

Islamic Review

Edited by AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

Vol. XX.]

[No. 2—

SHAWWAL-ZILQADA, 1350 A.H.
FEBRUARY—MARCH, 1932 A.C.

Annual Subscription, 10s.

Single Copy

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Kindly quote your Subscriber's Number when corresponding.

Telegrams : { Mosque, Woking.
" ISLAM, LAHORE.

Telephone : Woking 679.

THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION AND LITERARY TRUST (REGD).

(Incorporating the *Islamic Review*, The Muslim Literary Trust, The Basheer Muslim Library and The *Isha at-Islam*.)

Head Office :
AZEEZ MANZIL, Brandreth Road, Lahore, India.

Office in England :

THE MOSQUE, Woking, Surrey, England.

Bankers : LLOYDS BANK LTD., Lahore, India. BARCLAY'S BANK, LTD., Woking.

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The Late Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
نُصَلِّیْ عَلَیْ رَسُوْلِہِ الْکَرِیْمِ

THE
ISLAMIC REVIEW

SHAWWAL—ZU 'LQA'DA, 1350 A. H.
Vol. XX. FEBRUARY—MARCH 1932 A. C. No. 2-3.

IN MEMORIAM.

MIAN SIR MUHAMMAD SHAFI.

It is with feelings of the deepest regret, the most poignant sorrow, that we have to record the death of the Hon'ble Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., K.B., D.Litt., LL.D., Barrister-at Law, Advocate of the High Courts of Judicature at Lahore and Allahabad, which occurred at Lahore at 8-15 A.M., on January 7th last.

Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi was 62 years old, having been born on March 10th, 1869, at Baghbanpura, a village near Lahore. He was the son of the late Mian Din Muhammad. He was educated at the Vernacular Middle School of his village, and subsequently passed the Matriculation examination from the Central Model School, Lahore. He then went to the Government College, Lahore, but shortly after joined the Forman Christian College, Lahore. In 1889 he left for England and there studied for the Bar. He passed his Law examinations with credit, and distinguished himself in International Law. During his sojourn in England he successfully competed for different prizes

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and scholarships and was called to the Bar in 1892 by the Hon'ble Society of the Middle Temple. On his return to India he started his professional career at Hoshiarpur, but two years later he moved to Lahore, and soon rose to a prominent position in his profession. He enjoyed a lucrative practice on the Civil as well as Criminal side—a rare combination for the legal profession. He wrote and published various treatises on different branches of law, and by 1907 had become one of the leading lawyers of the Punjab Chief Court. A Judgeship of the Madras High Court was offered to him in 1912, but his love for his profession and his public life led him to turn it down. For the same reasons he refused an appointment to the Bench of the Punjab Chief Court which was offered to him in 1918. He was selected President of the Lahore High Court Bar Association in 1918 and also for the following year. In 1919 he presided over the deliberations of the Punjab Provincial Bar Conference. In 1925 he became Legal Adviser to the Bahawalpur State, and subsequently was employed by Khairpur and Patiala States in the same capacity.

Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi early in 1909 was nominated for 3 years as a member of the Punjab Legislative Council. From 1912 he represented the Province in the Imperial Legislative Council, and up to 1919 he was continuously either a member of the Punjab or the Imperial Legislative Councils. In 1919 he became the Education Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. At this time the portfolio consisted of Education, Local Self-Government, Archæology, Epigraphy, Census, Records Office, Imperial Library, Copyright and certain other subjects. In 1920 the Department of Public Health was transferred to him, and soon after he was also placed in charge of the Department of Commerce and Industry. Thus, during his tenure of office as a Member of the

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Viceroy's Executive Council, Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi was in charge at one time or another of three portfolios, which is unprecedented in the history of the Government of India. In 1922 Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi became the Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and occupied this office of great responsibility till 1924, and during these two years he also acted as the Vice-President of the Viceroy's Executive Council. He was also appointed Leader of the Council of State in the same year. In 1930 and again during the last year he went to England as a delegate to the Round Table Conference. On his return from England he once again became Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and held the portfolio of Member of Education, Health and Lands. He had but taken charge for a few days when all of a sudden the cruel hands of death snatched him away from this world :

Inna Lillahi wa inna ilaihe raje'oon.

(From God we are, and unto God we return—The Holy Qur-án.)

As an eminent lawyer and an educationalist, as a distinguished public servant and a statesman Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi strove hard for well nigh 40 years for the uplift of his country and community.

As a lawyer Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi owed success to his industry, his perseverance and his self-confidence. His wealth of knowledge and information bore testimony to his ability. He rose to the high position because of his psychological insight into the workings of the human mind. One outstanding trait in him as a lawyer was his professional morality, which, indeed, was of an exceptionally superior character. He was undoubtedly one of the ablest lawyers that India has ever produced, and as an advocate he had no superior in the country.

Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi's services in the field of education have been memorable. As early as 1892 he

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founded the Islamia School, Hoshiarpur. He acted as the Secretary of the Committee of Islamic College, Lahore, for over ten years. As a Fellow of the Punjab University and a Member of its Arts, Oriental and Law Faculties he raised the standard of education in the University on almost a parallel with the other Indian Universities. As Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Delhi University he rendered most valuable services to that institution. But by far the most outstanding achievement, that coming generations will associate with his great name, was the creation of six new Universities in India. In this alone he may be said to have raised for himself a monument more enduring than bronze, a memorial that will never perish. It is past history now, but nevertheless it is worth mentioning, that it was solely due to the untiring efforts of Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi that the Aligarh Muslim University Bill ever saw the light of the day. Indeed it was due to his rare skill and energy that, in spite of serious discouragement, and in the teeth of opposition, the historic Muslim University Bill was carried, after a stormy debate, through the Assembly.

Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi in his public life was always characterised by his world-wide outlook, his shrewd intelligence, and his sound judgment. His deep sense of loyalty to the cause he espoused always brought him to the front. He was dauntless in the face of opposition, and unflinching in the presentation of his selfless aims. He always stuck to them with tenacity, courage and boldness.

Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi served his community to the very last. He was one of the founders of the All-India Muslim League and its organ the "Daily Observer." He was President of the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore. He was also President of the Punjab Provincial National League. He presided twice over the

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deliberations of the All-India Mohamedan Educational Conference. And let it not be forgotten that he was one of the Trustees of the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust and a member of its Managing Committee.

Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi's life was devoted to the cause of Muslims. Indeed he was their best councillor and trusted leader. His material contribution to the deliberations of the recent two Round Table Conferences and his championship of the rights of his community in London is but very recent history. But in presenting the cause of the Muslims he was never biassed or bigoted against other communities. It is difficult to write adequately of him who has gone. Our praise seems trite and trivial, our most heartfelt tribute all unworthy in face of the colossal fact of his immense and unique personality. Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi's death has left a gap in the public life of India which time alone can fill. To say that he was very popular would be belittling his character. He was charming, gentle, kind, loveable—a loving son, a loving father, a loving husband and a loving, but above all sincere, friend. His was an extremely charitable nature, and God had gifted him with virtues of the highest order. He kept an open house, was hospitable and generous to a fault. His philanthropic purse was open to all. Many a poor and needy man has had reason to bless the name of Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi, and in many a humble heart his memory will never fade.

Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi was a God-fearing man, a true son of Islam. He has left behind a fine tradition of selfless service, spotless character and reputation, which the present generation and that to come are not easily to forget. Lahore mourned for a day the passing away of one of its distinguished sons. Flags were hoisted at half

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mast at the Government House and offices. All Law courts, Educational institutions, Public and Municipal offices remained closed. All Muslims and many Hindus closed their shops as a mark of respect. Hindus and Christians vied with the Muslims to pay their last respect and tribute to the memory of this great man. Representatives of the Viceroy and Governor, Judges of the High Court and Ministers of State joined over 50,000 citizens of Lahore and followed the bier. His Majesty the King and the Princes of India sent messages of condolence, glowing tributes were paid to the memory of the dead—a wonderful recognition of his services indeed, but would it make up the loss the Muslim community has suffered ?

We mourn the death of a worthy son of Islam, a trusted and influential champion of the Muslim cause. We mourn the premature removal of one whose efforts and sagacity have always been directed towards the welfare of the Muslims. We of the Working Muslim Mission mourn the death of a fellow-worker of Islam, a worker born with an unbreakable conviction in the Islamic tenets, and who took pride at its harmonising and spiritual mission. We grieve over the loss of a valued and dear friend of a very long standing, whose counsel and advice we had always welcomed.

May the Almighty rest his soul in peace !

WHY ISLAM IS MISUNDERSTOOD.

BY KHWAJA NIZAM-UD-DIN HASAN.

III

What is Islam ?

THE first misunderstanding with which I may deal now is the one as to the word "Islam." Islam, in its primary sense, means "to be at perfect peace," in its secondary and sublime sense "to surrender one's self to Him with Whom peace is made." It cannot be taken to

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mean anything beyond this true definition. It is a religion that alone has a distinctive appellation. It is not Muhammadanism but Islam, and thus claims a universality.

The principal bases on which the Islamic system is founded are : (1) a belief in the Unity, Immateriality, Power, Mercy, and Supreme Love of the Creator ; (2) charity and brotherhood among mankind ; (3) subjugation of passions ; (4) outpouring of a grateful heart to the Giver of all good ; and (5) accountability for human actions in another existence.¹

To these precepts certain practical duties are attached for conserving a true religious spirit. The principal of these are : (1) Prayer ; (2) Fasting ; (3) Almsgiving ; and (4) Pilgrimage.

These precepts are the result of superior development. Prayers are utterances of the sentiments of gratitude and love, of repentance and solicitation, from an outpouring human heart to the Ever-Merciful. They are means of moral elevation and internal purification, as they preserve us from crime, and from that which is blamable by reminding us of Allah.²

“ It is one of the glories of Islam,” admires an English historian,³ “ that its temples are not made with hands, and that its ceremonies can be performed anywhere upon God’s earth or under His heaven.”

In Islam the intervention of a priest or hierophant between man and his God is not recognized ; nor is any sacrifice or ceremonial required to bring the anxious heart nearer to its Comforter. “ The annual Sacrifice at the Hajj and Bairam is a mere memorial observance ”—(Ameer ‘Ali).

