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WISDOM OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

BY

MOHAMMAD AMIN

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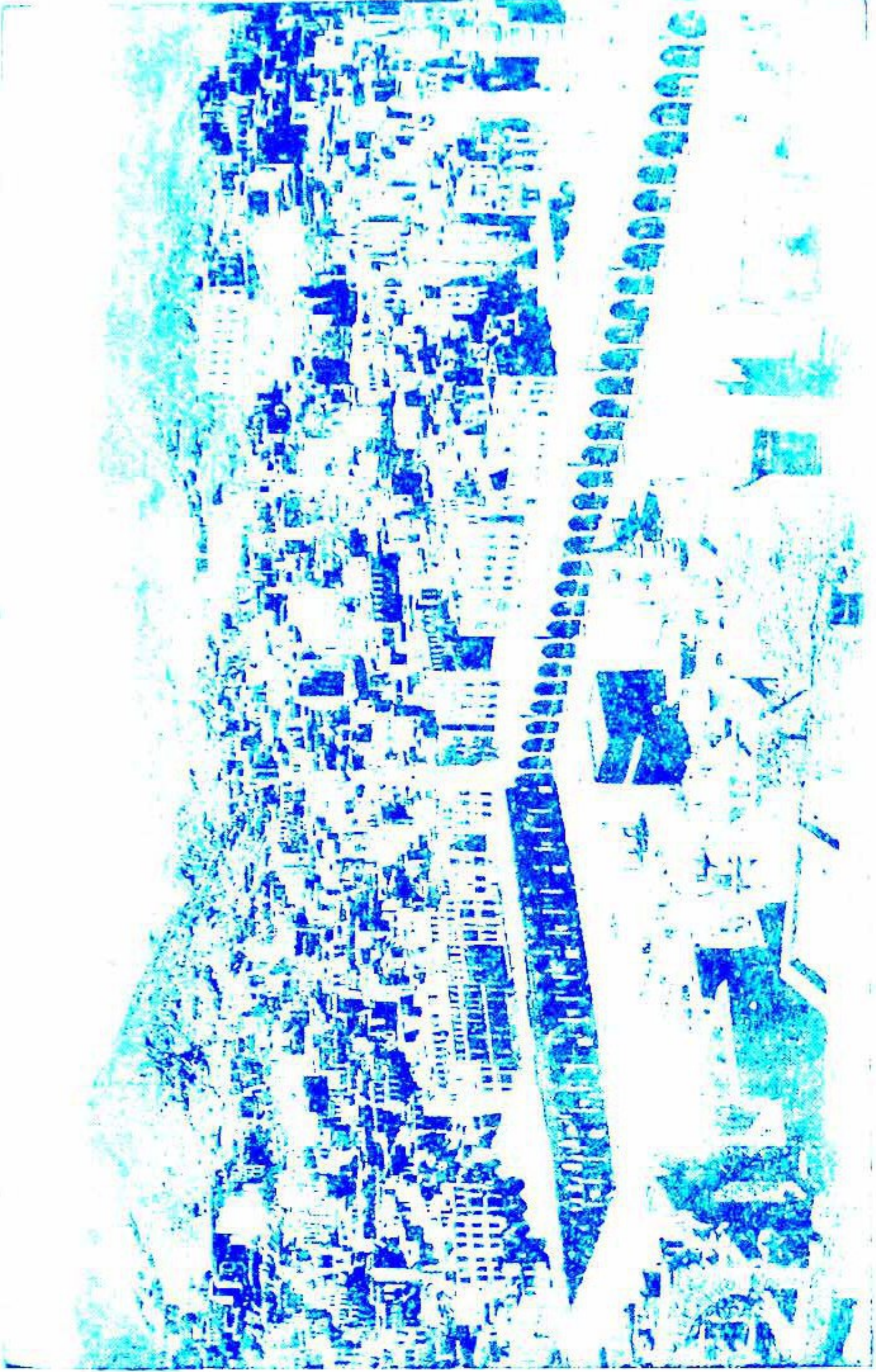
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MECCA
Birth-place of the Holy Prophet

WISDOM OF PROPHET
MUHAMMAD

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
LIFE OF MOHAMMAD - - - - -	9
POLYGAMY AND ISLAM - - - - -	33
WESTERN CIVILISATION AND RELIGION - - - - -	36
MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE - - - - -	38
PLACE OF WOMAN IN ISLAM - - - - -	47
MARRIAGE IN EARLY ISLAM - - - - -	54
STRENUOUS LIFE - - - - -	63
OPINIONS OF GREAT MEN ABOUT MOHAMMAD AND QURAN - - - - -	68
MESSAGE OF ISLAM - - - - -	99
ISLAM—THE RELIGION OF SUCCESS - - - - -	113
PILLARS OF ISLAM - - - - -	118
THE EMANCIPATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN - - - - -	129
THE MESSAGE OF MOHAMMAD - - - - -	133
ISLAM AND NEW ORDER - - - - -	142
SECRET OF HAPPINESS - - - - -	145

THE POWER OF SILENCE	-	-	-	-	149
WOMEN'S DEBT TO PROPHET MUHAMMAD	-				151
THE CURSE OF INTOXICATION	-	-	-		154
ADULTERY AND MONASTICISM	-	-	-		159
MONASTICISM	-	-	-	-	164
ISLAM AND SCIENCE	-	-	-	-	167
THE SAINTLY KHWAJA HASAN	-	-	-		176
THE SAINTLY MUSLIM MISSIONARIES IN INDIA	-				181
MISSIONARY WORK SINCE 1800	-	-	-		189
SAYINGS OF THE HOLY PROPHET MOHAMMAD	-				193
MOHAMMAD AND TEACHINGS OF QURAN	-				203

PREFACE

My friends were constantly asking me to republish in book form my articles which appeared in the *Dawn Times* during the last ten years. The result is this book.

There are a few essays by others interested in Islam which are included in this book.

I hope this book will meet with the same appreciation at the hands of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, which they kindly accorded to my other book: "Muhammad and Teachings of Quran."

Lahore :
July 1945.

MOHAMMAD AMIN,
Bar-at-Law.

Life of Mohammad

by

THOMAS CARLYLE

We have chosen Mohammad not as the most eminent Prophet, but as the one we are the freest to speak of. He is by no means the truest of Prophets; but I do esteem him a true one. Our current hypotheses about Mohammad, that he was a scheming Impostor, a falsehood-incarnate, that his religion is a mere mask of quackery and fatuity, begins really to be now untenable to any one. The lies, which well-meaning zeal had heaped round this man, are disgraceful to ourselves only.

The word this man spoke has been the life-guidance now of a hundred-and-eighty million of men these twelve hundred years. These hundred-and-eighty millions were made by God as well as we. A greater number of God's creatures believe in Mohammad's word at this hour than in any other word whatever. Are we to suppose that it was a miserable piece of spiritual legerdemain, this which so many creatures of the Almighty have lived by and died by? I, for my part, cannot form any such supposition. I will believe most things sooner than that. One would be entirely at a loss what to think of this world at all, if quackery so grew and were sanctioned here.

A false man found a religion? Why, a false man cannot build a brick house! If he does not know

and follow truly the properties of mortar, burnt clay and what else he works in, it is no house that he makes, but a rubbish heap. It will not stand for twelve centuries, to lodge a hundred-and-eighty millions; it will fall straightway. A man must conform himself to Nature's laws, be verily in communion with Nature and the truth of things, or Nature will answer him, no, not at all.

But of a great man, especially of him I will venture to assert that it is incredible he should have been other than true. It seems to me the primary foundation of him, and of all that can lie in him, this. No Mirabeau, Napoleon, Burns, Cromwell, no man adequate to do anything, but is first of all in right earnest about it, what I call a sincere man. I should say sincerity, a deep, great, genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic.

Such a man is what we call an original man: he comes to us at first hand. A messenger he sent, from the Infinite Unknown with tidings to us. We may call him Poet, Prophet, God!—in one way or other, we feel that the words he utters are as no other man's words. Direct from the Inner Fact of things:—he lives, and has to live, in daily communion with that. Really his utterances, are they not a kind of 'revelation'?—what we must call such for want of some other name. It is from the heart of the world that he comes; he is portion of the primal reality of things. God has made many revelations: but this man, too, has not God made him the latest and newest of all? The inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding; we must listen before all to him.

This man Mohammad, then, we will in no wise

consider as an ambitious schemer, we cannot conceive him so. The message he delivered was a real one; an earnest voice from the unknown Deep. The man's words were not false, nor his workings here below; no Inanimity, no simulacrum, a fiery mass of Life cast up from the great bosom of nature herself. To kindle the world, the world's Maker has ordered it so.

The Arabs Mohammad was born among are certainly a notable people. A gifted noble people; a people of wild strong feelings, and of iron restraint over these; the characteristic of noblemindedness, of genius. The wild Bedouin welcomes the stranger to his tent, as one having right to all that is there; were it his worst enemy, he will slay his foal to treat him, will serve him with sacred hospitality for three days, will set him fairly on his way;—and then by another law as sacred, kill him if he can. In words too as in action. They are not a loquacious people, taciturn rather; but eloquent, gifted when they do speak. An earnest truthful kind of men.

It had been from the sacredness attached to the Caabah and Hagar's well (called zem-zem), from the pilgrimages of all tribes of Arabs thither, that Mecca took its rise as a Town. Ten Men of a chief tribe, chosen in some rough way, were the governors of Mecca and Keepers of the Caabah. The Koresh were the chief tribe in Mohammad's time; his own family was of that tribe.

