pleased to hear on what authority *outside their own pernicious and unhealthy teachings and man-made dogmas* they arrive at this deplorable definitions of deadly sin. I, of course, recognize the need of laws and regulations respecting sex intercourse—such restrictions were established by the Holy Prophet of Arabia—but I altogether refuse to agree with the proposition that "if any one shall say the married state is to be preferred to the state of virginity or celibacy, let him be accursed" (Canon of the Council of Trent). According to my present lights—and I have been spared beyond the span accorded to Jesus or to the great reformer Martin Luther, and have spent the greater part of forty-five years in meditation on the future life—I can see very few "deadly sins." Amongst them I would place the following:—Cruelty to the poor and helpless. Cruelty to animals, our faithful dumb helpers in this life. Premeditated and wilful murder. Taking away another's husband or wife. Taking away the character of another or destroying a fair reputation. Taking forcibly from a woman that which she does not give willingly.

TOLERANCE

By M. W. PICKTHALL

"And the Jews say the Christians follow nothing good, and the Christians say the Jews follow nothing good, and they are readers of the Book. Those who have received no revelation use such talk as that. Surely God will judge between them in the Day of Resurrection concerning that in which they differ."

I AM going to speak to you upon a subject which seems to me the most important in the world—religious tolerance. Time was when any one who dared to preach such tolerance would have been crucified or burnt alive, or stoned to death by the devout, or, at any rate, would have had to fight hard for his life as did our lord Muhammad. But now one is allowed to stand up publicly and say it is desirable. That does imply a certain progress in the world, whatever pessimists may judge from late events. And it gives a special opportunity to us as Muslims, who are students of the Sacred Book and of the Prophet's teaching, for in that book and in that teaching is the Gospel, and the Canon of religious tolerance. With Christians it is something secular, which

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has grown up in spite of their religion ; with us it is a part of true religion, a part of the Divine Law revealed to us in the Qur-án.

For ages, if we look back upon history, there would seem to have been no such thing on earth, no such idea even in existence among people who possessed religious fervour. The followers of any creed regarded it as right and natural to exterminate or to enslave the followers of any other creed if they could get the chance. Men slaughtered those who differed from them in belief without compunction or remorse, imagining that by so doing they gave pleasure to their deities, and cleansed the world of something altogether impious, which had no right to live. That is as much as to say that they had no true notion of Divinity. The doctrine of the Unity of God, in Hebrew keeping, degenerated into that of a mere tribal deity, capricious, and vindictive, a partizan whose cult involved the hatred of all other peoples.

I think religious fanaticism the most devilish vice or passion which can animate humanity. It has certainly been the cause of more inhuman crimes than any other. Great prophets have been sent by God at intervals to call mankind into a better way of thinking, to remind them of the truths they will forget : that God is One, the God of all Creation, whose providence is over all alike ; too infinitely great to think and act as mortals think and act. All the great prophets, I believe, proclaimed this truth from God ; but in the Scriptures which they left behind them we find no plain injunction of religious tolerance, except in the Qur-án. Religious tolerance is of the very essence of Islám. The Qur-án enjoins it, and Muhammad in his life as Prophet and as ruler showed how it should be practised both in war and peace. He it was who first announced in terms which no one can misconstrue that Allah rewards the good of every creed and nation, not according to what they believe, as Jews and Christians thought—a good Jew was the same as a good Christian in his eyes—but according to what they do, the effort which they make to help humanity. We Muslims—God forgive us !—who have the sacred words of mercy and of toleration always before us, have often in our history fallen into great intolerance. But let nobody suppose that, when we do so, we are following the great example of Muhammad, or the precepts of our Faith. No ; when we do so, we lose sight of that example. No ; when we do so, we belie our faith.

The Prophet fought, it is true. He overcame his enemies by force of arms. It is one of the greatest ironies in human history that all the greatest benefactors of mankind have had to fight or die for their beliefs, because so many men refused with anger the blessings which they came to bring.

TOLERANCE

It is the greatest tragedy in human history that the Apostle of religious tolerance and his disciples were forced to fight repeatedly in self-defence.

Now hear the words of the Qur-án :—

“ Verily those who believe (i.e. the Muslims) and those who keep the Jews’ religious law, and the Christians and the Sabaeans—whoever believes in God and the Last Day, and does good works ; their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they grieve.”

“ To Allah belong the East and the West, and whithersoever you turn your faces, there is Allah’s purpose ; for Allah is widely-beneficent, all-knowing.

“ Righteousness does not consist in turning towards the East or the West ; but righteousness is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day, and the angels and the Scripture, and the Prophets, and gives his wealth for Allah’s love to relatives, and orphans, and poor people, and the wanderer, and those who ask, and to set free the captives. And those who keep up prayer, and pay the poor their due. And those who keep their compact when they make one. And those who are patient in distress and anguish, and conditions of adversity. These are the truly righteous. These are they who keep from wrong.

“ And they say : ‘ None enters Paradise except a Jew or a Christian.’ Such are their own desires. Say : ‘ Bring proof of that which you assert if you are truthful.’ Nay, but he who turns his face entirely towards God while doing good to men, verily his reward is with his Lord. And there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they grieve.”

It seemed to our beloved Prophet, as it seems to us, absurd that anybody should refuse so good a message. He sent out his ambassadors to all the monarchs of the earth, inviting them to a belief which should unite all thinking men. And some of his ambassadors were slain, others insulted, while only one or two obtained a careless hearing. It was the treacherous and cruel murder of one of those ambassadors by Christian officials, which led the Muslims into that long war with the Byzantine Empire which made their name a name of dread in Christian lands, and earned for them the reputation of fanatics. Surely the fanaticism was not theirs. Could anything surpass the tragic irony of the position of the early Muslims, who desired the peace of all mankind, obliged to fight against a host of men who bitterly resented that desire? And that was after the Prophet had conquered his home enemies, the idolatrous Coreysh and their confederates, who tried to extirpate the new religion, regarding it as something impious because it went against their tribal customs and established prejudice.

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Now please to disabuse your mind of the impression, if any of you have received it from your readings on this subject, that Muhammad was fanatical or harsh in war, or ever in his life played the aggressor. For twelve years he was patient under cruel persecutions, although at any time he could have raised a faction to protect him from among the idolaters themselves. He bade his followers retire from Mecca, and he himself eventually retired to a place, of which the people were more favourable to him; desiring peace. It was only when his enemies were on the road with a great army, meaning to hound him out of that retreat and make an end of the community, that he proclaimed to his disciples the command to fight. Anything that is worth living for is worth fighting for if need arise. That is the view of every healthy man. And surely nothing in this world was ever better worth defending than the hope of human progress, which Muhammad brought, than a religion which could furnish texts like those which I have quoted, new light to the world.

All the tolerance we see to-day in modern civilization is traceable directly to the Christian Reformation and the Renaissance. Gibbon traced the Reformation through the Paulician sect to El Islam; and the Renaissance of classic learning would not have been possible if El Islam had not been much more tolerant than Christianity, had not preserved the works of ancient learning which the Christians burnt as sinful. If the Prophet and his little band of followers had been exterminated, which would certainly have been their fate if they had not resisted their assailants, there would have been no such thought on earth as this religious tolerance, no such ideal as human progress at the present day. That is my belief, at any rate. It is not for nothing, surely, that the words of the Qur-án already quoted—

“ Righteousness does not consist in turning your faces towards the East or the West, but righteous is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day, and the angels and the Scripture, and the Prophets, and gives his wealth for love of Allah to relations, orphans, and the needy. . . .”