¹Ameer ‘Ali.

²Holy Qur-án, xxix. 45.

³Hunter : *Our Indian Mussalmans*, p. 179.

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In order to keep alive in the Muslim world the memory of the birthplace of Islam and maintain a strict discipline the Prophet directed the Muslims to turn their faces towards Mecca during prayers. He also required cleanliness as a necessary preliminary to the worship of Allah—not only the cleanliness and humility of the spirit but of the physical body as well.

Fasting was instituted for restraining the passions “by diurnal abstinence for a limited and definite period from all the gratifications of the senses, and directing the overflow of the animal spirits into a healthy channel.” It was not, perhaps, until now that the essentiality of fasting for health was recognized by the world at large.

Prior to Islam no religion had consecrated charity, the support of the widow, the orphan, and the helpless poor by enrolling them among the positive enactments of the system. Every individual, by the laws of Islam, is bound to contribute a certain part of his property towards the help and assistance of the poor and the indigent. The portion is usually $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the value of all goods, chattels, emblements, on profits of trade, mercantile business, etc. They are due when the property amounts to a certain value and has been in possession of a person for one whole year. Cattle employed in agriculture or in carrying burdens are not included in property.

Besides, at the end of Ramazan, on the day of 'Id-ul-Fitr, each head of a family has to give away in alms for himself and for every member of his household, and even for each guest who breaks his fast and sleeps in his house during the month, a measure of any grain or value of the same. The rightful recipients of these alms are not only the poor and the indigent but also debtors who cannot pay their debts, travellers and strangers, and slaves who

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wish to buy their freedom and have not the means for doing so.

I leave it to the discretion of candid observers to see the extraordinary importance of this institution, which in a systematized way, so different from Modern Socialism, keeps up a decent level of the standard of life in Muslim brotherhood, maintaining all on a status of perfect equality. Will the Socialists of to-day arrive at a better solution ?

“ The wisdom which incorporated into Islam the time-honoured custom of annual pilgrimage is one which has introduced into Muhammad’s religion a freemasonry and brotherhood of faith in spite of sectarian divisions. The eyes of the whole Muslim world fixed on the central spot keep alive in the bosom of each some sparks of the celestial fire which lighted up the world in that country of darkness. Here, again, the wisdom of the inspired lawgiver shines forth in the negative part of the enactment, in the conditions necessary to make the injunction obligatory : (1) ripeness of intelligence and discernment ; (2) perfect freedom and liberty ; (3) possession of the means of transport and subsistence during the journey ; (4) possession of means sufficient to support the pilgrim’s family during his absence from home ; (5) the possibility and practicability of the voyage.”¹

Things by nature abhorrent and unhealthy to man, such as the flesh of carnivorous animals and intoxicating drinks, and all kinds of excesses, were rigorously prohibited on physical and moral grounds.

The belief in the life after death is one of the most mystical and superior notions which is inculcated by Islam. The idea that every human being will have to render an account of his or her actions on earth, in a state of existence hereafter, and that the happiness or misery

¹Ameer 'Ali : *Spirit of Islam*.

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of individuals will depend upon the way in which they have performed the behests of their Creator, is one which is sufficiently confirmed by Spiritualists of modern days.¹

“The idea,” explains Mr. Ameer 'Ali, “of a future existence—of an existence after the separation of the living principle of our nature from the mortal part—is so generally shared by races of men, otherwise utterly distinct from each other, that it has led to the belief that it must be one of the first elementary constituents of our being. A more careful examination of facts, however, connected with the infancy of races and tribes, leads us to the conclusion that the conception of a future existence is also the result of the natural development of human mind.

“The wild savage has scarcely any idea of a life separate and distinct from that which he enjoys on earth. He looks upon death as the end of existence. Then comes a later stage when man has passed out of his savage state, his hopes and aspirations are bounded no more by an earthly death; he now anticipates another course of existence after the course here has been fulfilled. But even at this stage the conception of immortality does not rise out of the groove of daily life. Life after death is a mere continuation of life on earth. This idea of a continued life beyond the grave must have been developed from the yet unconscious longing of the human soul for a more extended sphere, where the separation of dear friends, so painful to both savage and civilized man, should end in reunion.

“The next stage is soon reached; man comes to believe that present happiness and misery are not, cannot be, the be-all and the end-all of his existence; that there is another life after death where he will be happy or miserable in proportion to his deserts.”²

¹*Cf.* books on Spiritualism by Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Conan Doyle.
²*Spirit of Islam.*

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Through these institutions and ideas the world for the first time received those principles which establish the universal brotherhood of man in the world. "The ideal of a league of human races," Professor Snonck Hurgronj observes, "has indeed been approached by Islam more nearly than by any other ; for the league of nations founded on the basis of Muhammad's religion took the principle of equality of all human races so seriously as to put to shame other communities."

The position of women was also raised by Islam to the highest precincts of honour and respect both morally and socially. The paradise was declared to be at the foot of the mother. This spiritual conception, together with the legal practice of treating woman as a *femme sole*, is far in advance of anything conceived by Western jurists or philosophers. Marriage was ennobled and sanctified by Islam, which introduced in it all that is high and divine in mutual love and compassion. Strictly speaking, polygamy was not the form of marriage, though it was allowed in restricted form under certain conditions : for how are we to decide the problem of life in the case of a teeming surplus of women ? Has Europe taken thought of this ?

Islam did not "consecrate" slavery, as has often been maliciously assumed, but provided in every way for the abolition and extinction of a custom which had securely implanted itself in the time of its free practice.

The political spirit of Islam was also one of toleration. The Prophet ordained every Muslim not to molest, ill-treat, or convert by force the followers of other creeds. Non-Muslims living under Muslim rule were only required to pay a tax in lieu of the military service, called "Jizya." It was only as time advanced that the toleration of the system was relaxed under the imperialism of Muslim

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potentates, but the form was adhered to to commit irrevocable horrors on conquered nations ; and the odium that gathered round it has remained to this day.

The remarkable success of Islam has been maliciously assigned to its propagation by the sword. History clearly refutes this. The early struggles of the Muslims were in self-defence, as is denoted by the term " Ghazwa." Do they bear any comparison to the religious wars of the Christians called the Crusades ? As Mr. Achmed Abdullah has said : " We never had a holy inquisition, witch-burning, *autos-de-fé*, a Thirty Years War. We have persecuted minor races for reasons of greed, or for reasons of national aggrandisement. Which nation has not ? But never in the name of religion. Unlike England, we never have worn an ace upon our sleeves and claimed that God put it there ; nor do we, in the Kipling style :

Take up the White Man's burden—
And put it on the Coon.

The True Prophet allowed us to unsheath our swords only on three occasions : to save all houses dedicated to the worship of Allah from destruction, no matter to what religion they belong ; to establish freedom of conscience ; to defend ourselves.

This is the real Islam which the Great Messenger of God preached to us. It was the same when its followers deviated from it ingraciously by their action and cast a veil of misapprehension over it. It is the same now when that veil is lifted from it—a Call to the whole of humanity to return to righteousness and to be at perfect peace with Allah.

Yet one great thing has resulted in the world on account of this misapprehension. It has forced her to crave for a religion which will revive her spiritual life. And we know where this thirst can be quenched. " The

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cult of Isis," writes Ameer 'Ali¹ " which still lingers in Europe, satisfies the longing of certain minds ; but the best thinkers want a recognition of the Supreme Intelligence, of a Design in Creation, of the existence of law and order in the Universe."

The problem for the future is, therefore, the Quest of a Universal Religion which will satisfy the universal longing of humanity. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has declared : " The world is hungry for a spiritual message," and for the proper solution, for the satisfaction of this he looks forward to the idea of a Universal Religion. " Man and woman," he says, " will be the priest and priestess in their own household, and in the future instead of one Sunday in the week there will be 365 Sundays in the year, so far as spiritual communion is concerned." Does not this notion entirely accord with the universal tenets of Islam, which is not the religion of a race or nationality but the religion of all who bow down before the Supreme Will : Islam—the religion of *salam* ?

BRIEF NOTES ON THE QUR-ÁN.

THE LAST TWO CHAPTERS

The Protection of God.

The last two Chapters of the Holy Qur-án are as follows :—

CHAPTER CXIII.

THE DAWN.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Say : I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn, from the evil of what He has created, and from the evil of the utterly dark night when it comes, and from the evil of these who cast (evil suggestions) in firm resolutions, and from the evil of the envious when He envies.

CHAPTER CXIV.

THE MEN.

Say : I seek refuge in the Lord of men, the King of men, the God of men ; from the evil of the whisperings of the slinking devil, who whispers into the hearts of men, from among jinn and the men.

¹*Islamic Culture*, Vol I, No. 3.

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If the Holy Book in its very beginning teaches us to seek assistance from God as regards every work to which we put our hand, by placing the word " Bismillah " (" In the Name of God ") at its commencement, it also teaches us to seek ultimate refuge in Him in the last two chapters ; they mention seven evils from which we can hardly escape, and we have to seek Divine protection against them. In one of them, entitled " The Dawn," the Book speaks of four things.

(a) " The evil of what He has created." Everything in the creation of God becomes evil when misused or mishandled. Sometimes we remain unaware of the circumstances that make things so. They come all of a sudden and destroy our prospects in life.

(b) We often know not how to acquit ourselves properly in various matters of importance in life. We grope in the dark, become entangled and see no way out.

(c) We sometimes make a firm resolution to work out our intent, but wrong suggestions come from others, and if we act upon them we are ruined.

(d) Our success in life often arouses jealousy in others and they begin to work against us, even without our knowledge.

We are often left in the dark in this respect, and, therefore, we should remain on the alert and commend ourselves to the protection of the Lord. The chapter has aptly been named "The Dawn," for it brings us out of the Darkness and makes us seek " refuge *in* the Lord of the Dawn."

The last chapter speaks of such evils as overtake us on account of polytheistic tendencies that may be lurking in our minds. Though we have to live in the world by our own efforts, yet we look to others as the givers of our bread. Again, we take others as the rulers of our

BRIEF NOTES ON THE QUR-ÁN.

destinies, but worst of all we pay to various fellow-creatures the same homage that should be reserved for our Lord. We make them the object of adoration.