It was among this Arab people, so circumstanced, in the year 570 of our Era, that the man Mohammad was born. He was of the family of Hashem, of a Koresh tribe as we; though poor connected with the chief persons of his country.

Almost at his birth he lost his father ; at the age of six his mother too, a woman noted for her beauty, her worth and sense : he fell to the charge of his grandfather, an old man, a hundred years old. A good old man : Mohammad's father, Abdullah, had been his younger favourite son. He saw in Mohammad, with his old life-worn eyes, a century old, the lost Abdullah, all that was left of Abdullah. He loved this little orphan boy greatly ; used to say : They must take care of that beautiful little boy, nothing in their kindred was more precious than he. At his death he left the little boy in charge to Abu Thaleb, the boy's uncle, who now became the head of the family. By his uncle, a just and rational man as everything betokens, Mohammad was brought up in the best Arab way.

Mohammad as he grew up accompanied his uncle on trading journeys. The eyes of the lad were open and doubtless he had glimpses of many things. These journeys to Syria were probably the beginning of much to Mohammad. But he had no school learning, of the thing we call school-learning none at all. The art of writing was but just introduced into Arabia ; it seems to be the true opinion that Mohammad never could write : Life in the Desert, with its experiences, was all his education.

What of this infinite universe he, from his dim place, with his own eyes and thoughts could take in, so much and no more of it was he to know. Curious if we reflect on it, this of having no books. Except by what he could see for himself, or hear by uncertain rumour of speech in the obscure Arabian Desert, he could know nothing. The wisdom that had been before him at a distance from him in the world, was in a manner as good as not there for him. Of the great brother souls, flame-beacons

through so many lands and times, no one directly communicates with this great soul. He is alone there, deep down in the bosom of the Wilderness; has to grow up so,—alone with Nature and his own Thoughts.

But from an early age, he had been remarked as a thoughtful man. His companions named him *Al-Amin*, 'The Faithful.' A man of truth and fidelity: true in what he did, in what he spoke and thought. They noted that he always meant something. A man rather taciturn in speech: silent when there was nothing to be said; but pertinent, wise, sincere, when he did speak; always throwing light on the matter. This is the only sort of speech worth speaking. Through life we find him to have been regarded as an altogether solid, brotherly, genuine man. A serious, sincere character, yet amiable, cordial, companionable, jocose even;—a good laugh in him withal. One hears of Mohammad's beauty, his fine sagacious honest face, brown florid complexion, beaming black eyes;—I somehow like too that vein on the brow, which swelled up when he was in anger. A spontaneous, passionate, yet just, true-meaning man. Full of wild faculty, fire and light: of wild worth, all uncultured; working out his life-task in the depths of the Desert there.

How he was placed with Khadijah, a rich widow, as her steward, and travelled, in her business, again to the Fairs of Syria; how he managed all, as one can well understand, with fidelity, adroitness; how her gratitude, her regard for him grew; the story of their marriage is altogether a graceful intelligible one, as told us by the Arab authors. He was twenty-five; she forty, though still beautiful. He seems to have lived in a most affectionate, peaceable, wholesome way with his wedded bene-

factoress, loving her truly, and her alone

It goes greatly against the impostor theory, the fact that he lived in this entirely unexceptionable, entirely quiet and commonplace way, till the heat of his years was done. He was forty before he talked of any mission from Heaven. All his irregularities, real and supposed, date from after his fiftieth year, when the good Khadijah died. All his 'ambition' seemingly, had been hitherto, to live an honest life ; his fame, the mere good opinion of neighbours that knew him, had been sufficient hitherto. Not till he was already getting old, the prurien heat of his life all burnt out, and peace growing to be the chief thing this world could give him, did he start on the 'career of ambition' ; and belying all his past character and existence, set up as a wretched empty charlatan to acquire what he could now no longer enjoy. For my share, I have no faith whatever in that.

Ah no ! This deep-hearted son of the Wilderness, with his beaming black eyes and open social deep soul, had other thoughts in him than ambition. A silent great soul ; he was one of those who cannot but be in earnest ; whom Nature herself has appointed to be sincere. While others walk in formulas and hearsays, contented enough to dwell there, this man could not screen himself in formulas ; he was alone with his own soul and the reality of things. The great Mystery of Existence, as I said, glared in upon him, with its terrors, with his splendours ; no hearsays could hide that unspeakable fact. "Here am I !"

Such sincerity, as we named it, has in very truth something of divine. The word of such a man is a Voice direct from Nature's own Heart. Men do

and must listen to that as to nothing else ;—all else is wind in comparison. From of old, a thousand thoughts, in his pilgrimages and wanderings, had been in this man ; “What am I ?” What is this unfathomable thing I live in, which men call Universe ? What is Life, what is death ? What am I to believe ? What am I to do ? The grim rocks of Mount Hira, of Mount Sinai, the stern sandy solitudes answered not. The great Heaven rolling silent overhead, with its blue glancing stars, answered not. There was no answer. This man’s own soul, and what of God’s inspiration dwelt there, had to answer !

It is the thing which all men have to ask themselves ; which we too have to ask and answer. This man felt it to be of infinite moment : all other things of no moment whatever in comparison. The jargon of argumentative Greek Sects, vague traditions of Jews, the stupid routine of Arab Idolatry, there was no answer in these. A Hero, as I repeat, has this first distinction, which indeed we may call first and last, the Alpha and Omega of his whole Heroism, that he looks through the shows of things into things. Use and wont, respectable hearsay, respectable formula : all these are good or not good. There is something behind and beyond all these, which all these must correspond with, be the age of, or they are—*Idolatries* ‘bits of black wood pretending to be God’ : to the earnest soul a mockery and abomination. *Idolatries* never so glided, waited on by heads of the Koresh, will do nothing for this man. Though all men walk by them, what good is it ? The great Reality stands glaring there upon him. He there has no answer it, or perish miserably. Now, even now, or else through all Eternity never ! Answer it ; thou must find an answer.

Ambition? What could all Arabia do for this man; with the crown of Greek Heraclius, of Persian Chosroes, and all crowns in the earth;—what could they all do for him? It was not of the Earth he wanted to hear tell: it was of the Heaven above and of the Hell beneath. All crowns and sovereignties whatsoever, where would they in a few brief years be? To be Sheikh of Mecca or Arabia, and have a bit of gilt wood put into your hands—will that be one's salvation? I decidedly think, not. We will leave it altogether, this impostor hypothesis, as not credible; not very tolerable even, worthy chiefly of dismissal by us.

Mohammad had been wont to retire yearly, during the month of Ramadhan, into solitude and silence; as indeed was the Arab custom, a praiseworthy custom, which such a man, above all, would find natural and useful. Communing with his own heart, in the silence of the mountains; himself silent; open to the 'small still voices:' it was a right natural custom! Mohammad was in his fortieth year, when having withdrawn to a cavern in Mount Hira, near Mecca, during this Ramadhan to pass the month in prayer, and meditation on those great questions, he one day told his wife Khadijah, who with his household was with him or near him this hour: That by the unspeakable special favour of Heaven he had now found it all out; was in doubt and darkness no longer, but saw it all. That all these Idols and Formulas were nothing, miserable bits of wood; that there was one God in and over all; and we must leave all Idols, and look to Him. That God is great; and that there is nothing else great! He is real is the Reality; Wooden Idols are not real: He is real. He made us at first, sustains us yet: we and all things are but the shadow of Him, a transitory garment veiling the Eternal

Splendour. 'Allah-o-Akbar, God is great ;'—and then also 'Islam,' that we must submit to God. 'That our whole strength lies in submission to Him.—'If this be Islam', says Goethe, 'do we not all live in Islam ?' Yes, all of us that have any moral life ! we all live so.

I say, this is yet the only true morality known. A man is right and invincible, virtuous and on the road towards sure conquest, precisely while he joins himself to the great deep Law of the World, in spite of all superficial laws, temporary appearances, profit-and-loss calculations ; he is victorious while he co-operates with that great Central Law, not victorious otherwise ;—and surely his first chance of co-operating with it, or getting into the course of it, is to know with his whole soul that it is, that it is good, and alone good. This is the soul of Islam. This is yet the highest Wisdom that Heaven has revealed to our Earth.

Such light had come, as it could, to illuminate the darkness of this wild soul. A confused dazzling splendour as of life and Heaven, in the great darkness which threatened to be death : he called it revelation and the angel Gabriel ; who of us yet can know what to call it ? It is the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth us understanding.'—That Mohammad's whole soul, set in flame with this grand Truth vouchsafed him, should feel as if it were important and the only important things, was very natural. That Province had unspeakably honoured him by revealing it, saving him from death and darkness ; that he therefore was bound to make known the same to all creatures ; this is what was meant by "Mohammad is the Prophet of God," this too is not without its true meaning.

The good Khadija, we can fancy, listened to

him with wonder, with doubt ; at length she answered : Yes, it was true that he said. One can fancy too the boundless gratitude of Mohammad ; and how of all the kindness she had done, this of believing the earnest struggling word he now spoke was the greatest. 'It is certain,' says Novalis, 'my conviction gains infinitely, the moment another soul will believe in it.' It is a boundless favour— He never forgot this good Khadijah. Long afterwards, Ayesha his young favourite wife, a woman who indeed distinguished herself among the Moslems, by all manner of qualities, through her whole long life ; this young brilliant Ayesha was, one day, questioning him : Now am I not better than Khadijah ? She was a widow ; old, and had lost her looks, you love me better than you did her ? ” No, by Allah ! answered Mohammad : “No, by Allah ! She believed in me when none else would believe. In the whole world I had but one friend, and she was that ! ”— Zeid, his slave, also believed in him, these with his young cousin Ali, Abu Thaleb's son, were his first converts.