—it is not for nothing, surely, that those words are followed immediately, in the text of the Qur-án, by the law of retaliation—that is, self-defence. As for those who say that self-defence is wicked, let them try to hold their footing without it in the world as it was in Muhammad's time, as it is in some countries to-day, a world of unrestrained brute force. Those who run down self-defence to-day, and will not fight for things they hold most dear, presume upon the privileges won by fighting men of old, by men who did defend what they considered right until it came to be regarded as a part of civilization. Retaliation is a natural

TOLERANCE

law of our existence, and all the natural laws are laws of God.

But do not think that Muhammad, while obeying this natural law, commanding men to fight in self-defence, for the protection of the weak or helpless, and the redress of wrong—do not think that he was merciless in warfare.

Many people seem to fancy that the Prophet made war indiscriminately upon all idolaters, and showed no mercy to idolaters, wherever found. That is not true. He never even called idolaters Kuffâr—the word they usually translate as “infidels”—till after they had heard and had refused the truth. Such a refusal in that time and place implied a violent and armed hostility to El Islam. He never attacked any of the pagan Arabs unless they had first attacked him or betrayed. With several of their tribes he made alliances. These friendly tribes became Muslims in the natural course, for no one who had no objection to alliance with the Prophet could long refuse adherence to a doctrine so far superior to any current in Arabia, recommended as it was by the purity and upright conduct of the early Muslims.

In the Qur-ân we find idolaters regarded, first, as foolish people who have gone astray, yet not in any sense cut off from Allah's mercy. Only after they have heard the truth and have rejected it with violence (that is, fought or plotted for its overthrow) are they denounced as wicked. The prayer of Abraham—

“Our Lord, forgive me *and my parents* and believers in the day when all accounts are balanced,”

—that prayer was used habitually by the Prophet and his companions. The parents of Abraham were idolaters. So were the parents of Muhammad (may God bless him !), of Ali, Omar, Abu Bekr, and ten thousand more. Yet they were prayed for in the same breath as believers, that Allah would extend His pardon to them at the Judgment Day. I could give many other instances to show that idolaters who knew no better were not regarded as cut off from Allah's mercy. Only those who actively opposed Islam when it was preached to them, and did their best to crush it out by persecution and by force of arms—in other words, who were atrociously intolerant—were treated as Kuffâr, as infidels; and they deserved it.

Well, these Kuffâr among the pagan Arabs, after trying to destroy Islam by every means they could contrive, were vanquished by the Muslims. Then they, too, embraced Islam—not at the sword's point, as has been represented, but because brute force had been their only argument against it. When force had failed them and enthroned the Muslims, they believed. They became cringing converts.

It has been said that the Prophet (may God bless him !) showed intolerance towards the heathen Arabs because,

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after the fall of Mecca, he appointed a date after which no idolater would be allowed to make the pilgrimage. The idolaters themselves had made the pilgrimage for centuries with circumstances of idolatry and most degrading superstition. When Muhammad and his followers had desired to make it with them according to the practice of a higher faith, they were refused with insult. The idolaters had tried by every means to keep the Muslims out. When Muhammad, having grown too powerful to be despised, obliged them upon one occasion to concede the privilege, they did so with the worst grace in the world, and themselves retired from Mecca for the period which the Muslims spent in their observances. There is no more striking picture in all history than that of those idolaters watching with wondering and jealous eyes from the surrounding heights the servants of the One God in the house of idols, taking no notice of the idols which they thought the glory of the house. And but a few months later they were all Mohammedans. They had tried to wreck Islam by warfare, murder, persecution, treachery. And yet Muhammad, when he conquered Mecca, pardoned them. Never was such mercy witnessed in the world before. He destroyed the idols which defiled the House of God, saying:

“ Truth is come ; darkness departeth,”

and proclaimed a general amnesty, celebrating his victory by donations to the needy and by freeing many fugitive slaves. The Meccans were converted to a man ; but some, no doubt, still hankered after the amusements of their former state, the drunkenness, the gambling, the libertinage, and the unlawful gains.

To let idolaters come every year in crowds to Meccan territory would have been to countenance the creeping back of all that wickedness, to help on the return of darkness to the land.

“ If it had not been for God’s repelling some men by others,” says the Qur-ân, “ the world would have gone all to badness.”

So it is. If Muhammad had let tolerance extend to weakness, the land he saved would shortly have relapsed to evil. The worship of Allah in spirit and in truth is better than the cult of idols. A sober life is better than a drunken one. Purity is better than unbridled lust. Evil is not equal with good, and evil where it shows its head must be repressed, and sternly. That is the limit of religious tolerance fixed by the Prophet, who never persecuted any man, nor as a ruler treated any man unjustly. He decreed that after one year no idolaters would be allowed in Meccan territory. Within a few years there were no idolaters in all Arabia.

So much for the idolaters who actively opposed Islam. As

TOLERANCE

for the Jews and Christians and all those who worship the One God and look to the Day of Judgment—though their priests and rabbis have obscured the truth with vain imaginings, they are simply Muslims who have gone astray. Such of them as do good works, and are not persecutors, are counted on a par with Muslims. The Prophet extended the most perfect tolerance to Jews and Christians, and those religions have at all times been allowed in Muslim lands. Those Jews and Christians who attacked the Prophet or betrayed him, he opposed or punished as the case might be; but that did not impair his toleration of their faith, nor did the subsequent refusal of the Christian Powers to help him in his contest with the Powers of Darkness in the world. He had expected them to help him in his war on superstition. He wished to come to understanding, and to live on friendly terms with them. But they refused. They chose to treat him as an infidel; they murdered his ambassador, and threatened him with extermination. From that refusal came the endless wars between Islam and Christendom, the hostile feeling on both sides down to our own day. But the Prophet and the early Muslims, though assailed on all hands, and threatened with destruction, never wavered from religious tolerance. In their wars against the Christians they respected churches, monasteries, and religious persons, and never forced the conquered folk to change their faith. And this has been the law of El Islam throughout the centuries, though Muslims have occasionally fallen short of it. It is natural that Muslims, thus attacked at first, and afterwards continually harassed by fanatics whose object of attack was their religion, should, after centuries, have grown fanatical themselves and attacked the religion of their enemies, forgetting the Quranic precepts; should sometimes have imitated their assailants in barbarity. Natural it is, indeed, but no less wrong.

The law of the Qur-án is just retaliation, not excess of any kind. The pagan Arabs who opposed the holy Prophet committed every kind of barbarity, yet never do we find the Prophet imitating them. The Muslims who, at divers times down to the present, have imitated their opponents in barbarity have done a great wrong to the Faith. For now, when men are looking for a faith of tolerance and intellectual freedom, a faith which they can reconcile with modern notions of enlightenment, they turn from El Islam, the only faith which could content them, because they hear that Muslims are fanatical. They do not know, of course, what made those Muslims so; they do not hear the other side of the whole question. We know that Muslims, ignorant and proud, have been cunningly and cruelly provoked for a political purpose, that they have been treacherously attacked and massacred times

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and again. But that does not improve the matter in the least. When put to that great test, through which the Prophet and the early Muslims passed triumphant, they failed. They fell away. They were as bad as their assailants, through ignorance of the true teaching of their Faith.

Is it not a shame to every Muslim, and particularly every Muslim blessed by God with wealth, that any of our brethren should be uninstructed in the Faith? Is it not a shame that Muslims should have fallen behind Christians—not in the enlightenment of their religion—that can never be—but in education, and even in this matter of religious tolerance; for the civil law of England is to-day more Islamic in its equal justice to all creeds and races than is the practice of old-fashioned Muslims. It is a fact to which we must awaken, for it accounts for much. It is a triumph of Islam, in which we modern Muslims have no share, although the message of the Prophet is its origin.