But sometimes, again, we are driven to believe in unseen agencies besides God, who claim to be worshipped like Him. This destroys our belief in the Unity of God, and kills in us the spirit of self-reliance and independence. We have, therefore, been asked to take refuge in the Lord, Who is really our Maintainer, our King, our Deity.

MR. GANDHI AND THE PROBLEM OF THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL.

IS GOD THE AUTHOR OF EVIL ?

“ I know that He has no Evil in Himself and yet if there be Evil, He is the Author of it, and yet untouched by it.”—Mr. Gandhi.

The above lawyer-like guarded statement of Mr. Gandhi—I believe he is or was a member of the Bar—involves a clear assumption that God is the author of evil. I know that the problem of evil has always presented a difficulty which, for most people, still remains unsolved. It is a sort of theological conundrum, which, though unravelled, has yet given rise to various erroneous and misleading doctrines which, in their turn, have had the effect of changing the destiny and condition of millions of people. Formal Christianity threw down its arms before evil and cried that man's sole means of escape therefrom was the blood of Christ. The Lord Buddha, while admitting the invincibility of evil, would not countenance any idea of vicarious atonement. He saw our salvation in absolute annihilation. Brahmanism directed us to withdraw ourselves from all wordly affairs and lead the life of a recluse in the jungles, which, according to the cult, was the only refuge

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from evil. Just as the ancient Greeks bowed down before Nemesis, so the Zoroastrian religion divided the world between two gods, the god of good and the god of evil, with man as a plaything in their hands. But the things of the flesh and indulgence therein could not fail to create an Epicurean strain in almost every society, introducing evil in various forms corresponding with the various deities in ancient Indian and Greek mythology. Evil was worshipped and adored with fanatical devotion, and never more so than at the time when the Holy Prophet of Arabia appeared to reform the world. Islam, at its coming, found the world full of sin, but with a garb of sanctity.

Islam renounced evil. It solved the vexed problem, and exposed wickedness in its true heinous colours. But evil has not, as yet, left the world. It still rules the human race. Mr. Gandhi could not have failed to observe its prevalence everywhere in human society; but his mind revolts against regarding God as having anything to do with it. He tries to steer a middle course which is bound, on the very face of it, to be unnavigable. If evil is everywhere, God is its author, in the judgment of Mr. Gandhi. And if He is its author, how can He remain unsullied by it. He, undoubtedly, does not Himself commit wrong, as did the deities of the old mythologies who were wont to revel in every species of crime, but He is responsible for evil. One may with all apology and reverence call Him a great sufferer who sees evil at work, and yet does nothing to stop it. But how, in that case, can He remain blameless? Such is the position which Mr. Gandhi has taken up.

This is only a reflection of the Christian theory. Mr. Gandhi has often prided himself on following the religion of *Ahimsa* which does not allow its members to inflict injury on others. Beautiful as such a religion may be,

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Mr. Gandhi as its advocate has betrayed himself into enunciating something absolutely at variance with the spirit of the faith; for injury is, after all, evil. God has always been associated with attributes which are regarded as the best of all in the judgment of His faithful. All that has been deemed most excellent has always been focussed on God. If the Lord Krishna was said to have been indulging in the company of women and committing every sort of act derogatory to the sanctity of sexual relation (as we find them set forth in the Puranic literature)—it was a lie and a despicable libel on the memory of that holy person. But these things were considered as virtues and were cheerfully ascribed to the god-incarnate. Man has always garlanded his chosen deity with the choicest of flowers, and if my contention be sound, how can Mr. Gandhi shift the responsibility of accepting evil as good from the shoulders of God, if He, in Mr. Gandhi's judgment, is its author.

How can those who abhor evil look to God as the source of all good? I am sure that Mr. Gandhi must abhor even the idea of evil, but these are the logical sequences of the pronouncements which he has made on the subject.

Evil, without doubt, is as old as humanity. It has remained co-existent with good, and yet we need not discredit God therefor. He is not its Creator. The problem is the most difficult one, but the Divine Revelation in the Qur-án has solved it. Everything, it says, is conducive to good. Since things have been created to be used by creatures of different capacities, the good of the thing depends upon the measure in which it is used by one or the other. Water, for instance, is one of the best gifts of God, but the quantity meant for human use for drinking would be most unsuitable for a camel. A camel would perish if it were not allowed to drink very much more than what is sufficient for man. In like manner

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water would be dangerous to our health, and hence an evil, if we were to drink it in the quantity suitable for a camel. Opium is a panacea, but it becomes poison when the quantity used goes beyond a certain measure. The principle of measure applies also on the moral and physical planes. In short, all things—actions and thoughts—are for good. It is our mishandling of them, that is, our use of them in a wrong measure, that converts good into evil. If virtue is a relative thing, and demands certain conditions and occasions for practice, evil will at once arise, the moment we disregard those conditions. Thus evil arose immediately after the first man, whether Cain or another, misused anything. The principle of measure, in fact, solves the whole problem. Let evil co-exist with good. But the former cannot be ascribed to God, especially when His Revelation came to enlighten us on the question of measure (55 : 8). We find a reference to it even in the Qur-ánic verses (96 : 6) which were first revealed to the Holy Prophet. Thus the Book at its very outset explained to us the true nature of evil and the way to exterminate it. Our disregard of measure creates evil, and knowledge of the measure keeps us on our guard against it. We also read in the Qur-án that good and evil are pre-measured things, and this has led some to think of “predestination as one of the teachings of the Qur-án.” The Holy Book, however, does not speak of anything in the nature of “predestination,” popularly called *Taqdir* in the Indian vernacular. It speaks, on the other hand, of the pre-measurement of good and evil, because the same thing which is meant to be good becomes evil in a different measure. If this indeed be so, we may deem in all reverence, that a duty lies on God to inform the world of the measure of good and evil. The Holy Qur-án admits this Divine obligation as we read in chapter 16 verse 9—“And upon Allah it rests to show the right way and then there are some deviating

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(ways).” If the opening chapter of the Qur-án teaches us to pray to God to show (1 : 5-7) us the right path, and keep us from the deviating ways, the second verse in the second chapter announces that the Book has been revealed for the guidance of those who seek to guard themselves against evil.

I have given these few ideas from the Qur-án on the subject as food for Mr. Gandhi’s contemplation. It would be a thousand pities if his name becomes immortalized in a film-message which pillories him as the utterer of a sentence which makes God the author of evil. As to his conception of God, it is, in spite of defects, much the same as that of a Muslim.

KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

A DEBT BY AN OUTSIDER TO THE FOLD.

BY E. CASSEY.

Many years ago, on one star-lit evening I stood in company of an invaluable friend gazing at the southern skies.

Being overpowered by the variegated refulgence of ‘Fomalhaut’ I turned to my friend and begged him to look at the star to be able to share my ecstasy.

Before he had actually taken the glasses that I was handing over to him, he gently smiled, and in almost an apologetic manner re-named the star, inobtrusively correcting my mispronunciation. “Yes, I well remember, ‘Fam u’l-Hüt’”, he said. You can well imagine my surprise. I, who had taken the name to be of some German astronomer (the last part of the word “haut” meaning “skin,” clearly indicating to that interpretation) after whom the star had been named, as is the custom in the modern times, learnt, all too sudden, that the word was of some non-European origin. Forgetting all about the

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star, in one breath I enquired, "But what does the word mean? From what language is the word derived"? Again, in a most unassuming manner he gently replied, "It is an Arabic word," it literally means "Mouth of the Fish." Knowing as I did that the star belonged to the constellation 'Southern Fish' I realized the beauty and significance of the name. To make my ignorance and assumption look less gross I pleaded, that my two Muslim student friends, in whose company I had often looked at the stars and whom I had tried to interest in my views of astronomy, had never suggested such a thing nor corrected my pronunciation. "Very probable", he calmly replied again, "most of the Muslim students never learn Arabic nowadays, unless they happen to have it as their mother tongue, and those who know Arabic have long since ceased to take interest in astronomy as a science." "That is the impression," I confessed, "I have been given about Musulmans in general by those Europeans, especially Englishmen, who have seen them in their own lands, that they are mostly illiterate and consider learning sciences a sin." "Well, I believe it is not exactly as bad. Although it cannot be denied, that in the last two centuries owing to several adverse causes, their education has been neglected. Perhaps it will surprise you to learn, that Islam was the first religion, mark my words, I say, religion, that made learning of science a compulsory duty, not only for men but expressly for women. That was not the least cause why all the sciences made strides specially in the first six centuries of Islam." "Is that true," I said. Decency forbade me to repeat what I had heard people say how women were treated in Islam and how fanatically narrow the Muslim religion was. "How artfully have the Christian lands contrived to cover every trace of Muslim civilization and history from their

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younger generations", he said musingly. "So that a man of your educational attainments does not even know that for full six centuries after Muhammad, Muslims were the sole repository of scientific thought and culture. Not only that, but it was they who brought 'paper' to Europe to write on, there being no paper before. That it was they who gave them the arithmetical figures, without which even arithmetic could never have progressed. That the very words 'Algebra' and 'Chemistry' are of Arab origin. But then how can I mention the history of 1,000 years in five minutes. Even the histories written by European authors, most grudging as they are to give any credit to Islam or Muslims, can furnish sufficient information to a student who wants to read true history and would not allow himself to be mystified. Many more duties are enjoined by Muslim religion on its followers than mentioned in the Decalogue, but the one command that is mostly stressed upon and repeated and again repeated, is to acquire knowledge through reflection on every aspect of nature. Performance of prayers even is not so much emphasized as reflection and understanding. It is not only search and research that is enjoined, but research and research again. One glance at the world literatures to-day will show you, that most of them were started directly through the influence of Islam and Muslims. Have you never asked yourself a simple question when studying European history, why Spain and Portugal, who have been the most backward countries, for the last several centuries, should have in every sense led the voyages of discovery, and that Province through Spain, and Italy through Sicily, should have started the modern Poetry and Romantic movement in Europe. Why Provence, and why not North of France? Then Chaucer, the Father of English poetry, could clearly indicate the sources that

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made him. But, then, that is a vast subject again. It is the history of science, of literature, of religion, extending over 900 years, while every effort has been made to minimize its importance, nay, cover its traces. Politics and old jealousies, my friend. Who cares for inconvenient and unpalatable truths specially when one happens to be a boss of the modern world.