He spoke of his Doctrine to this man and that ; but the most treated it with ridicule, with indifference ; in three years, I think, he had gained enough. thirteen followers. His progress was slow enough. His encouragement to go on, was altogether the usual encouragement that such a man in such a case meets. After some three years of small success, he invited forty of his chief kindred to dinner ! and there stood up and told them what his message was : that he had this thing to promulgate abroad to all men ; that it was the highest thing, the one thing : which of them would second him in that ? Amid the doubt and silence of all, young Ali, as yet a lad of sixteen, impatient of the silence, started up and exclaimed in passionate fierce language : That he

would! The assembly, among whom was Abu Thaleb, Ali's father, could not be unfriendly to Mohammad; yet the sight there, of one unlettered elderly man, with a lad of sixteen, deciding on such an enterprise against all mankind, appeared ridiculous to them; the assembly broke up in laughter. Nevertheless it proved not a laughable thing: it was a very serious thing: As for this young Ali, one cannot but like him. A noble-minded man, as he shows himself, now and always afterwards; full of affection, of fiery daring. Something chivalrous in him; brave as a lion; yet with a grace, a truth and affection worthy of Christian knighthood. He died by assassination in the Mosque; a death occasioned by his own generous fairness, confidence in the fairness of others: he said. If the wound proved not unto death, they must pardon the assassin; but if it did, then they must slay him straightway, that so they two in the same hour might appear before God, and see which side of that quarrel was the just one!

Mohammad naturally gave offence to the Koreish, Keepers of the Caabah, superintendents of the idols. One or two men of influence had joined him; the thing spread slowly, but it was spreading. Naturally, he gave offence to everybody: Who is this that pretends to be wiser than we all; that rebukes us all, as mere fools and worshippers of wood? Abu Thaleb the good uncle spoke with him: could he not be silent about all that; believe it all for himself and not trouble others, anger the chief men, endanger himself and them all, talking of it? Mohammad answered. If the sun stood on his right hand and the moon on his left, ordering him to hold his peace, he could not obey: No: there was something in the Truth he had got which war of Nature herself: equal in rank to sun, or moon, or whatever thing nature had made. It would speak

itself there, so long as the Almighty allowed it, in spite of sun and moon, so long as the Almighty allowed it, in spite of sun and moon, and all Koreish and all men and things. It must do that and could do no other. Mohammad answered so; and they say, burst into tears. Burst into tears; he felt that Abu Thaleb was good to him; that the task he had got was not soft, but a stern and great one.

He went on speaking to who would listen to him: publishing his Doctrine among the pilgrims as they came to Mecca: gaining adherents in this place and that. Continual contradiction, hatred, open or secret danger attended him. His powerful relations protected Mohammad himself, but by and by, on his own advice, all his adherents had to quit Mecca, and seek refuge in Abyssinia over the sea. The Koreish grew ever angrier; laid plots, and swore oaths among them, to put Mohammad to death with their own hands. Abu Thaleb was dead, the good Khadijah was dead. Mohammad is not solicitous of sympathy from us: but his outlook at this time was one of the dismalest. He had to hide in caverns, escape in disguise; fly hither and thither; homeless, in continual peril of his life, More than once it seemed all-over with him; more than once it turned on a straw, some rider's horse taking fright or the like, whether Mohammad and his Doctrine had not ended there, and not been heard of at all. But it was not to end so.

In the thirteenth year of his mission, finding his enemies all banded against him, forty sworn men, one out of every tribe, waiting to take his life, and no continuance possible at Mecca for him any longer Mohammad fled to the place then called Yathreb, where he had gained some adherents: the place they now call Medina, or "Medinat al Nabi"

the City of the Prophet," from that circumstance. It lay some 200 miles off, through rocks and deserts; not without great difficulty, in such mood as we may fancy, he escaped thither, and found welcome. The whole East dates its era from this Flight, Hejira as they name it: the Year I of this Hejira is 622 of our Era, the fifty-third of Mohammad's life.

He was now becoming an old man; his friends sinking round him one by one: his path desolate, encompassed with danger: unless he could find hope in his own heart, the outward face of things was but hopeless to him. It is so with all men in like case. Hitherto Mohammad had professed to publish his religion by way of preaching and persuasion alone. But now, driven foully out of his native country, since unjust men had not only given no ear to his earnest Heaven's message, the deep cry of his heart, but would not even let him live if he kept speaking it,—he resolved to defend himself like a man and Arab. If the Koreish will have it so, they shall have it. Tidings, felt to be of infinite moment to them and all men, they would not listen to these; would trample them down by sheer violence, steel and murder: well let steel try it then! Ten years more this Mohammad had; all of fighting, of breathless impetuous toil and struggle; with what result we know.

Much has been said of Mohammad's propagating his religion by the sword. The sword indeed: but where will you get your sword! Every new opinion, at its starting is precisely in a minority of one. In one man's head alone, there it dwells as yet. One man alone of the whole world believes it: there is one man against all men. That he take a sword, and try to propagate with that, will do little for him. You must first get your sword. On the whole a

thing will propagate itself as it can. We do not find of the Christian Religion either, that it always disdained the sword, when once it had got one. Charlemagne's conversion of the Saxons was not by preaching. I care little about the sword. I will allow a thing to struggle for itself in this world. With any sword or tongue or implement it has, or can lay hold of. We will let it preach, and pamphleteer, and fight, and to the uttermost bestir itself, and do, beak and claws, whatsoever is in it ; very sure that it will, in the long run, conquer nothing which does not deserve to be conquered. What is better than itself, it cannot put away, but only what is worse. In this great Duel, Nature herself is umpire, and can do no wrong ; the thing which is deepest-rooted in Nature, what we call truest, that thing and not the other will be found growing at last.

Here, however, in reference to much that there is in Muhammad and his success, we are to remember what an umpire Nature is ; what a greatness, composure of depth and tolerance there is in her. You take wheat to cast into the Earth's bosom : your wheat may be mixed with chaff, chopped straw, barn-sweepings, dust and all imaginable rubbish ; no matter : you cast it into the kind just Earth ; she grows the wheat,—the whole rubbish she silently absorbs, shrouds it in, says nothing of the rubbish. The yellow wheat is growing there ; the good Earth, is silent about all the rest,—has silently turned all the rest to some benefit too, and makes no complaint about it ! So everywhere in nature ! She is true and not a lie ; and yet so great, and just, and motherly in her truth. She requires of a thing only that it be genuine of heart, she will protect it if so ; will not, if not so. There is a soul of truth in all the things she ever gave harbour to. To genuine essence of Truth never dies.

Out of all the rubbish of Arab idolatries, argumentative theologies, traditions, subtleties, rumours and hypotheses of Greeks and Jews, with their idle wire-drawings, Mohammad, with his sincere heart, earnest as death and life, with his great flashing natural eyesight, had seen into the kernel of the matter. Idolatry is nothing : these wooden idols of yours, ye rub them with oil and wax, and the flies stick on them, '—these are wood, I tell you ! They can do nothing for you ; they are an impotent blasphemous pretence ; a horror and abomination if ye knew them. God alone has power ; He made us. He can kill us and keep us alive : Allah-o-Akbar', 'God is Great.' Understand that His will is best for you.

And now if the wild idolatrous men did believe this, and with their fiery hearts laid hold of it to do it, in what form soever it came to them ; I say it was well worthy of being believed. In one form or the other, I say it is still the one thing worthy of being believed by all men. Man does hereby become the high-priest of this Temple of a World. He is in harmony with the Decrees of the Author of this World ; co-operating with them, not vainly withstanding them : I know, to this day, no better definition of Duty than that same.

Islam devoured all the vain jangling setes ; and I think it had a right to do so. It was a Reality, direct from the great Heart of Nature once more. Arab idolatries, Syrian formulas, whatsoever was not equally real, had to go up in flame,—mere dead *fuel*, in various senses for this which was *fire*.

The Mohammadans regard their Quran with a reverence which few Christians pay even to their Bible. It is admitted everywhere as the standard of

all law and all practice ; the message sent direct out of Heaven; which this Earth has to conform to, and walk by ; the thing to be read. Their Judges decide by it, all Moslems are bound to study it, seek in it for the light of their life. They have mosques where it is all read daily. There for twelve hundred years has the voice of this Book, at all moments, kept sounding through the ears and the hearts of so many men.

If a book come from the heart, it will contrive to reach other hearts ; all art and autorcraft are of small amount to that. One would say the primary character of the Quran is that of its *genuineness*, of its being a *bona fide* book.

Sincerely, in all senses, seems to me the merit of the Quran ; what had rendered it precious to the wild Arab men. It is after all the first and last merit in a book ; gives rise to merits of all kinds,— nay, at bottom, it alone can give rise to merit of any kind. Mohammad, with a certain directness and rugged vigour, brings home to our heart the thing his own heart has been opened to. The eye that flashes direct into the hearts of things, and sees the truth of them ; this is to me a highly interesting object. Great Nature's own gift ; which she bestows on all ; but which one in thousands does not cast sorrowfully away ; it is what I call sincerity of vision ; the test of a sincere heart.