I hope that nobody will think from my remarks to-day that I think all religions equally desirable, or that I should choose my friends indifferently from them all, or that I would have a Muslim give up anything of his religious practice, or assimilate himself in any way to other people. No, it is more important than ever that we should be strict in our observances, when our influence is only of example. We claim the right of free development on Muslim lines, and that involves respect for the same right in others, strict justice in our dealings with all kinds of men, and hearty recognition of the good in others. If we so develop and aid our brethren to develop by true Muslim education upon modern lines, in a world at last won over to religious tolerance, we shall soon, please God, attain our end, which is not our own exaltation—God forbid!—nor the conquest of any territory, but the recognition by mankind of the plain truth that Allah is Lord of Heaven and of Earth, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

THE MAULUD-UN-NABI SAL'AM

THROUGH the exertions of the Central Islamic Society the celebration of the birthday of the HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (peace and victory be for him and his followers!) has become an annual festival in the capital of the British Isles as it has been for years and generations in Muslim lands. Not only Muslims of the great city, but all Londoners, should be proud of it—they should be proud that the birthday of the Greatest Benefactor of Humanity and of the greatest and most successful democratic and socialist Teacher the world has ever known is celebrated year after year in London. They will be the gainers if these annual celebrations induce them to study more deeply and impartially the life and mission of the great Master—the man who refused to make wonder-working the means of establishing the truth and honesty of his mission, who stopped his own deification and proclaimed to all that he was a man like other men, yet the man who did perform the grandest miracle ever performed of changing the very instinct of the people among whom he was born and of leaving permanently bold impressions of his teachings for the good and betterment of mankind in a way that no individual or group of individuals, not excluding those whom credulous people honour as gods or sons of God, ever did before him or after him.

The people of London are in need of being taught to be sober. Alcohol is one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, enemies of the people of the British Isles. They should go to Muhammad, who is the only teacher who succeeded in saving a great mass of mankind from the curse of alcoholism. He is the only teacher who laid down social laws of such practical beneficence as to save people from those dangerous diseases which have reached to a catastrophic stage in these islands. He is the only teacher who established real democracy and socialism, obliterating the demarcations and distinctions of colour, race, country, etc., in brotherly dealings of man with man.

These birthday celebrations in themselves demonstrate the lasting success of Muhammad's teachings.

Men and women of different countries, races, languages, colours, creeds meet together, in these celebrations, with fraternal affection. All are welcomed with an open heart.

Unfortunately there are certain ill-wishers of, to them, the "Antagonistic Faith," and of humanity at large, who are adopting means to drive a wedge in the unique solidarity and democracy of Islam and thus attack its very foundation. They are engaged at a great crisis in the affairs of the world in insidious intrigues of creating racial rivalries among

Muslims in the hope of weakening the power of Islam. May the celebrations of the birth of the great Prophet discourage them in their work of mischief, and warn the Muslims of Arabia, Turkey, Persia, Egypt, etc., against the evil of ignoring the teachings of the Great Master and of allowing the solidarity of Islam to be shattered for selfish ends.

As the Honble. Mr. Basu said, the new order of this world should be based upon greater harmony between races and races. Even non-Muslims should learn the universal and democratic teachings of Muhammad.

This celebration of the Holy Prophet's birth was as great a success as the preceding ones. Because of the nearness of the Christmas festivities and the election excitement it was found difficult to arrange the festival. Hotels like Claridge's and Ritz had no room, and the Society is thankful to Miss Beck and Mr. Sen for lending the spacious rooms at 21, Cromwell Road. Mr. Justice Ameer Ali, Lord Sinha, Major-General Dickson, Honble. Mr. B. Basu, Madame Ispahani, Miss Sadr and other Muslims, Christians, Jews, Parsis, Hindus—ladies and gentlemen representing almost all religions, colours, countries, and races—mixed freely and affably with one another without ceremony or formality. All felt that they were brothers and sisters meeting with each other. Mr. Arthur Field, the zealous secretary of the Anglo-Ottoman Society, was unavoidably absent, but sent a very encouraging and sympathetic telegram. Muslims from Egypt, Sudan, and Persia joined their Indian brothers in thanking Mr. Basu for his speech. The function began at 3 p.m., and it was after 6 p.m. when the gathering broke up to meet INSHA ALLAH next year. (AL QIDWAL.)

THE OPENING SPEECH OF MR. M. H. ISPAHANI.

We meet here to-day to celebrate the birthday of the Holy Prophet of Islam, who was born more than thirteen centuries ago in the most desolate part of Arabia, namely, Mecca.

Of the details of his life and mission on earth our esteemed friend Mr. Dudley Wright will tell us more than I am privileged to say to-night. On this auspicious occasion I cannot, however, help reading to you portions of a paper read by me fifteen years ago as President of the Muslim Literary Society of Madras. The extracts are translations of the words of the Holy Prophet himself.

The first quotation is from the speech he delivered on the occasion of his triumphal entry into Mecca, after the 360 idols that were placed in that house which was built by Abraham and his son for the worship of one God had been demolished by the Prophet's cousin, Ali, under his

immediate direction. Muhammad, leaning against the wall of the Kaaba, addressed the assembled inhabitants of Mecca, who had persecuted and tortured his followers and had all but succeeded in killing him, in the following words:—

“Descendants of the Koreish, how do you think I should act towards you?” They replied: “With kindness and pity, gracious brother and nephew, who are now able to do with us as you wish.” At these words tears came down the eyes of the Prophet, and he said: “I shall speak to you as Joseph spake unto his brothers. I shall not reproach you to-day; God will forgive and wipe off your sins. He is the most merciful and compassionate.” Then again he said: “You were bad neighbours to your Prophet. You disbelieved him and persecuted him until he fled from you. Not satisfied with this, you followed him to Medina and fought with him. Notwithstanding all this, he has forgiven you, and YOU ARE FREE.”

From that day the people of Mecca got the title of “Free people.”

The Prophet then delivered a long sermon which begins as follows:—

“Ye people! let him that is present tell it unto him that is absent. God in His mercy has, by the glory of Islam, ejected from you the pride in your fathers and in your clans which has come to you as a relic of idolatry. Ye people! you are descended from Adam, and Adam was made of clay. But the best of you in the eyes of God and the dearest of you to Him are those who are the most righteous and the most obedient unto Him. All the blood-feuds of former times have been to-day wiped off under my feet until the Day of Judgment.”

The second occasion was when the people of Medina who had helped him in defending the new faith grew discontented at his giving a larger share of the spoils of war to the more recent converts to Islam, i.e. the Meccans. He ordered a special tent to be put up and the Ansar collected therein. He then addressed them as follows:—

“Ye Ansar! I have learnt the discourse you hold amongst yourselves. When I came amongst you, you were wandering in darkness, and the Lord gave you the right direction; you were suffering, and He made you happy; you were at enmity amongst yourselves, and He filled your hearts with brotherly love and concord. Was it not so, tell me?” “Indeed, it is even as thou sayest,” was the reply; “to the Lord and his Prophet belong benevolence and grace.” “Nay, by the Lord,” continued the Prophet; “but you might have answered and answered truly, for I would have testified to its truth myself—‘Thou camest to us rejected as an impostor, and we believed in thee; thou camest as a helpless fugitive, and we assisted thee; poor and an outcast,

and we gave thee an asylum; comfortless, and we solaced thee.'"