“When I was young, my parents were almost unwilling to allow me to pursue studies in European languages, specially English. The reason that they gave was that lies, and only lies, have been written by these people against our religion, and that no young mind could gain by them but be misguided. I laughed at the idea then and called it a prejudice. But to my sorrow, later on, I found their statement vastly correct. The bad among them tell inconceivable lies. The best even cover up the traces and omit mentioning the truth. But still to come across a true word here and there is refreshing, and I am glad that I did not adopt the ostrichen policy. It is better, even better, to know the worst your antagonist can say about you.

“While in a matter like this there is no question of personal antagonism. When a man knowingly conceals the truth, he harms himself and those whose temporary interests he thinks he is safeguarding, more than the truth. But for this narrow and petty attitude of Christian countries, the subject ‘Comparative religion’ would have long ago vanished. There is no comparative science, nor comparative philosophy, there can be no comparative religion. But sooner or later the humanity must and will want to know the truth and is bound to know it.”

There our conversation suddenly stopped and my friend, who had to keep an appointment, took his leave. No sooner had he gone, than I had resolved to study history,

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with a view to find out for myself the actual fact as well as the attitude of the Christian historians. It is unnecessary to mention in detail the books I had to wade through. It was not long, however, that I came across Gibbon and then Carlyle, also the histories of Spain and Sicily and most histories of European and Asiatic literatures. Side by side, I revised my study of religion. It was then that I actually read the Qur-án. I said 'read' the Qur-án. But I soon found out that it is not to be read. It is to be studied. Every line stands for something by itself. And unless its significance is realized as such, continuation would only confound. It could not be otherwise. A small volume like that, dealing poetically with Nature, with history, with law, with social conditions, with the unseen, prophesying what is to come and giving in parable forms what could not be understood otherwise, must of necessity leave every line impregnated with some significance of its own.

It was after studying the Qur-án that I realized the words of Goethe about Islam quoted by Carlyle for the benefit of the English reader. It was also about this time that I sought and made the acquaintance of the author of the '*Preaching of Islam*', the first edition of which had fallen into my hands and introduced its author, Sir Thomas Arnold. I well remember one day talking with him on this subject, when in the course of conversation, he remarked: "Yes, no student of history can seriously deny that our civilization in Europe up to 15th or even 16th century was entirely based on Islamic culture and only after this did advance independently of it." "But," continued he, "Europe does not relish certain things in Islam, say, for instance, easy divorce."

This was in 1910. To-day we know which way the reform is tending in Europe and America. So much so,

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that repentant 'Spain-of-revolution', realizes that Roman Catholic divorce law is an impossible restraint on free, rational individuals. This brings to my mind marriage itself. With all the persistence and insistence of churches, that marriage should be solemnized in churches as a religious sacrament (considering the process of the bride being 'given away' and her promise of obedience to the new master) all the nations of Europe have freely opened register offices and consider the Islamic marriage, a free contract of two individuals entered into, in the presence of two witnesses, as sufficient. This brings to my mind also monasticism. When Henry VIII was breaking monasteries and protesting against Roman Catholicism, Spain had just some time before driven the Moors and Jews and had re-established the monasteries. But the fact that she had behaved wrongly should have been brought home to her by her defeat by Henry's daughter Elizabeth, at a time when England was not to compare with Spain in power and greatness. But she persisted till she had become the last country in Europe and is correcting her mistake with vengeance now and doing what Henry VIII did five centuries ago. In what simple, decisive and authoritative way the Qur-án disposes of this practice, "As to Monasticism this is their own invention."

I shall not further trouble the reader this time. I shall rather tell him why I have mentioned all this. Yes, only to pay my debt to my Muslim friend. But for his enlightening talk, I would still be in darkness on so many vital points that present themselves to us for solution even in these modern times, (undoubtedly far advanced in knowledge) and find no solution.

The reason why I am choosing the *Islamic Review* to publish my views on the Qur-án, and how it deals with the

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human problems, is that I publish my view mostly for the benefit of Muslims, for whatever they may be worth. I have no mind to convert anyone, nor thrust my views on unwilling persons to whom, owing to long-continued prejudice, they might be unpalatable.

It is quite possible that the views of an outsider may not entirely accord with the orthodox opinions of those who are within the fold. But then I am *now* certain that I am addressing a people whose religion was the first to recognize other religions, and not only preached but practised tolerance when neither Asia nor Europe knew the meaning of the word. Indian Hindus were polluted by the shadow of an outsider and dared not cross the "Black Waters," and Europeans considered butchering Jews as a religious operation, and neither of them realized that other religions might have a grain of truth. It may even be that someone benefits through my views in the same manner as I remember having read in a translation of the poet Sa'adi "I learned manners from the unmannerly." It is probable that there are a few at least in all Muslim countries, who are so much confused and confounded by the glare of modern, sudden and overwhelming advance in Europe, that they do not feel certain of their own ground, and are looking at facts and questions in the way Europe has set them and have no time even to read their own Book and see how it puts the questions or answers them.

I need not add more. If my humble contribution is looked forward to, I shall do my best to say the best, that a small being can say about a great Book, one-third of whose contents are avowedly to be only realized by the most elect and that only in centuries that are still to come.

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NOTES.

THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON PEACE THROUGH RELIGION.

In these days when "International Peace" is so much in the air, we think it worth while to make the position of Muslims, as a religious community, quite clear on this score. We have before us a questionnaire issued to all religious bodies by the World Conference on Peace through Religion. Let us take the different aspects one by one and put forward our own standpoint.

ISLAM AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE.

The very word 'Islam' signifies 'the making of peace'—a Muslim is one who makes peace. There is a saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad which defines a Muslim as one from whose hands and tongue others are safe.

According to Islam, however, a man should first of all make peace with his own nature before he can create a peaceful atmosphere around himself. Islam has, therefore, put forward ideals and prescribed practices that will tend to create peace within the individual mind. Speaking of the worship of God, which it upholds, the Qur-án says— "Now surely by Allah's remembrance are the hearts set at rest" (13 : 28).

The God-idea in every religion expresses in itself the highest ambition of its followers, and shapes their outlook on life. Let us examine the Muslim "Lord's Prayer" in this light. It begins with the words :—"All praise is due to Allah, the Evolver of the destiny of all the nations."

Thus, the religion of Islam takes its rise in internationalism and inculcates an optimistic view thereon, as the word "praise" implies. The "making of peace," which is its avowed object in the world, is, therefore, vitally connected with this conception of God and attitude towards humanity.

This has its bearing also on the second question.

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ISLAMIC PRAYER AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE.

As a matter of fact, a Muslim is nothing if not devoted to the peace and prosperity of the whole human race. The most popular prayer in the Muslim community, which is again taken from the Qur-án, reads—"Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the *Evolver of the destiny of the Nations*. (6 : 163). And the evolution of the destiny of humanity is possible only when there is peace and harmony among the nations.

ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE.

The religion of Islam leaves no aspect of the universal welfare untouched in its codified law, *i.e.*, the Qur-án. Every Muslim is pledged to international peace and prosperity by his very allegiance to the religion of Muhammad. Apart from the all-round teachings of the Qur-án, the words of the last sermon of the Holy Prophet cannot but ring in his ears all the days of his life—"The aristocracy of old time is trampled under my feet. The Arab has no superiority over him that is not an Arab, and he that is not an Arab has no superiority over the Arab. All are children of Adam, and Adam was made of earth." Muhammad gave a correct diagnosis of international strife and jealousy when he announced that national vanity was the root cause of it all. And who will deny the fact that there is no room for international jealousies and hatred in a society penetrated by Islamic ideas and practices ?

ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE.

There is no social life in Islam apart from religious life. Every detail of a Muslim's life is inspired and guided by his religion, which is a revealed one, and a complete code by itself. So the whole Muslim community is working, not only for International Peace, but also for

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the all-round prosperity of the human race. Their congregational prayers, which effectively crush all distinctions of birth, colour, wealth and culture, and create a real brotherhood between individuals and classes—their institution of Zakat, *i.e.*, the compulsory poor-tax which establishes a basis for a workable socialism permeated by tender and humane feelings towards one another—their practice of fasting which, besides instilling a desirable humility into the minds of the rich and strong, makes them feel commiseration for the starving millions of their fellow-beings—their system of pilgrimage which, insisting on the removal of the last vestige of national difference, *i.e.*, of dress, trains up diverse national minds in a sense of unity, equality and fraternity: all these are practical steps taken by Muslims as a community, under the direction of their religious scripture, to bring about a condition of things in human society which will ensure real and permanent peace not only between one nation and another, but also between the different classes within the same nation.

CONTRIBUTION OF ISLAM TO THE CAUSE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE.

Muslim society, as a whole, is making for International Peace by virtue of its religious principles, as enunciated in its scripture—the Qur-án. It is again to be emphasized that the religion of Islam or the Muslim community has not to depend upon any person or class for its outlook on life and for the definition of social duties; for all of which Muslim scripture is a sufficient guide, we quote from the Qur-án.

(1). Religious attitude :

“ All praise is due to Allah, the Evolver of the destiny of the nations (taken as a whole)”. (1: 1.)

“ We have not sent thee (*i.e.*, the Prophet Muhammad) except as a mercy to the nations.”

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Such a conception of God, and of the mission of their founder cannot but inspire the most catholic feelings in the hearts of the followers of the faith.

Again :

“ Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabeans, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve ” (2 : 62).

“ O you men ! Surely We have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other ; surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty) ; surely Allah is Knowing ; Aware ” (49 : 13).

These two verses cut at the root of all vanity arising out of denominational identity. Purity, responsibility and the active pursuit of virtue are made the standards of honourable life.

Diversity of colour and language has been described in the Qur-án as a sign or Holy Will of God. This being so, no follower of the Book can look down upon a complexion or language because it is different from that of his own people. Says the Book : “ And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colours, most surely there are signs in this for the learned ” (30 : 21).