Mohammad can work no miracles ; he often answers impatiently : " I can work no miracles. I ? I am a Public Preacher ; appointed to preach this Doctrine to all creatures." Yet the world, as we can see, had really from of old been all one great miracle to him. Look over the world, says he ; is it not wonderful, the work of Allah ; wholly 'a sign to you,' if your eyes were open ! This Earth, God

made it for you : appointed paths in it ; you can live in it, go to and fro on it.—The clouds in the dry country of Arabia : to Mohammad they are very wonderful : Great clouds, he says, born in the deep bosom of Upper Immensity, where do they come from ? They hang there, the great black monsters : pour down their rain deluges to revive a dead earth and grass springs, and tall leafy palm trees with their date-clusters hanging round'. Is not that a sign ? 'Your cattle too.—Allah made them : serviceable dumb creatures ; they change the grass into milk : you have your clothing from them, very strange creatures ; they come ranking home at evening time,' and, adds he, 'and are a credit to you !' Ships also, he talks often about ships ; Huge moving mountains, they spread out their cloth wings, go abounding through the water there. Heaven's wind driving them ; anon they lie motionless, God has withdrawn the wind, they lie dead, and cannot stir !

Miracles ? cries he : what miracle would you have ? Are not you yourselves there ? God made you, 'shaped you out of a little clay.' Ye were small once ; a few years ago ye were not at all. Ye have beauty, strength, thoughts, 'ye have compassion on one another.' Old age comes on you and gray hairs ; your strength fades into feebleness ; ye sink down, and again are not. 'Ye have compassion on one another,' this struck me much : Allah might have made you having no compassion on one another,—how had it been then ? This is a great direct thought, a glance at first hand into the very fact of things. To his eyes it is clear that this world is wholly miraculous.

Much has been said and written about the sensuality of Mohammad's religion ; more than was

just. His religion is not an easy one : with rigorous fasts, lavations, strict complex formulas, prayers five times a day and abstinence from wine, gambling and usury, it did not succeed by being an easy religion. As if indeed any religion, or cause holding of religion, could succeed by that ! It is a calumny on men to say that they are roused to heroic action by ease, hope of pleasure, recompense :—sugarplums of any kinds, in this world or the next. In the meanest mortal there lies something nobler. They wrong man greatly who say he is to be seduced by ease. Difficulty, abnegation, martyrdom, death are the allurements that act on the heart of man. Kindle the inner genial life of him, you have a flame that burns up all lower considerations. Not happiness, but something higher : one sees this even in the frivolous classes, with their 'point honour' and the like, not by flattering our appetites ; not by awakening the heroic that slumbers in every heart, can any religion gain followers.

Mohammad himself, after all that can be said about him, was not a sensual man. We shall err widely if we consider this man as a common voluptuary, intent mainly on base enjoyments,—nay, on enjoyments of any kind. His household was of the frugalest ; his common diet barley bread and water ; sometimes for months there was not a fire once lighted on his hearth. They record with just pride that he would mend his own shoes, patch his own cloak. A poor, hard-toiling, ill-provided man ; careless of what vulgar men toil for. Not a bad man, I should say ; something better in him than hunger of any sort—or these wild Arab men, fighting and jostling three-and-twenty years at his hand, in close contact with him always, would not have revered him so ! They called him Prophet, you say ? Why, he stood there face to face with

them : bare, not enshrined in any mystery ; visible clouting his own cloak, cobbing his own shoes : fighting, counselling, ordering in the midst of them : they must have seen what kind of a man he *was*, let him be *called* what you like ! No emperor with his tiaras was obeyed as this man in a cloak of his own clouting. During three-and-twenty years of rough actual trial. I find something of a veritable Hero necessary for that, of itself.

His last words are a prayer ; broken ejaculations of a heart struggling up, in trembling hope, towards its Maker. We cannot say that his religion made him *worse* : it made him better ; good, not bad. Generous things are recorded of him. When he lost his daughter, the thing he answers is, in his own dialect, every way sincere, and yet equivalent to that of Christians. "The Lord giveth, and the Lord ! taketh away : blessed be the name of the Lord : He answered in like manner of Zaid, his emancipated well-beloved slave, the second of the believers. Zaid had fallen in the War of Tabuc, the first of Mohammad's fightings with the Greeks. Mohammad said, It was well : Zaid had done his Master's work ; Zaid had now gone to his Master : it was all well with Zaid. Yet Zaid's daughter found him weeping over the body ;—the old gray-haired man melting in tears ! "What do I see ? " said she— "You see a friend weeping over his friend," he replied.

He went out for the last time into the mosque, two days before his death : asked if he had injured any man ? Let his own back bear the stripes. If he owed any man ? A voice answered, "Yes me three drachms," borrowed on such an occasion. Mohammad ordered them to be paid : "Better be in shame now," said he, "than at the Day of Judgment."—You remember Khadijah, and the "No, by Allah !"

Traits of that kind show us the genuine man, the brother of us all, brought visible through twelve centuries,—the veritable son of our common Mother.

Withal I like Mohammad for his total freedom from cant. He is a rough self-helping son of the wilderness ; does not pretend to be what he is not. There is no ostentatious pride in him ; but neither does he go much upon humility ; he is there as he can be in cloak and shoes of his own clouting ; speaks plainly to all manner of Persian Kings, Greek Emperors, what it is they are bound to do ; knows well enough, about himself, the ‘ respect due unto thee.’ In a life-and-death war with Bedouins, cruel things could not fail ; but neither are acts of mercy, of noble, natural pity and generosity wanting. Mohammad makes no apology for the one, no boast of the other. They were each the free dictate of his heart ; each called for, there and then. Not a mealy-mouthed man. A candid ferocity, if the case call for it is in him ; he does not mince matters ! The War of Tabuc is a thing he often speaks of : his men refused, many of them, to march on that occasion : pleaded the heat of the weather, the harvest, and so forth ; he can never forget that. Your harvest ? It lasts for a day. What will become of your harvest through all Eternity ? Hot weather ? Yes, it was hot ; but Hell will be hotter ! Sometimes a rough carcasm turns up : He says to the unbelievers. Ye shall have the just measure of your deeds at the Great Day. They will be weighed out to you ; ye shall not have short weight ! — Everywhere he fixes the matter in his eye ; he sees it : his heart, now and then, is as if struck dumb by the greatness of it. Assuredly, he says : that word in the Quran, is written down sometimes as a sentence by itself : ‘ Assuredly.’

No *Dilettantism* in this Mohammad ; it is a busi-

ness of Reprobation and Salvation with him ; of Time and Eternity : he is deadly in earnest about it : Dilettantism, hypothesis, speculation, a kind of amateur-search for Truth, toying and coquetting with Truth : this is the surest sin. The root of all other imaginable sins.

We will not praise Mohammad's moral precepts as always of the superfinest sort ; yet it can be said that there is always a tendency to good in them ; that they are the true dictates of a heart aiming towards what is just and true. The turning the other cheek of Christianity is not here : you are to revenge yourself, but it is to be in measure not overmuch, or beyond justice. On the other hand, Islam, like any great Faith, and insight into the essence of man, is a perfect equaliser of men : the soul of one believer outweighs all earthly kingships ; all men, according to Islam too, are equal. Mahammad insists not on the propriety of giving alms, but on the necessity of it ; he marks down by law how much you are to give, and it is at your peril if you neglect. The tenth part of a man's annual income, whatever that may be, is the property of the poor, of those that are afflicted and need help. Good all this : the natural voice of humanity, of pity and equity dwelling in the heart of this Son of Nature speaks so.

✓ In the Koran there is really very little said about the joys of Paradise ; they are intimated rather than insisted on. Nor is it forgotten that the highest joys even there shall be spiritual ; the pure Presence of the Highest, this shall infinitely transcend all other joys. He says, your salutation shall be, Peace.' Salam. Have Peace ! the thing that all rational souls long for, and seek, vainly here below, as the one blessing. 'Ye shall sit on seats, facing one another :

all grudges shall be taken away out of your hearts.' All grudges ! Ye shall love one another freely ; for each of you, in the eyes of his brothers, there shall be Heaven enough !

In reference to joys of Paradise it should be remembered, enjoying things which are pleasant, that is not the evil : it is the reducing of our moral self to slavery to them that is. Let a man assert withal that he is king over his habitudes : that he could and would shake them off, on cause shown : this is an excellent law. The Month Ramadhan (of fasting) for the Moslem, much in Mohammad's Religion, much in his own Life, bears in that direction, by a certain healthy manful instinct, which is good.

But there is another thing to be said about the Mohammadan Heaven and Hell. The Paradise, the Hell, the great enormous Day of Judgment he perpetually insists on : what is all this out a rude shadow of that grand spiritual Fact, the Beginning of Facts, which it is ill for us too if we do not all know and feel : The Infinite Nature of Duty ? That man's actions here are of infinite moment to him, and never die or end at all ; that man, with his little life, reaches upwards high as Heaven, downwards low as Hell, and in his threescore years of Time holds Eternity fearfully and wonderfully hidden : all this had burnt itself as in flame-characters, into his soul. As in flame and lightning, it stands written there ; awful and unspeakable, ever present to him. With bursting earnestness with a fierce rude sincerity, he strives to speak it, bodies it forth into that Heaven and that Hell. Bodies forth in what way you will, it is the first of all truths. It is venerable under all embodiments. What is the chief end of man here below ? Mohammad has

answered this question, in a way that might put some of us to shame !