When the Prophet came to these words the Medinites supplicated him to desist, and began to cry until the tears ran down upon their beards. Then he explained that the reason of his lavishing worldly goods on the fresh converts of the Koreish was to conciliate them and in a measure make them forget their late bereavements. Then again he continued:—

"Ye Ansar! why disturb your hearts because of the things of this life? Are ye not satisfied that others should obtain the flocks and the camels, while ye go back unto your homes with me in your midst? By Him who holds my life in His hands, I shall never abandon you. If all mankind went one way, and the Ansar another, verily I would join the Ansar. The Lord be favourable unto them, and bless them, and their children, and their children's children."

The Ansar all cried with one voice, "Yea, Prophet of God, we are well satisfied with our share," and retired happy and contented.

The third occasion was when he was to make his last farewell to his followers on his last pilgrimage to Mecca on the Mount of Arafat, which I would call "Muhammad's Sermon on the Mount." He said:—

"Your lives and property are sacred and inviolable amongst one another until ye appear before the Lord, and remember ye shall have to appear before your Lord, who shall demand from you an account of all your actions. Ye people! ye have rights over your wives, and your wives have rights over you. Treat your wives with kindness. Verily you have taken them on the security of God, and have made their persons lawful unto you by the words of God. And your slaves! see that ye feed them with such food as ye eat yourselves, and clothe them with the stuff ye wear; and if they commit a fault which ye are not inclined to forgive, then part from them, for they are the servants of the Lord, and are not to be harshly treated.

"Ye people! listen to my words and understand the same. Know that all Muslims are brothers unto one another. Ye are one brotherhood. Nothing which belongs to another is lawful unto his brother, unless freely given out of goodwill. Guard yourself from committing injustice.

"Let him that is present tell him that is absent. Haply he that shall be told may remember better than he who hath heard." Towards the conclusion of the sermon the Prophet exclaimed: "O Lord! I have delivered my message and accomplished my work." The assembled hosts below with one voice cried: "Yea, verily thou hast."

"O Lord! I beseech Thee bear Thou witness unto it."

This Sermon on the Mount appeals by its practicality and strong common sense to higher minds, and is also adapted to the capacity and demands of inferior natures which require positive and comprehensible directions for moral guidance.

I wish I had time to quote the original words in Arabic, which are much more soul-stirring than any translations. It is for this reason that I have always said to my young Indian friends that a good knowledge of Arabic would not only make them better linguists and logicians, but would enable them to appreciate the words of the great Master, whom they have the privilege of following, to a much higher extent than they are at present able through inadequate translations.

To my Christian friends I would say how much more appealing the words of Jesus Christ would be to them were it possible for them to have got the text of his beautiful words in the original Hebraic. The Muslims have this privilege, and it is for them to avail themselves of this opportunity which they have in common with their Jewish brethren, to whom the words of Moses have come down in the original.

I would draw the special attention of those who misrepresent Islam with sinister motives to those parts of the Sermon on the Mount of our Holy Prophet, whom the best of us always try to follow, which refer to the treatment by Muslims of the fair sex and of those who have to serve them—servants, slaves, labourers, or factory workers. Could anybody give greater rights to women and slaves than the Holy Prophet did? Can anybody in this twentieth century of the Christian era improve upon the most benevolent instructions given by the Prophet over thirteen centuries ago in the wilderness of Arabia in respect of women and servants?

MR. SADIQUE DUDLEY WRIGHT'S LECTURE.

The story of Muhammad is one of the most interesting, if not, indeed, the most interesting and fascinating of all biographies. As a religious reformer he came into the world at a time peculiarly ripe for instituting and prosecuting successfully such radical and blessed reforms as he undertook, and the disinterestedness of his mission is now beginning to be recognized. Time was when his maligners and misrepresenters dominated religious thought and opinion; but during the last two or three decades a more liberal and fair-minded spirit has prevailed among men, and slowly but surely the world at large is beginning to judge Muhammad in the right perspective, and the nobility of his character, the purity of his aims, and the sincerity of the mission he

undertook at divine command are being generally acknowledged and appreciated.

Within the memory of many Muhammad has been regarded only as a monster, a sort of diabolic warrior, whose followers must needs be, as they claimed he was, the very incarnation of cruelty. Now men acknowledge that he himself was the victim of ruthless persecution, and that the warfare in which he was forced to engage was a warfare of defence and not of aggression ; that he was imbued with the single desire of promoting the glory of the Living God, that he was a mighty leader for good, a benefactor not only of his own family, tribe, and nation, but of the human race, and, perhaps, the most remarkable human character the world has ever known. Especially did he emphasize the fact that, though a prophet, a title which he could rightly claim, yet he was human. He claimed no power to perform miracles, such as to make people believe in his mission by stunning their reason ; misguided enthusiasts have ascribed such power to him, but he, like other famous men, has suffered as much from friend as from foe, and over and over again he reminded his hearers that he was but a man. But though a man, he was a wonderful man, a man with a magnificent trust in God ; that, indeed, was his principal characteristic. He was a mighty spirit, a man of great spiritual force and power, the outcome of his frequent communion with the Eternal. His success, whether regarded from the spiritual or the material point of view, was complete. He succeeded in uniting the warring tribes of Arabia into a powerful nation, while his teachings, or, rather, the teachings of the Most High revealed to and through him, inspired the Arabs, and afterwards other nations, to lead a purer and holier life ; and his daring enthusiasm has been an incentive to noble and courageous deeds wherever his name has become honoured and revered. Always, even in the presence of the greatest danger, in the time of the direst adversity, he retained his confidence in God and the sense of His support. He realized that he had a mission, a divine mission, to perform ; that it was for the sake of Allah, to spread His truth among the nations, that he was forced to leave home and kindred ; to spread the knowledge of the Unity of God among the idolaters that he was called upon to suffer persecution.

The fatherless boy passed an uneventful youth and early manhood, and for the first forty years of his life he was an ordinary citizen of Arabia, though constantly retiring into a cave for the purposes of prayer, meditation, and fasting. His mode of life was an austere one, and never, at any period of his life, even when the means were within his reach, did he enrich himself as the outcome of his mission. It was while he was in one of those retreats which became

more frequent as the years rolled on, that there came the divine call, the heavenly message : " Arise, Muhammad, of a truth thou art the prophet of God : arise, preach, and magnify the Lord." No man, unsupported by the consciousness and firm conviction that his mission was a divine one, in the sense of being of divine origin and inspiration, could have stood his ground so firmly, so nobly, and so valiantly as did Muhammad, the prophet of God. Never did he entertain thoughts of revenge against his enemies. When the idolaters drove him forth from Mecca, when he preached there against idolatry, he betook himself to prayer :

" O Lord, I make my complaint to Thee. Out of my feebleness and the vanity of my wishes I am insignificant in the sight of men ; O Thou Most Merciful ! Lord of the weak, Thou art my Lord. Forsake me not. Leave me not a prey to strangers, nor to my enemies. If Thou art not offended, I am safe. I seek refuge in the light of Thy countenance, by which all darkness is dispelled and peace cometh in the near and hereafter. Solve Thou my difficulties as it pleaseth Thee. Guide them in the right path, for they do not know what they do."

Many long weary years were spent in the effort to win disciples : at the end of four years he could count upon only four adherents. It was no arm-chair religious creed that he taught, but a life of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving ; a creed, which though the simplest on record, nevertheless entered into all the details of the daily life, into the thoughts and actions of practical duties. And the result ? Persecutions and misrepresentations innumerable : the common fate of all true religious reformers, but the fate of Muhammad in an especial measure, both as regards number and severity. But there was another result, and that was that wherever his creed, the creed enunciated by and through him, was taught and adopted, men and nations were transformed from a rabble of superstitious slaves into brave God-fearing men. Drunkenness and vice disappeared ; immorality disappeared, and men who had gained a livelihood by murder and rapine became sober, God-fearing citizens. The creed

of Muhammad was the simplest but most far-reaching that can be imagined. It may be summarized in two words: Faith and Works. Faith, the most absolute in God, resulting in complete, implicit obedience to Allah, and submission to the Divine Will, as finds expression in the very name of the faith—Islam. Wherever his religion is adopted there is given the death-blow to priestcraft and materialism. Islam has no sacrifices in the sense of substitutionary atonement for sin; it has no pet theories of apostolic succession, of ordination of human beings with powers of absolution, and it is more opposed to idolatry than Christianity itself. It will not have the semblance of anything that can come between the soul and Allah. It believes in sacrifice, but in the sacrifice of the individual subordinating every desire and every impulse to the will of God.