Again, knowing that apart from the problems of colour, language and race, there is the problem of religious difference—that constant source of bickerings between the different sections of humanity—the religion of Islam points out a royal road to harmony in this direction. It insists on the recognition of all the religious heroes of other religious communities. Its teachings are very thorough in this respect.

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For every nation there has been a guide."

"There has not been a people but a warner has gone unto them" (35 : 24).

"Say, we believe in Allah and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the *tribes*, and in that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord, *we do not make any distinction between any of them* and to Him do we submit" (2 : 136).

Surely no better way of securing International Peace from the religious point of view can ever be imagined. Nay, a Muslim is to leave no stone unturned to maintain the honour of other religions. He is even required to fight against all who would desecrate a house of worship, no matter to what religion it may belong. Says the Qur-án:—

"And had there not been Allah's repelling some people by others, certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah's Name is much remembered, and surely Allah will help him who helps His cause" (22 : 40).

It is noteworthy that 'mosque' is mentioned last of all, and the preservation of the various houses of worship is regarded as God's cause.

(2). *Social justice.*

Here again the Qur-án is as emphatic as possible. It says:—

"O you who believe be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice, and let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably; act equitably, that is nearer to piety, and be careful of (your duty) to Allah; surely Allah is aware of what you do" (5 : 8).

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In the course of the sermon from which we have quoted in replying to the third question, the Prophet had also remarked :

“ Nothing which belongs to another can be lawfully possessed by any Muslim unless freely given out of goodwill. Guard yourselves against committing injustice.”

(3) *Inter-racial relations.*

According to Islam, humanity is to be regarded as one family.

The Qur-án says :—

“ All people are a single nation” (2 : 213).

“ And people are naught but a single nation” (10 : 20).

The Prophet's observation on the occasion of his last pilgrimage, which has been referred to above, cannot be excelled in emphasis or comprehensiveness.

“ All are children of Adam,” are his words.

But the Qur-án will go further and change the very mentality which disturbs the friendly relations between one nation and another.

It ordains as follows :—

“ O you who believe, let not (one) people laugh at (another) people, perchance they may be better than they, nor let women (laugh) at (other) women, perchance they may be better than they. . . .” (49 : 11).

Further :—

“ And help one another in goodness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and aggression ” (5 : 2).

Again :—

“ Allah does not forbid you respecting those who have not made war against you on account of your religion, and have not driven you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly ; surely Allah loves the doers of justice ” (60 : 82).

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These teachings are no dead letter. Except for very slight lapses here and there, Muslims, as a religious people, have been acting on these principles throughout these centuries. But a word as to the Muslim attitude towards war will not, perhaps, be out of place here. Muslims believe in war, but of a defensive and deterrent nature. They believe that there are cases of national arrogance and cruelty which cannot be stopped except by a resort to arms. The main cause of war in the Prophet's time was religious persecution. The Qur-án says :—

“ Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war has been made because they are oppressed, and most surely Allah is well able to assist them.”

“ Those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say : Our Lord is Allah.” (22 : 39, 40).

“ And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should only be for God (*i.e.*, a matter of free conscience) ; but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors ” (2 : 193).

The attitude towards this subject is clearly defined in the words :—“ And persecution is severer than slaughter ” (2 : 191). The other cause, therefore, in which Muslims are permitted, nay, required, to fight, is that of the oppressed, and the position is still more clear in the words :—

“ And what reason have you that you should not fight in the way of Allah (*i.e.*, for religious freedom), and of the weak among the men and the women and the children (of) those who say, Our Lord, cause us to go forth from this town, whose people are oppressors, and give us from Thee a guardian and give us from Thee a helper ” (4 : 75, 76).

But the object of all such wars should be peace. The soul of this apparent strife is nothing but peace, quite in

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keeping with the name of the religion. The Qur-án says:—

“ And if they incline to peace, then incline to it and trust in Allah ; surely He is the Hearing, the Knowing ” (8 : 61).

So the Muslim is but too ready to sheathe the sword, and anxiously waits for the aggressor to come down to his normal mood. Muslims, therefore, are a chivalrous people, living for certain moral, economic and social principles that alone can ensure peace and harmonious progress for the whole human race ; working peacefully for that progress so long as the atmosphere is calm enough for such a task, but ready to fight those who, with perverted minds, find their sole pleasure in giving a set-back to peaceful evolution and creating chaos in human society.

CORRESPONDENCE

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA,
November 3rd, 1931.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING, ENGLAND.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of October 20th together with the literature which you so graciously sent to me was received yesterday, and for which I wish to express my most sincere thanks and appreciation.

The principles of the Islamic faith, as I understand them, are such that are, indeed, worthy of deep consideration of all peoples. And were these principles generally known, particularly in western countries, they would be accorded the admiration due them instead of the

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ridicule heaped upon them as a result of a lack of knowledge and understanding. What I believe to be a principle of sterling quality of the Islamic faith is that Unity of Man or, as we like to say, the Brotherhood of Man. This, too, is a principle of Christianity, but as such it is only a principle talked about but never actually practiced. Surely no man can call God Father who does not call all men Brothers. Christianity has certainly fallen far short of its aim and purpose.

That the Islamic faith has made enormous strides in gaining adherents and converts is an admitted fact even by its enemies. It might appear to the uninformed that the reason for this is an easy path to salvation, but this is not true. The practice of the faith of Islam involves far more obligations, far more personal sacrifices, than that of Christianity, so it cannot be said that the easiness of the faith is anywhere near the answer. I believe we can find part of the answer in the fact that the Muslim practices his faith, whereas the Christian makes a feeble attempt.

I regret very much that there is not a mission here, but I sincerely believe that the time will come when the spires of a mosque will pierce the heavens in all the cities of the world.

After a more careful perusal of the literature at hand, I shall hope to forward my detailed views. In the meantime, I shall deem it an honour to hear from you.

May all good things come to you, and may the Light of Islam cast its rays into all corners of the earth.

I remain,

Very sincerely,

HARRY E. HEINKEL.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BELMONT, SURREY,

The 26th November 1931.

TO THE IMAM

OF THE MOSQUE AT WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I most sincerely thank you for the pamphlet, books and letter you have so kindly sent me. They are not only instructive but full of beautiful thoughts. What a lovely world this might be, if only every one could be taught at first only to try to live up to many of the Islamic tenets. Based on its foundation of "peace" every conceivable beautiful thought could be made to grow and flourish.

I am sorry to have to say it, but it is a fact that millions of us, Western peoples, have not only been purposefully kept in ignorance about everything of this kind, but were taught almost at our mother's knees to hate and despise everything which comes from the East, with the almost single exception of our Christian Bible. Is it too much to hope that this great barrier between East and West, in these days of broadcasting, will yet be broken down, and this in the very near future ?

Again thanking you.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN JAGGERS.

EAST HORSLEY, LEATHERHEAD,

The 23rd November 1931.

DEAR SIR,

As one of the Gilbert White Fellowship Party, who visited the Mosque recently, I was much interested in the pamphlet "What is Islam?"

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If it is not troubling you too much, I should be very glad if you could let me have two more copies of this, as I have been asked to lend mine, and do not wish to part with it. It is quite the best exposition of the Islamic creed that I have come across.

I may add that one of the papers is required for a Church of England Clergyman, who had spent many years in India and has recently come to this district.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours truly,

(Miss) O. I. WARD.

OUR WOKING LETTER.

MR. HARUN FAWLKES AT THE MOSQUE.

On Sunday, the 13th December, the day of our weekly lecture, there came to the Mosque a brilliant youth, Mr. C. J. Howard Fawlkes, the worthy son of Brigadier-General Howard Fawlkes. His visit was a consequence of our invitation. Only the other day we came to know from Lady Ali Baig that Mr. Fawlkes had been a Muslim long since, and that his name in Islam was Harun. Our pleasure knew no bounds, and we were very anxious to have him in our midst. He was also very much pleased to be in our company, and spent the whole day with us. He has been a subscriber to the *Islamic Review* for many years past, and has a thorough knowledge of the Qur-án. He loves the Arabic language and its script.

SIR UMAR HUBERT C. RHYS RANKIN, BART.

Sir Umar Hubert Rankin, Bart., is now staying at the mosque to master the technical aspect of the Islamic prayers. He intends to stay here during the month of Ramadan, to take advantage of the facilities provided at

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the mosque during the month of Fast. He is also engaged in the affairs regarding his inheritance from his father. Muslim brothers all the world over should pray for the continuity of faith in a Muslim of his type, because he is one of those few Muslims who will prefer to lose everything in the world rather than effect a compromise in matters religious. His frankness in such matters is pinching to others, but his sincerity shines through all his actions, and he never hesitates in inviting others to the faith of his adoption.

OURSELVES AND SPIRITUALISTS.

We have been receiving numerous invitations from various spiritualist associations to speak at their meetings. Up to this time we have addressed the Brixton Psycho Society, the Hackney Independent Lyceum Church and the Kingston Spiritualistic Society. The audiences were very large and consisted of persons of a very high standard of thinking. The attitude of these people is so very promising that it makes us very often regret that we cannot give more attention to them. However, we are doing our utmost.

NO SECTS IN ISLAM.

We have more often than not laid stress that Islam knows of no sects. In this connection we are pleased to note that during the Conference of Muslims which was recently held at Jerusalem the whole body of Sunni and other Muslims said their prayers behind a Shia Imam. The vital unifying force of Islam is thus asserting itself in a marvellous way in spite of the enemies' attempt to the contrary.

AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMED.

ISLAMIC REVIEW.

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

INTRODUCTION

BY KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

(Continued from Vol. XX, page 40.)

CHAPTER I.

EXISTENCE OF GOD.