He does not like a Bentham, Paley, take Right and Wrong, and calculate, the profit and loss, ultimate pleasure of the one and of the other ; and summing all up by addition and subtraction into a net result, ask you, whether on the whole the Right does not preponderate considerably ? No, it is not better to do the one than the other ; the one is to the other as life is to death.—as Heaven is to Hell. The one must in nowise be done, the other in nowise left undone. You shall not measure them ; they are incommensurable ; the one is death eternal to a man, the other is life eternal. Benthamite Utility, virtue by Profit and Loss, reducing this God's world to a dead brute Steam-engine, the infinite celestial soul of Man to a kind of Hay-balance for weighing and thistles on, pleasures and pains on :—If you ask me which gives, Mohammad or they, the beggarlier and falser view of Man and his Destinies in this universe, I will answer ; It is not Mohammad !—

On the whole we will repeat that this religion of Mohammad has, like Christianity, a genuine element of what is spiritually highest looking through it. His Heaven is symbolical of sacred Duty, and to be earned by faith and welldoing, by valiant action, and a divine patience which is still more valiant. Call it not false : look not at its imperfections, look at the truth of it. For these twelve centuries, it has been the religion and life-guidance of the fifth part of the whole kindred of Mankind. Above all things, it has been a religion heartily believed. These Arabs believe their religion, and try to live by it. No Christians, since the early ages, or only perhaps the English Puritans in modern time, have ever

stood by their Faith as the Moslems do by theirs,—believing it wholly, fronting Time with it, and Eternity with it. This night the watchman on the streets of Cairo when he cries: “Who goes? will hear from the passenger, along with his answer, “There is no god but God.” *Allah Akbar*. Islam sounds through the souls, and whole daily existence, of these millions. Zealous missionaries preach it abroad among Malays, black Papuans, brutal Idolaters;—displacing what is worse, nothing that is better or good.

To the Arab nation it was a birth from darkness into light; Arabia first became alive by means of it. A poor shepherd people, roaming unnoticed in its deserts since the creation of the world: a Hero-Prophet was sent down to them with a word they could believe: see, the unnoticed becomes world-notable, the small has grown world-great; within one century afterwards, Arabia is at Granada on this hand, at Delhi on that;—glancing in valour and splendour and the light of genius, Arabia shines through long ages over a great section of the world. Belief is great, life-giving. The history of a Nation becomes fruitful, soul-elevating, great, so soon as it believes. These Arabs, the man Mohammad, and that one century,—is it not as if a spark had fallen, one spark on a world of what seemed black unnoticeable sand? but to, the sand proves explosive powder, blazing heaven-high from Delhi to Granada. I said the Great Man was always as lightning out of Heaven; the rest of men waited for him like fuel, and then they too would flame.

Polygamy and Islam

by

R. ROBERTS, B.A., Ph.D.

Among the Eastern people polygamy is a recognized practice and it appears Mohammad found no reason why he should abolish the existing custom among the Arabs. And in fairness to Mohammad it must be said that he limited rather than introduced the practice among the Arabs.

Other men than Mohammad have failed to find any evil in polygamy. Hallam points out that the German reformers, even so late as the sixteenth century, admitted the validity of a second or third marriage contemporaneously with the first, in default of issue or other similar causes. And Schopenhaver three centuries later praises the Mormons because they have made converts by throwing off what he terms "the unnatural bondage of monogamy." Similar sentiments may be found in the works of Edward von Hartmann, who observes that the natural instinct of man is in favour of polygamy, and that of woman in favour of monogamy.

Bearing these things in mind, one need not be surprised that Mohammad, an Arab of the seventh century, could see no harm in polygamy and so did not absolutely abolish it. If he could not abolish, he could and did restrict. He enacted that no man should marry more wives than he could adequately

provide for. And this command is generally observed since one wife is the rule among the poorer classes, nor is it by any means confined to these alone.

Although, however, polygamy is sanctioned, one must not think that advantage of this practice is taken by the generality of Muslims. As regards polygamy in India Syed Amir Ali says: A custom has grown up in that country, which is largely followed by all classes of the community, of drawing up a marriage deed containing a formal renunciation on the part of the future husband of any right or semblance of right which he might possess or claim to possess to contract a second marriage during the existence of the first. The custom serves as a most efficacious check upon the growth and perpetuation of the institution of polygamy. In India more than ninety-five per cent of Muslims are at the present moment, either by conviction or necessity, monogamists." The author further refers to the statement of Colonel Macgregor that in Persia only two per cent of the population enjoys the questionable luxury of plurality of wives.

The Rev. T. W. Reese, Calvinistic Methodist Missionary in Sylhet says: With regard to Muslims in Sylhet and Cachar all my experience goes to show that it is an extremely rare thing to find a man with more than one wife. I am sure not even one per cent Muslims avail themselves of the practice. Probably something like one in a thousand would more adequately represent it. And even in these cases where polygamy is practised among them, it is generally due to the absence of any issue by the first wife, and sometimes by her inability, on account of physical disease or weakness, to perform the household duties. The sentiment of the Muslim commu-

nity is decidedly in favour of only one wife.

The custom of female infanticide which was practised among many nations of the East and West was strongly denounced by Mohammad and so in Arabia came to an end. Mohammad deserves praise for it.

The enactments of the Koran concerning the distribution of a deceased person's estate show a great advance upon the unjust customs of pre-Islamic times. Mohammad gave women the right to inherit, possess and acquire property in a way which is not enjoyed even by many modern women.

Western Civilisation & Religion

John Galsworth says in his book "Castles in Spain : "

" Civilisation ? It is learned and wealthy social organisation ? Or is it general gentility ? Without agreeing on any ethical definition we may admit that *the most civilised state will be that wherein is found the greatest proportionate number of happy, healthy, wise and gentle citizens.* Whether civilisation, judged by this standard, has ever been high, is more than doubtful ; it was certainly low before the war, and is at the moment even lower. The Great War, and not a thunderbolt from the blue launched at an unoffending mankind : it was a stealing Fate carefully nurtured within the bosom of modern civilisation, the natural and gradually reached result of a crude competitive system pursued almost to its limits—the climax, in fact, of the individual, political, and national rivalries which have been speeding to this end since the Middle Ages.

"If there be a saving way, at all, it is obviously this : substitute health and happiness for wealth as a world ideal ; and translate that new ideal into action by *education* from babyhood up. To do this, States must reorganise the spirit of education—in other words, must introduce religion ; not the old formal creeds, but the humanistic religion of service for the common weal, the religion of a social honour which puts the health and happiness of all first and the

wealth of self second.”

Speaking of Western civilisation and religion Bernard Shaw says :

“If any religion has the chance of ruling over England, nay, Europe, within the next hundred years, it can only be Islam.

“I have always held the religion of Mohammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess the assimilating capability to the changing phase of existence, which can make its appeal to every age. I believe that if a man like Mohammad were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it much needed peace and happiness.”

Rev. Murray Titus says :

“Islamic brotherhood is a social and spiritual fact. Islam is not only a faith, it is a legal system and a social system as well. Islam does possess a brotherhood which is a unifying factor amid the clashes of colour, race, nationality and class.”

Marriage and Divorce

Islam lays down rational and just laws about marriage and divorce which satisfy the human heart as well as brain. The laws of marriage and divorce in other religions are day by day coming nearer and nearer to Islam.

God says in the Quran that He has created us in couples and put sympathy and affection between the sexes so that we may find consolation and happiness in each other. The marriage in Islam is a social contract entered into by the parties on a footing of equality and by free consent of the parties. At the time of marriage the bridegroom has to make a settlement of dower on the wife which is regarded as a debt on his part and which the wife can demand and legally obtain and on the husband's death is a first charge on his property.

If the husband does not find his wife a suitable companion he can divorce her but will have to pay the stipulated dower at once. He has, according to the Quran, to give three divorces at intervals of one month each, during which period the couple can reconcile so that divorce need not take place. If no reconciliation takes place, the divorce becomes absolute and both parties become free to contract other marriages. If a wife is not satisfied with her husband she can obtain a divorce called *Khulla* on condition of giving up her right to dower. If the parties can agree as to the custody of children they

can do so, otherwise the courts will decide the matter in the best interest of the children.

The Quran provides that where disputes arise between the married couple they should both appoint their arbitrators who should find some amicable settlement of their disputes and restore harmonious relations between them. If the effort of the arbitrators fail, rather than have a lasting unhappiness, the parties can have resort to divorce and marry elsewhere according to their choice. During the continuance of the marriage the husband is bound to support the wife and children of marriage and can be compelled by law to do so. The husband cannot control the property of his wife which remains at her own disposal. She also retains her own name and does not have to call herself Mrs. somebody. She can engage in business, exercise her municipal rights, and in fact is as free a citizen as her husband.

Besides inheriting her parents' property along with her brothers, she inherits also her husband's property along with her children. In matters of religion Islam gives her the same rights as to men, and lays on her similar duties to that of man, such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving, pilgrimage, etc.

The holy Prophet says that the thing which is allowed by the law of Islam but which is not pleasing to God is divorce. The Muslim couple is therefore bound to make every effort at mutual adjustment before resorting to divorce. "A Muslim must not hate his wife," says the Prophet, "and if he be displeased with one bad quality in her, then let him be pleased with another which is good." Similarly wives who are patient with their husbands acquire spiritual merit thereby. Knowledge that

their unreasonableness will lead to divorce makes them behave well towards each other.