Thirteen hundred years have passed since the prophet Muhammad—the last and greatest of all the prophets—delivered his message, but the message which he delivered, and which is now being delivered, brings consolation, joy, and inspiration to one-third of the human race. The magnetism of his personality has endured from generation to generation; the faith which he taught has lost none of its power; but in the temples erected for the worship of the True and Living God by his followers, you will find no bust of that revered prophet, no statue erected to his honour, no pictorial representation of the man who laboured so diligently, faithfully, and persistently, in season and out of season, to bring men to the worship, the true worship, of Allah.

Shall we deny Muhammad his true place in history? Does he not deserve our gratitude, the gratitude of all mankind? We, as followers of the faith which that prophet declared, merely ask that his life and his work shall be studied in a distinterested and unprejudiced manner, disinterested in the sense of non-bias: real interest will follow as surely as the night the day. Study the transformation which has come over the habits and manners of people and nations which, before the light of the Gospel of Allah was revealed to them by the followers of the Prophet,

were only to be classed among the savage races of the earth.

When the crowds assembled outside the dwelling of Muhammad on the news of his death becoming known there were loud cries and lamentations. "He is not dead," cried Omar, "he has only swooned." Drawing his sword he threatened with violence any one who dared to say that the Prophet was dead. Then the stern voice of Abu Bekr was heard above the tumult, and, quoting the words of the Qur-án: "Do ye worship Muhammad? Then know that he, indeed, is dead, but the God of Muhammad liveth and can never die!" he quieted the multitude. So-to-day, we who believe in the divinity of his message, but not in the deification of the messenger, have assembled to pay our tribute of esteem, devotion, and reverence, and once again to proclaim our belief: *La Ilaha ill Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah.*

THE HONBLE. MR. BUPENDRANATH BASU'S SPEECH.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I am glad that I have been given an opportunity to pay my humble tribute to the value of the life and work of the Holy Prophet of Islam, whose birthday we have come here to celebrate. I being an Indian and a countryman of a large and important section of the population who are Muslims, I think, although a Hindu by descent and culture, I can realize in some measure the wonderful effect on the minds of the followers of Islam left by the Holy Prophet's teaching and his own life.

In my judgment nine-tenths of the ills of the human race might be ascribed to the assumed and supposed superiority of one class over another, of one man over another, and of one nation over another. The evils which this artificial inequality might produce were rampant at the time of the Holy Prophet, but by dint of personal example under the healthful spirit of the teachings of his faith he created a nation in which the humblest dusky son of Africa stood on a level of absolute equality with the proudest chieftain of an Arabian clan. But that was not the end

of it. This spirit of genuine democracy, tolerance, and equality which the Prophet preached and practised spread to the very ends of the earth. That is why in India to-day, thirteen hundred years after the advent of that holy man, the commonest sweeper can claim undisputed equality with one of noble descent within the pale of Islam.

I have been a student of religions, and I could not find the same spirit of equality in any other religion. Among the Hindus we have a rigid caste system. I am not going to enter into the controversy whether this caste system was a feature of Hindu religion at the time of its purity or not; the present-day facts are that the system exists and Hindus believe that the people of certain caste were born from the head of the Creator, others from his hands, and others from his feet, and so forth. Under those religions which can claim sisterhood with Islam we find that the Jewish people consider the Israelites to be the chosen people of God. As regards Christianity, we find in India that a particular terminology has been coined by the Christian clergymen to distinguish those persons of the country who have adopted Christianity from their European brothers. They are called "Native Christians," and are looked at with contempt by their more lucky brothers who were born in Europe.

Another blessing of Islam is that it has done away with priesthood. All the ceremonies of the religion can be performed by any Muslim.

There is one more unique and distinguishing teaching of the Prophet of Islam, and that I consider is the noblest. Islam has opened the door of salvation for all those who do good deeds. It matters not whether we turn to the East or the West when we pray to our Creator. It is our deeds and motives that count.¹

¹ The Hon'ble. Mr. Basu probably referred to the following verses of the Holy Qu-rán :—

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East or the West, but righteousness is this, that one should believe in Allah, in the last day, in the angels and the Book and the Prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to near of kin and the orphans and

In the great undertaking which confronts the world to-day let every philanthropist and genuine well-wisher of humanity reflect on the meaning of these great achievements of Muhammad and try to apply the same spirit in the order that is coming. It need not be said that any little infusion of the spirit of Islamic democracy and equality would make the future entirely different from the past.

SAIYID HAIDAR RIZA'S SPEECH.

The number of Muslims is as follows : Asia, 142 millions ; Europe, 4 millions ; Africa, 51 millions ; North America, 15,000 ; South America, 10,000 ; Oceania, 25 millions ; total, 222 millions. As compared with other religions, this total is 51 millions less than the Roman Catholics, 50 millions more than the Protestants, 12 millions more than the Hindus, and 84 millions more than the Buddhists. The total number of Muslims is roughly about one-eighth of the whole of the human race. Personally it is a great surprise to me that the number is not considerably more.¹

The best way to appreciate the life and work of Muhammad would be to understand the nature of his extraordinary mission. We do not look upon Muhammad as God or the son of God, or any other relation of God. In the eyes of Islam it is high treason against the sanctity and majesty of God to attribute any kind of relationship to Him. He is Absolute, Supreme, One and independent of any connection or tie. Muhammad was only a *man*, although the needy and the wayfarer and those who ask, and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the alms and the performers of their promises when they make a promise and be patient in distress and affliction and in times of danger. These are they who are true to themselves and these are they who are righteous " (ch. ii., v. 177).

" Surely those who Believe (Muslims) and those who are Jews, and the Christians and the Sabians, who ever believes in Allah and the last day, and does good deeds, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them nor shall they grieve " (ch. ii., v. 62).

¹ Mr. Riza has taken his numbers from prejudiced sources. Christian clergymen always give reduced numbers of Muslims, but Draper and others have declared the Muslim population of the world to be one-third of its total population, and it is INCREASING year by year.—M. H. K.

he was the best man that has ever lived. The Holy Qur-án is very explicit about it. *Va ma Muhammad illa rasul*, "What is Muhammad but a prophet?" Muslims do not worship Muhammad. Christians worship Christ as the son of God; Buddhists look upon Buddha as God; Hindus worship men and call them gods; Muslims worship God. Muslims are wrongly called Muhammadans: they ought to be called "God's people," because they worship no other person or being but the One, Supreme, Loving Master.

I must tell you what the theory of the Holy Qur-án is. The Qur-án was not written by Muhammad; it was not conceived by him; he did not compose it. The Qur-án is the direct word of God. Muhammad received the Qur-án from God, and according to the order of God delivered it to the peoples. The teachings that go under the name of Muhammad must be divided into two classes: (1) What Muhammad himself said or taught: *Hadis*, tradition—which were his own words and actions; and (2) the Word of God—the Qur-án—which the whole world must obey for the sake of its own salvation. This is the distinctive feature of the Qur-án: in the Qur-án the speaker is God Himself: He is speaking directly to His creatures. I have made it my business to study all religions. I have read portions of the writings of Confucius, the Vedas, the Zenda Vesta, the sayings of Buddha, and the Bible, and I say that there is *no* other book which lays claim to being the word of God like the Qur-án. Read the Bible from Genesis to the Revelation, and there is not one word to suggest that the Bible or any part of it is the word of God.