The subject now needs no elaborate arguments in its support, especially when Science accepts it as a verity. A century before, Biology took the Universe as a freak of Nature which in her works, as the then atheistic belief went, observed no order or system. But to-day the rule of the Law has been admitted on all hands. Everything in the world appears to have been enchained by the Law. It follows¹ it implicitly. Nature discloses regularity, precision, punctuality, knowledge, power, command, intellect, pre-ordination, pre-arrangement, pre-caution, and several other features that are the possessions of the mind exclusively. In their presence the universe cannot be taken as the outcome of accident. It needs an intelligent Design to precede the process of its creation. The word design sometimes used to bore minds with sceptic tendencies, but it has become now widened in its connotation. It brings within it so many facts and figures recently discovered by Science that disbelief in God would amount to ignorance. But how wonderful of the Holy Qur-án to anticipate, in its pages, all that Science advances to substantiate her belief in Divine Existence. It in itself is an extra-cogent reason, firstly, to believe in an Omnis-

¹ 3 : 82.

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cient Being and, secondly, as to the Divine Origin of the Book itself.

The Holy Book, though teeming with reasons on the subject, adopts also another novel but laconic method to explain its verities. It gives us a list of Divine Attributes which in their signification also imply the best of logic needed to prove all Qur-ánic tenets. Here I would give some such Holy Names as work everywhere in Nature, and also strongly refer to the Existence of the Mind who created the universe. I have already explained *Al-Rabb*. This includes :—

Al-Bádee—He who creates out of nothing. *Al-Bárió*, *Al-Báree*—He who originates things with various faculties in them. *Al-Bátin*—He who knows latent and hidden properties of things. *Al-Záhir*—He who brings things to manifestation. *Al-Wájid*—He who finds and knows the whereabouts of the required things. *Al-Jámé*—The collector of things in the place they are needed. *Al-Jabbár*, *Al-Qahhár*—He who subjects others to His Will and makes them to work according to His wishes to their good. *Al-Kháliq*—He who combines things in a given proportion to create new things. He fixes the said proportion first. *Al-Rasheed*—He who puts things on the right path. *Al-Hádi*—He who guides further progress on right lines. *Al-Razzáq*—The nourisher. *Al-Rahmán*—He who pre-arranges the needful. *Al-Mohsi*—He who comprehends (every necessity). *Al-Básit*—He who expands. *Al-Qábiz*—He who contracts. *Al-Mané*—He who guards things against the encroachment of other destroying factor. *Al-Muqueet*—The Controller. *Al-Raqeeb*—He who watches every movement. *Al-Akhir*—He who brings things to their final development.

These Attributes refer to various functions of Mind that are observed even in the creation of a single thing.

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The Holy Qur-án did a real service to Scientific research through Divine Attributes. It facilitated investigation. These names supply us with a sure data, and in the light of their significance we proceed in our research work as the Qur-án itself suggests when it asks us to study Nature. In Chapter 3, Verse 190, it clearly says that in studying things in the universe we have to keep these Attributes of God before our mind. The Muslim scientists put the above-mentioned names on their chart as a guide and took no time to discover the laws working in Nature for creation.

I read a beautiful episode in the writings of a Moorish Divine called Mohy-ud-Din ibne Arabi. He once was asked as to the colour which Divine Light assumed when the universe became emanated :—

“ Black was the colour ” was the reply. He also gave reasons for this conclusion. If light was the material out of which the heavens and the earth were made,¹ it must be of black hue ; because the colour was in consonance with the Attribute *Al-Bátin*, which means “ He Who is Hidden and Unseen.” There was a time preceding Creation when everything was hidden. No sooner the said light assumed other colours than it came to work under another Divine Attribute called *Al-Záhir*—the Manifest. It was a minute’s thinking on the part of Mohy-ud-Din to arrive at the conclusion. But Science took ages to find out that a dense and impenetrable substance popularly called ether stands at the commencement of every thing.

It is not surprising now to find out the reason for the adversity which has blighted the economic condition of the present-day Muslims. They, in the words of the Qur-án, turned their² backs upon its teachings. They have but to thank their own inadvertence and their neglect of

¹ 24 : 35. ² 25 : 30.

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the Qur-án. Let them study the conditions precedent to progress as laid down in the Qur-án, they are the same as have crowned modern scientific efforts with success ; and if they find that they are those which I propose to set out in this book, then they must rue the day when they became regardless of their sacred Scripture. Now, a word to Modern Culture. If the world made no progress in material civilization till the appearance of Islam, and if their then success owed its very existence to certain truths revealed in the Qur-án, how can they minimize the importance of Religion ? On the other hand, I would ask the rest of the religious world to ponder over these facts. Is it worth while to follow any religious system in these days of Culture and Progress, if their respective revelations do not invite our attention to the essential necessary things in life ?

CHAPTER II.

QUR-ÁN : A BOOK FROM GOD.

MIRACULOUS BEAUTIES OF THE QUR-ÁN.

I have shown the necessity of a Divine Revelation to man, as well as for a Book like the Qur-án. But it is also necessary to give reasons which will persuade the reader of these pages to accept the Holy Qur-án as a Book from God. Its Revealer felt the necessity Himself, as I find at the very outset.¹ The Book after speaking of two classes of people, firstly, those² who will benefit by it, and, secondly, those³ who will not care to receive light from its guidance, makes this very important statement. It says definitely that the world⁴ with all its resources has been created for the use and benefit of the human race. But inasmuch as they need a proper guidance in

¹ 2 : 23. ² 2 : 1—5. ³ 2 : 6 : 20. ⁴ 2 : 21.

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the form of a Book, that Book should come from the Lord, and to prove that it contains a Message from Him it should possess a quality that will distinguish it from books written by men. It is the uniqueness of things in Nature that gives them the character of being from God. Similarly we read in Chapter 2 : 23 :—

“ And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your helpers, beside Allah, if you are truthful.”

A similar challenge is contained in Chapter 10 : 38, and in Chapter 11 : 13, where the doubters are invited to produce ten chapters like it, while in Chapter 17 : 88, the whole of mankind is declared to be unable to produce a Book like the Qur-án.

QUR-ÁN : A MIRACLE.—The Sacred Book has various miraculous features about it which should be borne in mind. It has been admittedly the most successful of all sacred books in its mission. It came first to a people verging on the borders of animality and raised them from thence to the acme of civilization within the shortest period recorded in history for such a transformation. It changed the destinies of the world by bringing the greater portion of it under its healthy influence, while setting the remainder on the right path to civilization. The Book still remains a source of inspiration to the human race, inculcating the noblest of ideals—Monotheism, Universalism and Democracy. Though it gives the true solutions to all the important problems of humanity and provides for every contingency of life, yet it is wonderfully laconic. It condenses the whole of its teaching into 6,666 verses.

STYLE.—The Qur-án is a miracle for its diction and style. We can sometimes read volumes in a chapter, chapters in a verse, and in a single word perceive a veritable

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treasure of knowledge, yet it is in no wise dogmatic. It produces logical reasons for every one of its tenets. It appeals to things in Nature for confirmation of its truths. Thus, its opening words are marvellously pregnant with sublime significance. They are as follows :—

“ All praise (*hamd*) is for Allah, the *Rabb* (The Creator and Maintainer) of the worlds.” This sentence is not only an epitome of various teachings, but it contains the purest of logic to support its assertions. It speaks of the Deity, Whom it calls The *Rabb*.

Science observed many things in Nature before it believed in the existence of the First Intelligent Cause. It saw the whole of Nature bound with the chains of laws which, though apparently conflicting in some cases, yet worked in harmony as if under a single controlling hand. Science observed Design and Evolution worked out under Intellect, Knowledge and Power. This led biology to give up its earlier atheistical beliefs and accept God as the Mover of the whole machine ; but it is marvellous to find that the Qur-án here anticipates Science. The Book refers to the above-mentioned verities among many other things, when speaking of God : but surely it is the wonder of wonders that the very meaning of the word “ *Rabb* ” should also cover them. The phrase “ The Creator of the worlds ” is preceded by the word “ *Al-Hamd*,” which first means praise, eulogy and approbation ; and, secondly, our submission to the ways of the Creator ; for by saying “ *hamd* ” we express our willingness to submit to His laws, and the literal interpretation of “ *Islam* ” is “ submission.” Technically it means Obedience to the Laws of God. Thus the Qur-ánic sentence, besides expressing our intelligent belief in the existence of the Deity, refers to our creed of life, that is to say, our religion—the religion of obedience and com-

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mandment. If God has been pleased to base His work of creation on laws, as the word "Rabb" denotes, our very existence and its proper evolution would command us to observe these laws. We cannot live, even for a moment, without them. Yet, even so, we do not know all the necessary laws and, therefore, Revelation must come from God to enlighten us.

Every Prophet of God, as the Qur-án says, came with one and the same message. They all taught us to obey Allah or *Rabb*. If Allah is the Source of all laws, and *Rabb* promulgates the ways of creation and sustenance, we cannot remain indifferent to such laws. This is the religion of which the Qur-án speaks.

The sentence under discussion, "All praise (or submission) is for Allah, the Creator of the Worlds," refers also to the nature of the religion we have to observe. Science and the Qur-án alike speak of various worlds into which we have passed from the beginning up to the present stage of sojourn, which is the final stage of our physical growth. Here we stand at the threshold of a "New Creation."¹ It has been, up to now, the world of matter, now we enter into that of consciousness. We have found the means of subsistence in every sphere into which we have entered during the journey, and, in it, have become prepared for our progress in the sphere immediately following it. We naturally look to our Creator for nourishment in this world as well as for our preparation for the next, if any. We are on the mental plane now, and need intellectual food; we need knowledge of the ways of progress on the mental, moral, and spiritual planes, since they are the chief constituents of the present and the coming world; we need a revelation from God. Thus a single sentence of four words—*Al-hamdo lillahi Rabbil A'lameen*

¹ 23 : 14.

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—All submission to *Rabb* of the Worlds—conveys a world of truth in it.

Here I have spoken of only one aspect of the Qur-ánic style. I purposely avoid what the Arabic scholars have written in volumes in explaining the various other miraculous beauties of its diction and style as it is beyond the appreciation of an average reader. It needs attainment of a very high scholarly knowledge of the language itself to understand it.