Both in France and among the Hindus the wife or her parents have to provide the dowry which becomes the husband's property. Among the Hindus a struggle is going on against exorbitant dowries demanded by prospective husbands. The right to divorce for unhappily married couples and where the husband is very cruel is being demanded. Hindu women are also asking that the law be changed so that they may be able to inherit property along with their brothers. All this shows they are coming in line with Islamic ideas of woman's worth and status which the Holy Prophet accorded to Muslim women about fourteen hundred years ago. The right of Hindu widows to remarry is also more or less conceded now and there are very few adherents of the cruel custom of *Sati*.

In spite of vigorous opposition by the Church in Christian countries the right to divorce has been won by the public after long and bitter struggle. The Roman Catholic Church, however, still consigns to Hell those who obtain divorce from civil courts.

I append hereunder the opinions of some Western thinkers about the matter which shows how anxious they are to adopt the Islamic ideas of marriage and divorce :—

Mr. Bertrand Russel says :

“The Catholic Church is opposed to divorce entirely, on no matter what ground. The Soviet Republic allows divorce on the application of either party. Britain admits only one ground, namely, adultery.

“I do not think that adultery, by itself, should be a ground for divorce. A large percentage of husbands, and a not inconsiderable percentage of wives, are occasionally and more or less casually unfaithful, particularly during enforced separations, without any desire to break up the home or any cessation of mutual affection.

“The most usual ground for divorce ought to be one which at present is allowed in few countries, namely, mutual consent. The law of Britain, like that of New York State, lays it down that there shall be no divorce if both parties desire it. This is inherently absurd.

“The official proof of adultery in court leads to a good deal of scandal, perjuries and disgrace and is a sordid business. If mutual consent is admitted questions of alimony and custody of the children can be settled out of court by private treaty between husband and wife, the court being merely called upon to sanction whatever agreement has been reached.

“There remain, however, such matters as insanity, crime, etc. The failure to recognize these grounds for divorce is an intolerable cruelty, not only to the husband or wife, but also to the children.

“I hold, nevertheless, that, as a matter of private morality, parents ought to be slow to resort to divorce except for grave cause. The way to secure this, however, is not by harsh laws, but by making parents more conscious of their obligations towards children, and of the need of mutual forbearance resulting from the obligations.

“In fine, where there are children, the usual

ground of divorce should be by mutual consent ; other grounds should be insanity, grave crime, habitual drunkenness, and certain other diseases. Adultery *per se* should not be a ground.

Fanny Hurst says :—

“The consensus of procedure among the United States seems to be their unanimous refusal to recognize the contractual aspect of marriage, or to solve the dilemma of divorce like any other violation of legal agreement between the parties.

“The Church keeps shrieking : *Whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder*. But many men and women are lured into marriage by false signals of passion resulting in adultery, incompatibility, non-support, cruelty, desertion, etc. The effect of holding such rotting marriage together, or trapping the child in the vice of a home built on the sands of distrust, hate, and disillusionment is beyond estimate ; an estimate neither the Church nor the State seems inclined to ponder upon.”

H. G. Wells says :

“ I would not have the State intervene to make people live together or oblige them to live apart. I would not have it penalized any wavering of desire. If either or both parties to a marriage fell short in their duty (to their children) that the State should appoint trustees and assessors with authority and power to recall them to their responsibility, with the power to call them together and arrange the best working scheme for the child or children concerned. In case of childless marriages I do not see why the State, that overworked institution, should be compelled to act as a register for their sterile or

sterilized associations and partings.”

Theodore Dreiser says :

Two people who at the best neither understand themselves nor each other and in youth are moved to a high degree (in some cases wholly by a primal and utterly sensual passion, of which throughout the Christian era they have been told to be ashamed and evasive, are socially and so legally made to declare that if permitted to join each other in this relationship they will do this, that and the other ; honour, obey, cherish, support, and so on, “till death do us part.”

And then somewhere it is added—and with what appalling ignorance and effrontery—“*Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.*”

Yet in most cases there are changing temperaments and enlarging vision. And may be the wrong girl or the wrong man. And rows, and bitterness and quarrels.

Fine lovely ! But man and wife just the same *until death do them part.*

In Russia marriage is no longer the binding thing that it once was. Divorce is easy—merely a declaration of intention to separate. Better still, there is nothing in it on that score for either Church or State ; no shabby, grafting lawyers or priests or ministers, no conniving relatives or friends ; no overcrowded courts with sociologically uninspired judges, or priests or preachers with outworn ceremonies and sacraments, at so much per ceremony or sacrament (easy money for fat, loafing hierarchical shadow dancers and religious soothsayers, as I see it)—

nothing but just common-sense and reality.

In fact as the communists now see it, two people can get along or they cannot. If they cannot—why chain them down to an unendurable companionship with each other, and their children who are to be injured by them? This clears the scene of what constitutes a disgusting mess here. For only consider the uproar—charges, blackmail, grafting, detectives breaking into rooms, husbands and wives shouting at each other, bawling all the little intimacies that love ever knew, with divorce lawyer's egging them on.

And then if they still insist upon leaving each other, courts, jails, alimony, lawyer's fees, blackmail. No only that, but that world's largest real estate organization, the Catholic Church, condemns them to hell besides.

Rebecca West says :—

Though I have the kind of temperament that hates to break a marriage I had made, I regard divorce laws as a necessary part of the arrangements in a civilized state.

Although the consequences of being the child of divorced parents are heavy (to the child), they are sometimes not so heavy as the consequences of being brought up in close propinquity and at the mercy of a brutal and vicious parent. We have also to admit that in the case of a childless couple there may be reasons why a divorce may become as essential to a human being's continued existence as food or air. There is infidelity, there is drunkenness, there is, above all, cruelty, not only of the body but of the mind. No one who has not been through it can know

the full horror of being tied to a man who craves domestic war instead of peace, whose love is indistinguishable from hate. The day that is poisoned from its dawn by petty rages about nothing, by a deliberate destruction of everything pleasant, the night that is full of fear, because it is certain that no one can suffer all this without going mad, and if one goes mad there will be nobody to be kind, these are things to which no human being should have a life sentence.

Possibility of divorce makes it clear to the ordinary man and woman that they must behave well in the married state or run the risk of losing its advantages, it does impress on them some rudiments of a sane attitude towards sex. It, therefore, lifts up the community to a level where happy marriages are much more likely to occur.

Leon Feuchtwaenger says :

The communion of two persons has a reasonable foundation only so long as these persons are united by natural affection. If these two persons choose to have their affections stamped with an official seal by the State, nothing can be said against it.

But it is reasonable for the State to provide such an official seal only on condition that the alliance shall last for a lifetime, and that the breaking of it is an infraction not only of civil but of criminal law.

If I leave a theatre before the end of the play, if I do not read a book right up to last page, if I sever a business connection before the agreed period is terminated, no one will think the worse of me.

If, however, I do not solve the extremely diffi-

cult problem of the life alliance of the human being with another in such a way that this alliance endures for a lifetime, then the State-approved martial convention will interpret this as a piece of my worthlessness.

It is not, however, a matter of blame if one human being finds it impossible to put up with another as long as it had been originally contemplated.

The State would have to provide that in all circumstances marriage contracts should contain provision for the possibility of a severance. In the case of the wife having no profession of her own, or if she gives up her profession in order to marry it would have to be laid down how her domestic work should be remunerated.

As long as legislators insist on placing martial alliances on a pedestal of a mystic sacrament, instead of on the basis of a clean and just contract, so long will our divorce laws be the everlasting cause of spiritual putrefaction.

Place of Woman in Islam

Islam contemplates men and women as free and equal and enjoins co-operation between the two for their mutual good. Women have similar rights over men as men have over women, says the Qur'aen. In olden days women enjoyed great influence in Muslim society, as mothers, wives, daughters, poets, writers, queens and saints. The degradation of Muslim society began from the time when they learnt from the non-Muslims to look upon women as merely drudges, house-servants, as toys for men as play and instrument of his lust, to be jealously kept immuned within the walls of the *zenana*, not even allowed to enjoy the sunshine and fresh air of gardens.

The Holy Prophet of Islam enjoyed great respect and tenderness for women. 'Paradise is at the feet of the mother,' he said. That is to say that if the mother is worthy of paradise he shall bring up her children also to be such. This shows how much he realized the importance of good and educated mothers. 'Give me mothers,' says Napoleon, 'and I will give you a nation.' That is to say, the greatness of a nation depends upon the greatness of its mothers. The Holy Prophet used to stand up for respect when his daughter Fatima came to visit him. He thus showed by his own example how daughters were to be respected. He also helped his wives in their domestic work thus showing that no degradation attached to performing domestic duties of

19

cooking cleaning the utensils, and sweeping the floor and mending the clothes. On his journeys he always took one or other of his wives on his camel with him thus showing that travelling is not prohibited for women by Islam.

Mr. J. Alexander Gunn, M.A., Fellow of the University of Liverpool, says in his well-known book *Bergson and his Philosophy* :—

“It must be admitted that the present system of civilization with its scientific campaign of conquest of the material environment has been the work of man’s intellect. In the ruder stages of existence women’s subordination to men may have been necessary and justifiable. But in the development of society it has become increasingly less necessary, and humanity is now at a stage where the contributions of women to society are absolutely vital to its welfare and progress. Women is proverbially and rightly regarded as more intuitive than man. This need not be taken to mean that, given the opportunity of intellectual development (until now practically denied to her), woman would not show as great ability in this direction as man. But it is an undeniable fact that woman as kept more closely to the forces of the great life-principle, both by the fact that in her rests the creative power for the continuation of the human family and also by the fact that the development of the personalities of children has been her function.