The Bible was written by men who were inspired. Prophets before Muhammad were men who were divinely inspired. It seems that through preceding prophets God was preparing His people to receive His message, and when He, in His divine wisdom, thought that the people were ready, He sent Muhammad, and through Muhammad God spoke *direct* to His people. This is clearly shown by the fact that no prophet, no religious teacher, had ever half as many followers in his lifetime as Muhammad had.

Islam is the youngest of the world-religions. Christ before he left this world said that there was some one else to come—the Paraclete of St. John. Christ knew that the work of God was not completed. Muhammad was the promised Paraclete, and he knew that through him God had finally delivered His message to His people. The Qur-án says that the work of God was completed in it, and the most convincing proof of Islam is that although over 1,300 years have passed since Islam was revealed, there has been no world-religion brought forward since.

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND HIS MISSION

By AL QIDWAI

MUHAMMAD was born in Mecca 570 years after Jesus. In his fortieth year he received his commission from God to be a Warner, a Teacher, a Prophet to His children who had lapsed into idolatry and moral degradation everywhere in the world. It was the darkest time in the history of the world when Muhammad brought the torch. That torch proved to be more brilliant than the sun. It illumined the very soul of man. There has been no man in the world who has influenced it in so many ways as did Muhammad. Muhammad was himself a miracle. We call him a man, because he himself taught us to call him a man. Otherwise there is no doubt that he accomplished what no mortal could accomplish. He had something in him which was not of this earth. If he was a man, then we should all be proud that a man can raise himself to that stage when he does not remain far distant from God. It is only the study of Muhammad's life-work that teaches man how he can get nearer to godhead. Other saintly men have reached near to God in their characters, but few have been able to assimilate to themselves so many attributes of God as did Muhammad, and none have been able to infuse so generally in others that spirit which enables man to assimilate the attributes of God.

Muhammad revolutionized humanity itself. He changed

the very conceptions of mankind as regards religion, morality, sociology, and even politics.

Muhammad laid down the principle that all religions have come from God. That there was no nation to whom God's messengers were not sent. That a true believer should make no distinction between those messengers, believing in some and not in others. This was a wonderful revolution in the religious conceptions of man. It did away with all narrow-mindedness in religion. Another revolution in the religious conception was that Muhammad made it clear that religiousness or righteousness did not consist solely in offering your prayers this way or that way, or in adopting this ritual or that ritual, but by worship of God was meant to fathom the mysteries of the universe, to find out the laws of Nature and to use that knowledge for the good of the creatures of God and for His glorification.

As to ethics and morality, Muhammad taught that mere idealism did not count much. Actions must correspond to ideals. Man should not only think and philosophize nobly, but should also act nobly. He should be a useful citizen of the world, a helpful member of the society, a working unit in the great machinery. Self-elevation was not the only duty assigned by the Creator to man. There was also the duty of uplifting other fellow creatures. Muhammad himself never preached what he could not practise. He declared it to be the Divine rule that no soul is burdened with what it cannot bear. Self-immolation was not wanted of man, although self-abnegation and even self-sacrifice were. For individuals themselves it was the best life that was exemplified by the great Buddha, but for the human race, for the human society, that life was not only not good, but actually harmful. Muhammad's moral teachings were not meant to form but the golden pages of some book, but they were meant to be translated into action in our daily, rather hourly, life. Man was taught, not only by the word of mouth, but by the example of the Prophet himself, how he should live from morning to evening, and from evening to morning, how he should behave towards his wife, children, neighbour, guest, friend, foe, towards the rich

and the poor, the good and the bad, in peace and in war, towards even the birds and animals. He was even told that he should not cut green trees, should not tire out his riding beasts.

In social matters Muhammad was the very first practical socialist who annihilated all class distinctions, all racial differences, all special rights and privileges. He was the first religious teacher to teach respect for women. He taught to help all the weaker or troubled sections of society—to be good to children, women, orphans, old people, wayfarers, those who are homeless, those who labour and sweat. The most fitting title given to Muhammad by God Himself was RAHMATUL-LILALAMIN—the Mercy for the worlds. The social reforms of Muhammad alone could have given him the position of the greatest benefactor of humanity. But his reforms were extended to all the aspects of human life.

His political reforms were as marvellous as any other. These days, when the leading statesmen of the whole world are going to sit round a table to settle the political affairs of the world, it should not be amiss to give out some political principles laid down by the greatest statesman—Muhammad.

The first principle laid down by him was that mere local patriotism—that is, love of the country in which one lives—is not quite worthy of man. Man's patriotism should be universal. He should consider himself to be the citizen of the world. "I am for my country, whether it be in the right or wrong," was not a very grand principle. A man should feel for his brother man, even if the latter lived in a country poles apart from his. If a wrong were done to a man living in one country, the other man living in a different country should consider it his duty to help in setting it right. As far as that nation was concerned which Muhammad had produced as a model, the local patriotism was actually replaced by the universal patriotism. He who knew the watchword—*La ilaha illa Allah Muhammad rasul Allah*—could go from north to south, and from east to west, and would be received in every place or country where Muslims lived as a brother with all the rights, all the privileges enjoyed by the local inhabitants themselves. Up-

till to-day the sovereign of the Muslim Empire and the Khalifa (Vicegerent) of Muhammad receives his brother from any part of the world with open arms.

The other principle was that the whole humanity formed one nation—one brotherhood. If Muhammad were alive to-day he would have formed a League of Humanity, not a League of Nations. From his standpoint the idea of a League of Nations would have been a low ideal. The European statesmen of to-day consider it to be too noble. Some go to the length of calling it simply idealism. They have such narrow views that it is difficult to expect from them even a really beneficial and universal League of Nations. Unlike Muhammad, they come down to the extent of making differences of colour and race. There is no doubt that the League of Nations will look at the Poles and the Czecho-Slovaks with a different eye from the Indians. Indians are to-day the oldest nation in the world. Their civilization and culture is the oldest. Even in modern learning they have proved themselves to be superior to their teachers. They have lived for 150 years under the tutelage or guardianship of a nation which claims to be democratic and which is proud of her "Mother of Parliaments," while the Poles have lived under destructive autocratism. Yet because the Poles are natives of Europe they are sure to get more consideration and privileges than the Indians. This is the result of men not having liberal views in respect of nationalism. For these reasons Muhammad extended the idea of nationalism as he did that of patriotism. The model nation he formed was universal. There was no distinction of European or Asiatic in that. There was no difference between a Turk and an Arab, all the Muslims of the world formed one nation. Muhammad made numerous other political reforms. He completely socialized the state. That state was, like his nation, a model. On that model the whole world could be made into a socialist state.

The world needs Muhammad's models to-day more than ever it did before.

(1) As to the first, it can safely be said that it was a lie. What Christ claimed to be was nothing more nor less than what Muhammad, an admitted monotheist, later on claimed to be. As the well-known Islamic formula is "There is no Deity but Allah, and Muhammad is one sent by Allah," so Christ also gave his formula in these words: "This is life eternal; that they might know the Only True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3). And again in the same Gospel we find these words of Christ: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth in Him that sent me hath everlasting life."

Jesus laid stress upon the Unity of God, and asked the people to love Him most whole-heartedly. "The Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." He was far from claiming any equality with God or any partnership in Godhead. He said repeatedly that the will and command of God should be done. He said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. vii. 21).