PROPHECIES IN THE QUR-AN.—Like everything in creation the Qur-án has baffled all human efforts to produce another book like it in matter of diction and style. But there are other proofs which show that the Book could not emanate from a human brain. Prophecies and their fulfilment, for example, have been spoken of as proof of Divine Messengership in the Book of Deuteronomy. But the prophecy should not be mere guesswork, nor couched in oracular terms of mystery. It should be made at a time and under circumstances that make its occurrence an impossibility. Such prophecies I find in the Qur-án :—

(1) *The Qur-án will retain its purity.*—It appeared among a most illiterate people. The art of writing was then in its infancy throughout the whole world. Human memory was the only custodian of ancient history, and this affected the purity of such records as there were. For this very same reason almost all Sacred Literature could not remain in its original text. The Qur-án,¹ at this period of history, claimed that it would remain free from all corruptions; and to-day we find the prophecy fulfilled up to the hilt. It was made in the clearest and most authoritative terms, and it could only have come from One Who possessed the knowledge of coming events and

¹ 15 : 9.

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had also the power to create things that would make His words a reality.

(2) *Islam shall succeed.*—Muhammad, though of noble extraction among the Meccans, was, immediately after his claims to Prophethood, completely deserted by almost all his kith and kin. Most of his uncles and cousins became his mortal enemies, since they were the custodians of the great temple of idols. They owed their income and all honour to idolatry, while the new Prophet was raised to eradicate that form of worship from the earth. He had to work against heavy odds; not only did he meet discouragement, but also every hardship and persecution, and these of a most terrible nature. Every effort was made to put an end to his mission. He had but few followers, but they were all subjected to every kind of oppression and tyranny. They left their homes for good, as did the Prophet, after 13 years persecution at a juncture when the enemy decided to murder him and had besieged his house for that purpose, but he escaped. The Qur-án spoke many a time of the unique success¹ that will come to the Prophet during his lifetime. The prophecy was repeated, especially on those occasions when the hostility of his enemies became more and more embittered. It was prophesied that the whole of Arabia would embrace Islam, and that the enemies of the Prophet would be at his feet,² and that the faith would extend to the four corners of the world with its tenets prevailing over³ the doctrines of all other religions. The last portion of the prophecy is in the course of its fulfilment to-day, when Monotheism, Universalism and Democracy with various other Qur-ánic tenets vigorously preached for the first time in that Holy Book, are becoming increasingly popular.

¹ 93 : 5, 18 : 1—3, 108 : 1, 24 : 58. ² 70 : 36—39, 20 : 108.

³ 61 : 9, 48 : 28, 9 : 3.

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(3) *Total Defeat of the Meccans.*—I have just referred to the flight of the Prophet to Medina. He settled there, but he had hardly time to arrange his affairs in his new place of residence when he heard of his enemy's march against him. With a small band of three hundred and thirteen men, most of whom were inexperienced and under age, he left Medina. At a distance of thirty miles from that city the Muslims saw more than one thousand veteran soldiers, the flowers of Meccan bravery, marching against them. It was a disheartening scene. The Prophet in his tent prostrated himself in prayer to the Almighty, when Abu-Bakr, the first Caliph, came to him and reminded him of the prophetic words that had been revealed years before at Mecca. In fact, that very prophecy had become a household word with every Muslim before the battle took place. Abu-Bakr left the tent and recited the prophetic words to everyone with whom he met. It is a matter for surprise, perhaps, that the small Muslim band, though facing certain death, were in the best of spirits on this occasion. They believed that that mighty force had come to meet its own destruction in fulfilment of the prophecy.¹

There is nothing in history to equal the event at Badr—the scene of the conflict. Though but a small scuffle between one thousand men on one side and some three hundred on the other, it produced far-reaching results in the history of the world, as Gibbon says : “ It changed the destinies of the whole human race. Not only did it save Islam, but it enabled the faith to rule the world in the future.” The Qur-án has spoken of it as a great witness to the truth of Islam.² It has also been mentioned clearly in the Old Testament.³

¹ 54 : 45.

² 3 : 22, 8 : 41.

³ Book of Isaiah.

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(4) *The Final Fall of the Enemy.*—I read of another prophecy in chapter xxxviii of the Qur-án which became revealed years before the occurrence of which it speaks. The chapter refers to the time when opposition to Islam was approaching its height ; the immediate prospects of the Prophet were of the gloomiest description. At this juncture he received the following words from the Most High : “ A mighty host of the Allies shall be here put to flight.” It was the fourth year of the Hijra when the enemies of the Prophet made their last attempt to uproot Islam. Almost all the tribes of Arabia banded together and marched on Medina. The town was besieged and trenches were dug by the followers of the Prophet to defend it. His force was insignificant in number and powerless before the mighty host which was approaching, but instead of losing heart they rejoiced greatly on account of the said prophecy. The time for its fulfilment, they thought, had arrived. The Holy Book¹ speaks thus of the event : “ And when the believers saw the Allies, they said, ‘ This is what Allah and His Apostle promised us, and Allah and His Apostle spoke the truth ’ ” ; and it served but to increase their faith. The Allies refer to the prophecy and the battle is called the Battle of the Allies. The result was the total overthrow of the Meccans and the fulfilment of the mighty prophecy.

(5) *The Defeat of the Persians by the Romans.*—The struggle between these two nations was of long standing. It began in A. C. 602. When Chosroes the Second, of Persia, set out to avenge the death of Maurice, who had been murdered by Phocas, his armies ravaged Syria and Asia Minor, and in 608 advanced as far as Chalcedon. In 613 and 614, Damascus and Jerusalem were taken by the general Shahabaraz, and the Holy Cross was carried away

¹ 33 : 22.

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in triumph. Soon after, even Egypt was subdued, the Romans being able to offer but little resistance, torn as they were by internal dissensions and hard pressed by Avars and Slavs.—(*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Article Chosroes II.)

The Meccans rejoiced at the news of the Roman defeat, because of their ancient friendship with the Persians. But the following revelation came to the Holy Prophet at the very time when the news of the Roman defeat arrived, “I am Allah, the Best Knower. The Romans are vanquished *in a near land, and they, after being vanquished, shall overcome within a few years* Allah’s is the *command before and after* ; *And on that day the believers shall rejoice.*”¹

The revelation made in 616 contained two different prophecies, which I have italicized in the above quotation. One was concerned with the overthrow of the Persians by the Romans, who had become utterly powerless by that time, and the other foretold the fall and defeat of the Meccans at the hands of but a few Muslims. The time given in the text for the fulfilment of the prophecy is “Bid’aa,” which literally means a period from three to nine years. The prophecy became, at the time of its revelation, the subject of heated discussion between Muslims and non-Muslims at Mecca ; so much so that Abu-Jehl, the arch-enemy of Islam, wagered seventy camels with Abu-Bakr as to the issue of the prophecy. The events foretold were at that time a sheer impossibility. They could not be a political forecast, seeing that they determined such highly improbable events with exactness and precision, especially when “the Greeks were so distressed that there appeared little likelihood of their being able to retrieve their fortune,” as Palmer rightly points out, when commenting on these verses in his English translation of

¹ 30 : 4.

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the Qur-án. In the year following the revelation, "the Persians proceeded to lay siege to Constantinople itself," which showed the hopeless condition of the Romans at that time.

However, in A. C. 624, Heraclius advanced into Northern Media. He destroyed the great fire-temple of Gondzak and routed a large Persian army. The Romans returned victorious, leaving the Persians totally defeated. It was about this time that a handful of persecuted Muslims vanquished the powerful forces of Mecca at Badr, where Abu-Jehl, who had wagered against the fulfilment of the prophecy, was among the slain. A foolish critic might, perhaps, describe the revelation as a chance or coincidence, the defeat of a mighty people like the Persians and the Meccans by those of fallen estate (the Romans and the Muslims); but how can he explain the synchronizing of the two events of quite different characters, especially when the happenings at Badr were a sequel to the flight of the Prophet from Mecca? No one could have even dreamed of the flight at the time of the prophecy, and what is then to be said of its occurrence in the year 623 of the Christian Era, when the Meccans one year after it would pursue the flying Prophet and fall at Badr in 624, the year after the Persian defeat by the Romans? It is a most curious event in the history of the world, especially when we find that the event at Badr occurred one year after the flight, as was foretold in the prophecy of the "Burden of Arab" in the Old Testament as given in the Book of Isiah, which clearly says that the power of Kedar—the ancestors of the Meccans—would fall just one year after the flight; and so it occurred.

(6) *The Recovery of Pharaoh's drowned body.*—The drowning of Pharaoh with his people in the river Nile was a well-known Biblical story at the time of the revela-

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tion of the Qur-án. But the old record said that the body of Pharaoh was never found and the river was his grave ; but the Qur-án contradicted the Biblical narrative and gave a striking new version of the episode in the following words : “ But We will this day deliver thee with thy body that thou mayest be a sign to those after thee.” The Christian critics of the Qur-án declared it this Qur-ánic statement to be a fabrication, seeing that the Book of Exodus gave quite a different story. But the last century discovered the body of Rameses, the Pharaoh of Moses, preserved among the mummies of Egypt. The body must have been cast ashore and then embalmed by the Egyptians. No one in the world knew of it, but the Qur-án revealed it some two thousand years after the event, and I may say that the world took thirteen hundred years more to confirm the truth spoken of in the Qur-ánic pages.

(7) *The exalted position of its scribes.*—The Book also said that it would see among its scribes men of very high rank.¹ The prophecy became fulfilled even in this respect, when the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, and many other kings, wrote the Qur-án with their own hands.

(8) *Scientific Predictions.*—(a) By these predictions I mean the revelations of certain scientific truths, that have recently been acknowledged, but were mentioned by the Qur-án at a time when no one in the world knew of them, and would have nothing to do with sciences. For example, very little was known of biology in those days, but the Qur-án, in the clearest terms, speaks of water as the producer of life.² The Book is not a treatise on Science. It merely refers to certain phenomena in nature for the purpose of elucidating its principle

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underlying Nature. Since it comes from the Omniscient Lord, it cannot, like the Book of Genesis, impart wrong knowledge.

(b) It is, moreover, a recent discovery that everything in the universe has got its mate or supplement for procreative purposes, but the Qur-án disclosed the secret in 51: 49 in the clearest terms.