“The subjection in which women have been largely kept until now has not only hindered them from taking part in the work of society as a whole and from expressing their point of view, but has meant that many of them have little or no knowledge of their capacities and abilities in wider direc-

tions. However, with their increasing realization of their own powers, with the granting of increased opportunities to them, and an adequate recognition of their personality side by side with that of men achievements of supreme value for humanity as a whole may be expected from them. In certain spheres they may be found much better adapted than are men to achieve a vision which will raise human life to a higher plane and give it greater worth. More especially in the realms of ethical development, of social science, problem of sex, of war and peace, of child welfare, health, and education, of religion and philosophy we hope to have valuable contributions from the more intuitive mind of woman.

“It is not in the fighting male of the race : it is in Woman that we have the future centre of Power in civilization.” remarks Mr. Benjamin Kidd in his book *The Science of Power* (p. 195). The wandering Dante required for the guidance not only the intellectual faculties of a Virgil but in addition the intuitive woman-soul of a Beatrice to lead him upward and on.”

I quote here a few remarks from a lecture delivered by Mrs. Iqbalunnisa Hussain of Bangalore at the Muslim Society of Great Britain, in London, in February 1935 :—

“Woman as a social unit is as social a being as a man. The gregarious instinct in us is so great that it compels us to be in the company of not only the members of the same sex but also those of the opposite sex. Hence if a society is to be prosperous, progressive and happy it must have a reasonable amount of free mixing of both the sexes as we have been seeing here (in Europe) in the society of the

most advanced nations of the world. Its development as a whole depends upon the harmonious development of its parts. But in Muslim society a man or woman belonging to it, not being very well acquainted with the characteristics of the other sex, is mentally and morally dwarfed, and is unfit to successfully tackle the problems of the modern world.

Woman as an individual has the same power of feeling, sentiment and emotion as a man. Women are susceptible to the joys and sorrow of this world to the same extent as man. They, like men, continually fall prey to the ills of existence. They have to encounter in the battle-field of this world the same amount of evil as man. If philosophy is a solace of mind to a man it is the same to a woman. If he takes interest in literary pursuits she also takes an interest as keenly if she is given the same opportunity and facility. But for reasons incomprehensible to me by they have been treated as reasonless beings and incapable of following a course of action that would be of benefit to humanity.

It is not the greatest delight of us to do great services which contribute to the good of humanity? Women are better fitted to achieve this end. They are endowed with gentleness of manner, persuasive power and take delight in succouring the unfortunate. Is it right that they should be deprived by men of almost every opportunity of exercising the great powers they possess? If you could know the feelings of many millions of women you would find they are miserable because they never had fair opportunity given to them. They have a right to demand that the gifts which have been bestowed upon them by their Maker should not be arbitrarily taken away simply because they are called women, and that they

should not be shut out from what is good and great in the world.

Among the uneducated Muslims, women are treated as puppets and they do not live for themselves but for their autocratic men of unlimited power. We see women of other nations play as important a part in the activities of the world as men. A great thinker says, "We are foolish, and without excuse foolish, in speaking of the superiority of one sex to the other as if they can be compared in similar ways. Each has what the other has not and each completes the other and is completed by the other. They are in nothing alike and the happiness and perfection of both depend on each asking and receiving from the other what only the other can give." These are the words of a great thinker. What is that a woman can give to a man? Woman is an embodiment of love, affection, care and tenderness, in fact she possesses all the moral characteristics. What is it that a man can give to a woman? He can support her by his physical courage, candour and patience in facing the difficulties of the world, and has the instinct of discipline.

The modern thinking Indian will surely admit that education is that which develops the mental faculties and serves to maintain discipline. Those who have undergone a certain discipline are capable of adapting themselves to any condition of life—happy or miserable, favourable or prejudicial. The fundamental fact of life is that this a hard world and living is hard for all creatures but specially for the least evolved and for those unadjusted to their conditions. Right education is disinterested and it brings up the woman for her own sake and for the sake of her race, nation and country.

Though men and women are naturally under obligation morally, physically and spiritually to each other, the wonder is that it is not brought home to them in all the experiences of their daily life. Yet how evident is the simple truth that men and women need to depend upon each other in order to derive happiness through the proper performance of their mutual duties. They need still more to repair the natural defects of each other by means of contact and culture. As the natural roughness of man's nature if left to itself, develops into cruel barbarity making him unfit for domestic life, so does the natural weakness, helplessness and backwardness of women, if kept in their original state, become a source of constant discomfort to both the sexes.

For a nation to be brave, true and noble, its women should be taught so first. The destiny of a nation lies far more in the hands of women, since within the house, the power of the mother reigns supreme in many spheres, and though they may be weak individually they are strong collectively. The uneducated women are often themselves mere children intellect with nothing to teach their little ones but fabulous legends and old world superstition. Since the imagination is very strong in early years the mother's teaching, however foolish, leaves an indelible impression stamped on children's minds. The earthly rewards and punishment of worthy and unworthy men are to a great extent in the hands of women. We must care for women who are the educators of the human race if we desire the new generation to accomplish its work. The degeneration, demoralisation and denaturalisation of our community is the direct result of the illiterate womanhood and their theoretical and practical fatalism and religious formalism. National excellence depends upon the culture and discrimination of women.

The spread of education among woman is indispensable both for the sake of family happiness and national progress. There is a strong desire in both sexes for each other's comradeship. The newly married husband too feels the craving for his wife's companionship in everything that concerns and interests him. In the course of the time he learns, that due to unfavourable customs or lack of culture in his wife, she is unfit to participate in all the phases of his life. He gives up this idea in despair and tries to make friendship with women of other nations who seem better fitted to create interest in him.

Our young men should determine to see the women of their community as more than the progenitors of children. Women's duty is not only the preparation of the race but to be real Muslim mothers with the inheritance of bravery, patience, forbearance and love. They should be the fittest preceptors and educators of their children. The uneducated women have become through ages of neglect a prey to ignorance and superstitions, and victims of men's selfishness. The seclusion has undermined their health, has made them an economic burden, has made their education difficult, and has cramped, narrowed and repressed their personality. Those who oppose the education of women are not the friends of humanity but are wicked enemies of the human race at large wherever they may be."

Marriage in Early Islam

by

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Consent

The first question is whether a girl had the right to accept a proposal of marriage or refuse it. Mohammad expressed the opinion that women should be consulted as to their choice of husbands and that if a virgin was too shy to speak, her silence was to be taken as consent. This silence may have been proof, not of actual shyness, but of absence of any disapproval of her husband, and thus to have provided to a certain extent a safeguard against a union which was repulsive to women.

There is mentioned in the traditions the case of a young woman who objected to her father's choice of husband, and Mohammad revoked the marriage and allowed her to make her own choice. The sequel of the tradition is of interest, for the girl is reported as saying that she had no objection to the marriage, but she wished women to understand that their fathers had no authority over their daughters' affairs. Here, then, is a definite attempt on the part of a young woman to depart from the customary subordination to her parents' control on the question of marriage—an attempt which had Muhammad's approval and support. In the same manner, he revok-

ed a marriage arranged for Zainab (bint Usman b. Mazun) by her uncle, Qudamah, to Abdullah (b. Umar), so that she might marry a suitor, Shuba (b. Mughirab), who was more pleasing to her and her mother.

There is evidence to show that Mohammad strongly disapproved of a widow being married to a man against her will. This is demonstrated in the case of Khansa (bint Khudham), a Madinian widow, who was married by her father to a man whom she disliked. She appealed to Mohammad who revoked the marriage and gave her control over her own affairs.

Dowry

It has been stated by W. Robertson Smith that before the rise of Islam the Dowry was paid to the wife's relatives or guardians. Mohammad abolished this custom. It is fairly clear from the Quranic ordinance that Mohammad adopted the point of view that the dowry was to be paid to the woman herself. It is clearly stated that she was to receive the dowry and gifts before the marriage contract.

Adultery

It is probable that Mohammad employed the term *zina* to the very loose matrimonial bond and consequent abuses thereof, rather than to adultery in the strict sense of word. Judging by its use in the Quran and the traditions, Mohammad seems to have applied it to any practice that weakened the unity of the family, or to any type of promiscuous marriage and, in general, with reference to an attitude of

moral laxity. For instance, one of the undertakings of the covenant between Mohammad and women of the Islamic community was that they should not commit *zina*. Hind bint Utbah, Abu Sufyan's wife, reacted to this requirement by exclaiming, "Can a woman free (hurrah) commit *zina*?" In other words a Meccan woman of high social status could not contract any type of marriage that was debasing, and hence the Meccan type of marriage could not be regarded as *zina*. The above theory is further substantiated by the fact that people of Taif described themselves as a people who married among strangers and that *zina* was necessary to them. This was in reply to Mohammad's prohibition of *zina* after the surrender of the town to him. It is apparent from this remark that *zina* must have applied to some type of loose marriage they were accustomed to contract. It may have been that a man contracted a permanent marriage with a woman of his own tribe and temporary marriages were arranged with women of other tribes. Islam improved the status of marriage and did away with immoral customs.

The covenant contained another undertaking on the part of the women was "that they should not come with lies which have been forged between their arms and legs." This also appears to have been an attack on the laxity exhibited in preserving the unity of the family rather than the actual practice of adultery. It referred possibly to the custom of a divorced, or widowed woman remarrying before the birth of her child by the first husband, and the child being considered as belonging to the second husband.