The formula of Christ as to the worship of One God only was the same as that of his predecessor Moses or his successor Muhammad.

The Old Testament says: "Thou shalt love no other gods before me."

The New Testament says: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. vii. 10).

The Last Testament (Holy Qur-án) says in the very opening chapter—

Iyaku na'budo va iyaka nastáin.

"Thee do we worship, and to Thee do we go for help and strength," and again, "Say, God is One. He is All-powerful. He begetteth not, and has not been begotten, and there is nothing like unto Him."

Christians themselves daily repeat the prayer: "Our Father which art in heaven . . . give us this day our daily bread," and yet they believe, as did the enemies of Christ assert, to take his life, that Christ particularized himself to be the Son of God, or that Christ was called the only begotten Son of God. Christ never called himself that.

(2) As to the second charge, far from claiming territorial kingship, Jesus Christ himself admitted:—

"Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. viii. 20).

What Christ meant was that he had come to expose the hypocrisy and the impiety of the Jewish priests, and by cleansing the Israelites of their impure life he wanted to make them fit for the kingdom of heaven. If they accepted him as a king (in the spiritual sense), he would lead them to the kingdom of heaven.

(3) As regards the third charge, Christ many a time said, "Of myself I can do nothing" (John v. 5, 19, 30, and viii. 28).

It is a great pity that Western people have misunderstood Christ just as much, although in a different way altogether, as the Jewish priests of his own days.

To Muslims and to other Orientals generally the preaching of Christ is very clear. Buddha before him had taught the same principles. Buddha had left his kingdom, his wife, and relations, and devoted himself to self-elevation and purification. Christ was very much like Buddha. Only Buddha was more practical for himself. The love of God was not acquired by Jesus. It was born in him. He forgot himself in the love of God. The East has produced scores of his prototypes, though he must be acknowledged to be superior to all of them. In our days we have seen people in the East, like Haji Waris Ali Shah of Déva, who lived exactly the life Christ lived. The life of absorption in the love of God, the life of indifference towards and forgetfulness of their own person—their own existence—the life of celibacy and detachment from the world—the life of high and godly morals, of kindness to the poor and to the rich, men and women, sinners and pious, improving the morals of the people for their good and for the good of humanity, fighting against gross materialism through their own example of pure spirituality, teaching people that happiness and advancement do not consist only in material progress and inventions, that civilization does not depend upon securing a life of luxuries and enjoyments, and demonstrating to the people at large what human beings can do if they devote themselves wholly to the love of God. They, like Christ, have performed wonders—not assertively, not ostentatiously, but unconsciously, simply by the power they possessed from God through their spiritual nearness to Him. The power they thus possessed was brought into play when excited by sympathy or pity for anybody. They had developed their spirituality as people develop their memory, eloquence, or imaginative faculties. Through spiritual purification and development they had reached nearer God. What they did was the work of God.

A Persian poet says :—

Mardané Khuda Khuda na bashand
Laikin zi Khuda juda na bashand.

Godly men are not God,
But they are not separate from God.

Muhammad had reported from God :—

La yazalo abdiyalmomino yataqarrabo illa binnawafilé hatta ahabbaho fa iza ahbabtoho kunto sam'ahollazi yasmao bihé va basarahollazi yabsoro biké va yadahollaté yabtesho biha va lisanahollati yantigo biha va rijlahollati yamshi biha.

That truly believing servant of Mine who approaches near Me by his devotion becomes immortal, and then I make him My beloved. When I make him My beloved I become his ears by which he hears—his eyes by which he sees—his hands by which he touches—his tongue by which he speaks—and his feet by which he walks.

God has said in the Holy Qur-án :—

Wa nahno agrabo elaike minkum va lakin la tubsirun.

“And we are nearer to him than you, but you do not see.”

Mansoor Hallaj, a great Muslim saint, who has left a very learned volume of poetry in Arabic, lost his life for the same reason and in the same way as Jesus is said to have lost his. Mansoor cried out in a fit of ecstasy : “*Anal Haq*,” “I am the Truth,” and Muslim theologians took it to be blasphemy, and condemned Mansoor to death just as Jesus was condemned to death by the Jewish priests. As to the miracles of healing or curing lepers and casting off devils, all these are everyday occurrences in the East. Many wonders of the kind have been attributed to Muslim saints. Sceptics rather feel shy to believe in them, nowadays, and find out some physical cause of those miracles or wonders.

But people of the same intelligence and class who worshipped Jesus when such miracles were performed by him, bow down to-day also to these Muslim wonderworkers. Muslim masses, however low in intelligence they may be, never worship any but God. Many Muslim saints are attributed to have performed all those miracles which are attributed to Jesus, and which have earned for him the position of “The only begotten son of God” and a partner in the Godhead. Not only in their life but even when dead they are supposed to be performing the same miracles. I would advise all Christians who believe in the deity of Christ because he performed wonders to read the life of Muslim saints and to visit their shrines. In the district of Bahraich there is the tomb of a saint named Syed Salar Masood Ghazi, where thousands of people—mostly Hindus—go with flags every year, and those who have leprosy have a bath in a pool there, and are supposed to get cured—at least one each year. Physicians might find some medical proper-

ties in the water, but the masses believe it to be a miracle of the saint.

In my own district—Bara Banki, not many miles from my own home—there is a place called Bansa, where there is the tomb of a great saint named Shah Abdul Razzaq. He was an ordinary soldier, but is said to have been gifted with extraordinary powers. And he who goes to his tomb to-day and sees all that goes on there can have no doubt that he must have been a wonderful man. Every year people flock there. His "urs" is performed on every fourth of the Arabic month of Shawwal, when he died. Many people who are supposed to have been taken possession of by devils are taken there during the time of the fair. Many go even at other times and stay there till the devils have been cast off. A regular court, of course in the spirit, is supposed to be held. The devil is allowed to speak, through the mouth of the person possessed, in his own defence. Often the hearing is adjourned from day to day.

Ultimately the devil is cast. Very often he is supposed to be burnt. There is a tamarind-tree. The person possessed by the devil goes to it and knocks his or her forehead against the trunk of the tree with great force and shouts "I am burnt, burnt," and drops. When he comes to, he is a cured person.

It must be admitted that mostly unintelligent people get possessed by the devils and perform wonderful feats. But now and then fairly well educated persons are also taken to that shrine to get cured of their diseases or of the devils.

I have personally visited that place scores of times. When I go there I explain to myself all that I see in a thousand ways. I take the persons to be suffering from hysteria, delusions, this and that. Yet I confess I do not feel quite satisfied with these explanations, and I cry with Shakespeare, "There are many more things in heaven and earth, than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

For a student of psychic phenomena that shrine at Bansa is a good place, particularly when the patient is a respectable person whose *bona fides* cannot be doubted.

There are many other such wonderworking shrines, like Ajmer and Deva, etc. And this is the case in the twentieth century of the Christian era. Who can blame those poor unintelligent fishermen of Galilee who observed such performances from a "carpenter's son," whose birth had a mystery attached to it, if they began to consider him superhuman—the son of God, and so forth? But what was the value of their faith can be judged from the fact that even Christ's nearest and dearest disciples deserted him, betrayed him, denied him, and cursed him. The

wonders performed by Jesus amazed the unintelligent and superstitious fishermen, and they took him to be superhuman because of those miracles. They were perhaps justified in doing so. But there is no justification for his followers now in the twentieth century to take him to be superhuman. Those physical or spiritual reasons through which the wonders performed at Bansa or Bahraich, Deva or Ajmer, can be explained should be sufficient to explain the wonders performed by Christ also. Even the Bible itself gives almost all those miracles performed by Christ to have been performed by other prophets preceding him.