(c) I have spoken elsewhere of the earth¹ and its formation, but geology has to-day confirmed, word for word, everything revealed by the Qur-án as to the earth and its several stages of growth from a fiery² mass.

(d) The Qur-án speaks of the life-germ—the seminal fluid—as the essence of earthly matter. It speaks³ of the various stages through which it passes when in a woman's womb before it evolves into human shape, and the Qur-ánic statement has been verified to-day by physiology.

(e) The art of navigation was discovered and brought to a high pitch of perfection by early Muslims. Though everyone before Islam knew well enough that the blowing of the winds did aid the course of the ship on the sea, the Qur-án disclosed a wonderful truth so helpful to navigation that the winds might be made subservient to human will, and the mighty ocean itself would become the servant of man as soon as he acquired proper knowledge.⁴

(f) The world knew something of the heavens in early days, but the Qur-án increased immensely our knowledge of the subject. It inspired the early Muslims to rescue astronomy from the clutches of astrology and place it on a strictly scientific⁵ basis, leading to many valuable discoveries. The Qur-án not only asserted that the luminaries moved in their respective orbits, but it revealed that

¹ See Chapter on Cosmogony of the Qur-án.

² 41: 11. ³ 23: 12—14.

⁴ 14: 32, 33.

⁵ 36: 38, 90.

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each orbit or sphere consisted of a sort of liquid¹ matter in which it floated ; this again is a recent discovery.

(g) No one knew of the roundness of the earth in pre-Islamic days, but the Qur-án clearly hints at this when it speaks of numberless Easts and Wests. No one, in those days, could imagine a thing like that, as seeing that they thought of one East and one West. Even certain religious scriptures give ridiculous explanations of the setting of the sun in the West and its rising again from the East. The present division of the hemisphere into East and the West is a man-made barrier. But as in the course of the progress of Islam it had to assume a certain political importance, the Qur-án spoke of two Easts and two Wests. But if the earth be round, every inch of it is a new East and a new West. If, for instance, " B " is distant two hundred miles from " A " which, let us suppose, is situated to the West of " A," the sun will rise there some three minutes before it will rise at " B." Similarly, it will set at " B " three minutes after it has set at " A." If, therefore, we take places on the hemisphere two hundred miles apart as rising and setting places for the sun, there will be thousands of Easts and Wests on the earth, thus confirming the truth of the Qur-án.

The Book may be man's handiwork, but if it is, its author must be a person of transcendental mental calibre, as well as a law-giver, a nation-builder, and a moralist of the loftiest ideals and one fully conversant with the various " ologies," etc., that have been discovered in modern days: geology, botany, biology, physiology, astronomy, geography, etc. This proves that the revelation of the Qur-án is from an All-Knowing Being.

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Freedom from variation.—Another feature of the Book which has always struck me as a very strong proof of its Divine origin is its freedom from variations. It makes these claims for itself.¹ It should not be forgotten that the Book that acquired its present shape under Divine Revelation, spread over a period of twenty-three years. Though such a period is long enough to bring changes into the life of every man, yet Muhammad passed it in exceptional and varied adventurous circumstances. His life was full of vicissitudes. Beginning life as an honourable trader, he almost at once became the preacher of a new religion. He was forsaken and persecuted in every possible manner. He fled for his life, and then re-appeared as a victorious soldier; he conquered his enemies in many battles and reduced them to complete subjection. Indigence and affluence, adversity and prosperity, he experienced in their most extreme form, and the Holy Book acquired its revelation under circumstances such as these. Had it been a figment of the Prophet's mind his environment must have affected the Book in every way, but in it there is no sign of this. Again, the language of an author, as well as his diction and style, offers aspects of contrast as regards his own writing at different periods of his life. His early efforts show a certain rawness. Efficiency and ability comes to him gradually, but his style is apt to dwindle in its beauty when he approaches old age. We find nothing of this kind in the Qur-án. It is a most wonderful exception to the universal rule. Even the earliest revelations contained therein are eloquent in the highest degree, and mastery of the art of writing is kept in the background. If Muhammad had contrived to keep the whole Book from beginning to end a secret, had continued unremittingly to improve it during his lifetime, and then had published it at the end of his life,

¹ 4: 82.

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one might be able to understand the unique and unchangeable character of the Book. But the case is otherwise altogether. Every portion of it was, as it were, broadcast soon after it was revealed. Again, what we find at the beginning of the revelation gets confirmation at the end. The first chapter of the Qur-án is one of the earliest. It was described by the Prophet as the essence of the whole Book. The Qur-án says the same. But we find this truth borne out when the Qur-án became complete. Everything spoken of in the opening chapter was explained at suitable length in the course of the Book. Whatever principles of life were given in the early Meccan days of the revelation were preserved and explained later on. No new principle was ever inculcated to accommodate any unexpected change, such as often beset the life of the Prophet.

The claim of the Qur-án, that it would baffle human efforts to produce its equal, is based on absolute truth. A Book completed in twenty-three years, dealing with every aspect of human life, and yet remaining free from any kind of discrepancy or even a slight variation, is in itself a miracle.

(To be continued.)

MODERNISM IN RELIGION.

BY K. KUDOS.

Islam does not believe in modernising things which come from God. It would be presumptuous on our part to think that modernism can mean improvement on the work of God. If things in Nature owe their creation to the Design of an Omniscient God, He must foresee all coming vicissitudes and provide for the coming events. We find so in the whole creation. New conditions, no doubt, do necessitate repealing of the current order, but we find no change in the material proved by Nature. It comes within our use to meet the new

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emergency. This century may be taken as the time of inventions. Wireless, Broadcast, Aircraft, and Submarines have come within our acquisition within recent times, but we did not invent any material for them. It was only a new mechanism or a re-arrangement of things already in existence. We found a new adaptability for various things in our new machines, but the said properties did already exist inherently in the materials used. Their new properties come within our ken, but they are only discovered. On the other hand, every man-made thing loses its use when events take a new turn. New order demands re-shaping of manual labour. This is the distinction between natural and artificial things, the former does not allow any change, but the latter needs modernisation at each step.

This differentiating principle would also decide the claims of various Books as coming from Divine Origin. They would not, if from God, allow any modernisation of their tenets or *re-interpretation of their text*. New conditions in life must look for something new in theology as well. But if a Book is a Word of God, the language it has been couched in should be broad and rich enough to meet the new demand. Religions based upon human traditions have constantly felt the need of harmony with new ideas, and being tenaciously attached to our respective religions we hasten to modernism at every new cycle of ideas.

Unfortunately, teachings of Jesus lost their genuineness at their very inception. As his religion was rejected by his own tribe, his early followers looked to the gentiles for the support. In order to popularize their faith in the world of the pagans, the early fathers had to subordinate their simple religion to the demands of the people beyond the pale of the Law. Various councils and synods were called to modernise the faith on heathen lines ; so much

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so that the old religion became absolutely metamorphosed by the end of the fifth century. The Revival of Learnings brought forth a new regime which wanted to see religion on a new basis in the West. The Reformation came and satisfied Christian world for some time. Then began a keen struggle between the Church and Science. Though the former made every effort to throttle down the latter, but it survived every persecution and came to prominence in the end. The Church then began to enter on the campaign of compromise. Modernism came to help it. Old doctrines became moulded into new shapes. But as the matter of repealing came into the hands of cultured people—the Modernist Churchmen—it was forsaken as an hopeless task. Doctor Barnes desires now a new creed,¹ “for the creeds,” according to him, “were not vitally infallible in both Religion and Science.” The learned doctor speaks a truism, but his dictum would not hold water if the religion is based on Divine Revelation.

We know very little of the early changes that Hinduism went through for want of history of the Hindus. But it could not remain without modernism as it had been based on human traditions. Last century saw a new modernist in Hinduism in the person of Raja Ram Mohan Rai who was followed in his pursuit by his worthy disciple Keshub Chandra Sen. Brahma Samaj was started by them on theistic lines. Most of their inspirations came from the Qur-án. But as they could not accept the principle of Revelation from without, they had to build a new Church. They made a big departure from Hinduism in its monotheistic tenets. The Raja was succeeded by another modernist in Hindu faith—Daya Nand by name. He founded a new school of thought under the name

The Daily Telegraph, June 1931.

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of Arya Samaj. Though his interpretation of the Vedas—the Hindu Revelation—was not generally accepted by the Hindus, he was of opinion that there was no ploytheism in the Book. But the spirit of modernity carried him beyond reasonable limits. He tried to read all newly discovered things in Science in the Vedas. Steam and electric mechanism was existing in Vedic days according to his interpretation of the Book. The Hindu community suffered a great loss in his demise as no other interpreter of the Vedas could follow his footsteps, otherwise we would have seen mention of Broadcast, Wireless and of Submarine in the ancient scriptures. Unfortunately for Hinduism now its learned votaries have been taken up by politics, the demands of which cannot go hand in hand with ancient Hindu teachings. Spirit of exclusiveness permeates the Hindu religion. It not only divided its followers into various castes, but it would not allow millions of people, popularly called untouchables, the ordinary rights of humanity. This spirit goes detrimentally against the spirit of unification which is the demand of the day. Hindu Nationalists saw the difficulty in their way and had to avow their hopelessness in their religion. Every effort has been made on the lines of Modernism to remove the ban of untouchability from millions of Indians, but all in vain.

Islam and its Book, the Qur-án, needs no Modernism. The Book is comprehensive enough to respond to all new calls. Had it not been so it could not claim to be of Divine Origin. A Book coming from the All-Knowing God should provide for all that which necessitates introduction of Modernism.

WHAT IS ISLAM ?

WHAT IS ISLAM ?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teaching. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.]

ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word Islam literally means : (1) Peace ; (2) the way to achieve peace ; (3) submission ; as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHETS OF ISLAM.—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, *i.e.*, the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's prophets, including Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR-ÁN.—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, but, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number : belief in (1) Allah ; (2) angels ; (3) books from God ; (4) messengers from God ; (5) the hereafter ; (6) the premeasurement of good and evil ; (7) resurrection after death.

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

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

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number : (1) declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad ; (2) prayer ; (3) fasting ; (4) almsgiving ; (5) pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Mecca.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship one God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of all the

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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