Christ's mysterious birth also cannot be claimed to be a proof of his deity. There are people to-day, and there were people in the days of Christ himself, according to whom there was no mystery about his birth. According to them he was the son of Joseph the carpenter, who traced his lineage to David, and Mary the "espoused wife" of Joseph.

Christ was not the only child born to Mary. She had other children from Joseph. However, even if the conception of Christ was immaculate, that could not be taken to be a proof of his being the only begotten son of God. There had been before him many such sons.

One person known in the Bible was Melchisedek (Hebrews vii. 3), who is said to have had no father and no mother. It seems to be a trick of nature to produce now and then such children, who are supposed to have required no male agency for conception. It seems to be a habit of nature to endow such children whose birth is enshrouded in a sort of mystery with greatness. Krishna and Buddha are also supposed to be God's begotten children. The Romans claimed their first ancestor to be born of a god. The Chinese kings were also said to have been born of God. In India there are many clans even to-day who claim to have a godly birth. The clans of Sombansi and Chanderbansi claim to have had the sun-god and the moon-god to be their ancestors, as their respective designations imply.

In short, even from a religious or spiritual point of view there is no argument in favour of Christ having a special claim to superhumanity or deity. His martyrdom must be taken as that of a man.

The fact whether Jesus was actually put on the cross and died on it, or was saved from that ignominy by the providence of God, as was the son of Abraham after the trial was over, is immaterial to gauge the significance of the martyrdom. It is enough that Christ manfully and boldly underwent the trial of martyrdom for a sublime cause.

Those who believe Christ to be a God or part of a God take away from him the glory of martyrdom. God cannot

suffer. God cannot die. If Christ was God he could not be elevated at all by his martyrdom. He would rather be degraded. No sane person would bow to a God who is overcome by his human enemies and is put on the cross, and nailed and pierced and killed. If God had meant to make all the people atheists and unbelievers in Him, then, and then only, could He have made such a manifestation of His impotence as was seen on the cross at Calvary.

The belief that he went up to heaven three days after the crucifixion would not take away anything from that degradation which he underwent, nor would it add anything to the glory of God. Even when he is said to have risen Christ was afraid of his enemies. A God to be afraid! Who will worship such a God? And why and what for was Christ afraid after having "risen"? Why did he not ascend to heaven defiantly? The truth is that Christians of to-day degrade Christ when they try to raise him to the pinnacle of Godhead.

They have degraded him even as a man.

The account of his crucifixion as given in the New Testament degrades him. It does complete injustice to that wonderful man. The account is not only inconsistent, but very damaging to the character of Jesus Christ.

Socrates refused to escape away. Socrates boldly faced his accusers, challenged the charges brought against him, and showed his complete trust in God, but Christ has been represented, by these writers of the New Testament who pretend it was written by the inspiration of God Himself and consists of His very words, as concealing himself from his opponents and found by them only by the treachery of one of his own disciples.

Christ is represented by Matthew and others to be very nervous, and to have been "sorrowful and sore troubled" simply through fear of being caught. He is represented to implore his disciples to keep watch. He does not let himself be alone when he goes only to a "stone's throw" to pray to his Creator--his Father. He takes three disciples with him to keep watch, because, he says, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." In short, Christ is represented by these so-called inspired writers to be more like a sneaking coward who has committed some crime and is afraid of its consequences. What a contrast between him whom people worship as God and the son of God and him whom the same people believe to be a heathen. Even in trust of God the "heathen" excels the "Son of God."

The words put into the mouth of Christ while praying for deliverance from the impending affliction are: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me" (Matthew). What did this "if it be possible" mean? That Christ did not believe in the omnipotence of God.

Further, Christ is supposed to have cried out, *Eli, Eli, lama sabakhtani*, "O God, O God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Mark). Which means that Christ died with the conviction that God had left him.

And yet the whole world is asked to believe by the Christians of to-day that this man knew and warned his disciples that his death will only be temporary, that he will rise only after three days of his death, and that he said that his kingdom was of heaven, and so forth. Not only this, the world is asked to believe that upon the crucifixion of this man who tried to hide himself, who was frightened of the very idea of being caught, who did not even approach God without three of his disciples with him to keep watch over him; this man who, when caught and brought in the court, had not the courage of even meeting the charges boldly; this man who was not convinced of the omnipotence of God; this man who ended life under the conviction that his God had left him—upon this man depends the salvation of the whole world.

To add greater absurdity to all this it is added that Christ had a foreknowledge of the little plot which his "Father" had matured of saving humanity by the crucifixion of His "son."

And yet Christ shirked being crucified; yet he did not bless Judas Iscariot, and the poor man, through whose action the world was to be saved, committed suicide. Any man would have sacrificed two thousand times his own life and undergone most painful martyrdom each time if he had been told that upon his martyrdom depended the salvation of the world. If Christ really died in the way represented by Matthew, then it will be doing immeasurable injustice not only to the great martyrdom of saintly Hosain, but also to that of Socrates, to put Christ's martyrdom with theirs in the same book. Jesus had the least reason to be timid. He was not leaving behind any wife or children, or any dear or near relative, as were Socrates and Hosain both. The mother and brothers he was leaving he had already denied. So it should have been easier for him to face death. As far as Socrates was concerned, he was not even quite sure of what he was to expect after death. Hosain was confident that he would go straight to paradise. Christ also should have expected the same, and there should have been still less reason for him to have been "troubled in spirit" (John), or for his "being in an agony," or for his "sweat becoming as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground" (Luke), or for his crying "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Mark).

The martyrdom of Christ was very noble and grand, but not as represented by the Gospels or believed by Christians. Christ was one of the most brilliant stars that have

ever appeared or are likely ever to appear on the horizon of the universe, but not as he is represented by his disciples or by his followers.

Every one of them who pretends to be his follower is a Peter, who indirectly curse him and deny him. By their description of him and of his character they make every right-thinking mind revolt against him. By their beliefs they degrade God, to glorify Whom Christ came. They impute passions to Him and say that He begot a son. They give Him out to be a revengeful God, who could not feel satisfied until the life of "His own begotten son" was taken, they vitiate the masterpiece of God by attributing to him original sin, etc.

Christ as a God will always excite ridicule and be the cause of making religion itself revolting to sensible people. A critical study of the four gospels would make any reasonable person indifferent to religion and averse to Christ. The contradictions in those four gospels are colossal. One puts forward different facts to the other. One puts different words from the other in the mouth of Jesus for identical occasions. If anybody were to judge Christ himself by what the gospels say, he would get disgusted with him. They present him as one who always contradicted himself.

He begs forgiveness for his murderers according to one gospel, but according to all four he curses a fig-tree which could not supply him with fruits when he was hungry, because the fruit season was not come.

He says that he who will take the sword shall perish by the sword, yet he bids his own disciples to buy the sword, even if they have to sell their garments.

He shows miracles to establish his power and the glory of God, but he bids his people not to mention what powers he possesses and rebukes those who call him the "Son of God."

He says that he has come to confirm the law, not to destroy it, and that heaven and earth will pass away, but "not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass," yet he breaks the law himself as regards the sabbath, and also contradicts and alters it (see Matt. v.).

He says that the very generation of his disciples will see the coming of the kingdom of God, and yet he says that except God, nobody, including himself, knows when that kingdom will come.

He calls himself son of man, and his genealogy is traced through Joseph to David, so that the prophecy as regards his Messiahship be fulfilled in him, yet he is said not to be the son of Joseph at all, and to have been begotten by the Holy Ghost when no man had touched his mother.

He is supposed to be a universal teacher yet he says, "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of Israel" (Matt. xv. 24).