Polygamy

Mohammad found himself face to face with

rather a serious problem in regard to those Muhajirin who had emigrated to Madinah with their wives and children. The battle of Badr had resulted in a success for Mohammad with comparatively few casualties, but with his reversal at Uhud there had been considerable loss of life, though it is true, mostly amongst the Ansar. It is quite evident from subsequent events that Mohammad was not to be deterred in his resolution to defeat the Meccans, though, no doubt, by this time he fully realized that this could not be accomplished without a severe struggle, which would necessarily entail serious loss of life both to the Ansar and the Muhajirin. The problem that presented itself was, how were the wives and children of those who were killed, especially of the Muhajirin, to be provided for. In the first few years following the Hijrah there were no funds available from which pensions could be paid to the widows and children. A further disability from which the Muhajirin women suffered was the fact that many of them were cut off from their families, who would, in the usual course of events, have concerned themselves in looking after their interests, and procuring a husband for them in the event of their widowhood.

To these factors must be added that the very lax marriage bonds of that time did not guarantee any permanence of support to the widow. It was not merely from a humanitarian point of view that Mohammad impressed upon his followers the line of conduct he expected them to adopt towards widows and children, but the dire necessity of provision being made for them. It was after the Battle of Uhud, therefore, that the greater of the Surat-un-Nisa was revealed, in which polygamy was sanctioned and other important ordinances were introduced, making provision for the maintenance and protec-

tion of women and children. The most important ordinance, and the one which was to have the greatest influence in the development of the institution of marriage, was that which permitted the Muslims to have a multiplicity of wives, "and if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, or four, but if you fear you will not do justice (between them) then marry only one or what your right hand possesses." Mohammad sought not only to prescribe to his community obligations towards widows and children, but he himself set an example. He had previously married Zainab bint Khuzaimah after her husband had been killed at Badr, and he now married Um Salamah, whose husband succumbed from the wounds he received at Uhud. Um Salamah came from the clan of Makhzum of Quraish, who, for the most part, were bitter enemies of Mohammad, so that she was in a somewhat isolated position. Mohammad, therefore, married her.

It must, therefore, be suggested that Mohammad by his sanction of polygamy was introducing a regularized type of polygamous marriage to meet the emergency of the time. To comprehend fully the object he had in view this verse cannot be taken alone, but must be considered in conjunction with his other ordinances relating to marriage and divorce. He sought to replace the ill-defined marriage practices, which provided no protection for the woman, by a well-defined legal institution, or more correctly, by the foundation of such an institution. This, possibly, was only one step towards a more ambitious goal, to make the family the main common unit of his community in place of clan or tribe. By his sanction of polygamy he was incorporating these superfluous women into the family life, in preference to allowing them to act as a disintegrating factor, as

they had probably done in pre-Islamic times, by contracting temporary marriages with various members of the community.

It must also be pointed out that he did not restrict the number of wives a man might marry, but merely suggested as many as four. This suggestion was probably based on the fact that he himself had four wives at the time and found that he was only able to satisfactorily maintain that number of women. Later he found he could act with justice towards a greater number of women, who unfortunately had lost their husbands fighting for his cause or against it, and he accepted the responsibility of maintaining them as his wives. This absolves Mohammad from the accusation of not conforming to his own law.

Marriage Customs

An essential part of the wedding ceremonies was the wedding feast which was, and is, known as the *Walimah*. It was usual for the feast to be provided by the bridegroom. It is likely that music had a place in marriage ceremonies. The bride was led to the bridegroom in a procession and the following refrain was chanted: "We come to you, we come to you, so greet us and we shall greet you." All this gave publicity to the function of the marriage.

Institution of the Hijab

Mohammad instructed his wives not to marry again after his death, not to consider themselves as other women, nor to be too complaisant in their speech, but

to remain quietly in their homes and not go forth in public, decked out as the women of Jahiliyya (pre-Islamic times) were wont to do. He also gave his wives the title of "Mothers of the believers"

Women at Medina were of an independent spirit and freely mixed with men. Mohammad wanted to raise the status of his wives in society as "mothers of the believers" and wanted them to live a more secluded life devoting themselves to their spiritual duties. He, therefore, made it known to his community that henceforward his wives would be secluded from them, and that there would not, in future, be the easy access to them which had hitherto been the custom.

It is possible that those innovations were the cause of the disagreement between Mohammad and his wives and resulted in a choice being given by him to the type of life they proposed to lead. It, therefore, appears that this ordinance was in the form of an ultimatum to his wives that he wished them to adopt a mode of life that would give them a special status in the community. This disposes of the story of the discovery of Mariah, the Coptic slave girl, by Hafsa as the cause of the breach between Mohammad and his wives which occasioned him to withdraw himself for a month.

Just as the men of the community took Muhammad as their model, so the women looked to his wives as an example of the right mode of living, and on this account adopted the practice of seclusion. On the other hand, it may have been that owing to the Arab conquests the women probably came in contact with foreign people who practised the custom of seclusion and veiling. The influx of wealth after the conquests and the increase of the slave

population placed the original Arab women, as well as the men, on a higher social level, and it was possibly felt that the wearing of the veil and seclusion were more compatible with their changed status.

Dissolution of Marriage Ties

The fact that the Quran contains a number of ordinances on the subject of the dissolution of marriage ties, shows that Mohammad must have given considerable thought and time to the subjects. These ordinances resulted in a number of changes, which may be said to have constituted a reform of the methods employed in pre-Islamic times for the dissolution of marriages.

A Muslim woman can obtain a divorce from her husband. She asks her husband to free her and she, on her part, returns to him the dowry and other gifts she may have received from him. This form of divorce is called *Khula* and the term is derived from the root which means "to cast off one's clothes" and is, therefore, rather aptly defined by Robertson Smith as "divesture." Habibah (bint Sahl) of the Bani Malik (b. an-Najjar) was married to Thabit (b. Qais b. Shammas) of the Bani Harith (b. al-Khazraj). She went to Mohammad and complained that she and her husband could not agree, so Mohammad ordered her to return to Thabit all that she had received from him. Having done this, she went back to live with her own clan. This form of divorce is still legal to-day.

Inheritance

The Quranic ordinances entitle a woman to in-

herit from her male and female relatives, both by consanguinity and affinity, receiving from them a specified share, which varies with the circumstances. Al-Baidawi states that this was an innovation on the part of Mohammad.

Muslim women can hold property and can deal with it unhindered by their relations.

Strenuous Life

The poet Iqbal was a great believer in a life of action. He deprecated more theorising which weakens the personality and makes it unfit for action. According to Har Dayal, M. A., one of the causes of the decline of the Hindu race was its love of theorising and holding action in light esteem. According to the Quran, on the Day of Judgment, we shall be judged by our actions, and in this world also God rewards individuals and nations according to their actions. "Hateful it is to God that you say things which you do not do," says the Quran. "Those whose actions will be great will enjoy their reward in Paradise and those whose actions will be worthless will suffer Hell," says the Quran at another place. *Wama tuji. zuna illa ma kuntum ta'mulun* (and ye shall not be rewarded except for ye do) is the verdict of the Quran. Of course the Quran insists on sincerity of heart and condemns hypocrisy.

The whole history shows that it is the brave, industrious and intelligent nations that win in the struggle for existence. The slothful, the timid and the foolish go to the wall. Theodore Roosevelt, then President of the United States, praised a strenuous life at the Hamilton Club, at Chicago in 1899 in the following terms :—

"I wish to preach not the doctrine of ignoble ease but the doctrine of the strenuous life, the life of toil and effort, of labour and strife, to preach that

highest form of success which comes not to the man who desires mere easy peace but to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship, or from bitter toil, and who out of these wins the splendid ultimate triumph.

A life ignoble ease, a life of that peace which springs merely from lack either of desire or of power to strive after great things, is as little worthy of a nation as of an individual. I ask only that what every self-respecting American demands from himself, and from his sons, shall be demanded of the American nation as a whole. Who among you would teach your boys that ease, that peace is to be the first consideration in your eyes—to be the ultimate goal after which they strive? You men of Chicago have made this city great, you men of Illinois have done your share, and more than your share, in making America great, because you neither preach nor practise such a doctrine. You work yourselves, and you bring up your sons to work. If you are rich, and are worth your salt, you will teach your sons that though they may have leisure, it is not to be spent in idleness; for wisely used leisure merely means that those who possess it, being free from the necessity of working for their livelihood, are all the more bound to carry on some kind of non-remunerative work in science, in letters, in art, in exploration, in historical research—work of the type we most need in this country, the successful carrying out of which reflects most honour upon the nation.

We do not admire the man of timid pace. We admire the man who embodies victorious effort; the man who never wrongs his neighbour; who is prompt to help a friend; but who has those virile qualities necessary to win in the stern strife of actual life. It is hard to fail; but it is worse never

to have tried to succeed. In this life we get nothing save by effort. Freedom from effort in the present, merely means that there has been stored up effort in the past. A man can be freed from the necessity of work only by the fact that he or his fathers before him have worked to good purpose. If the freedom thus purchased is used aright, and the man still does actual work, though of a different kind, whether as a writer or a general, whether in the field of politics or in the field of exploration and adventure, he shows he deserves his good fortune. But if he treats the period of freedom from the need of actual labour as a period not of preparation but of mere enjoyment, he shows that he is merely a cumberer on the earth's surface : and he surely unfits himself to hold his own with his fellows if the need to do so should again arise. A mere life of ease is not in the end a satisfactory life, and above all it is a life which ultimately unfits those who follow it for serious work in the world.

As it is with the individual so it is with the nation. It is a base untruth to say that happy is the nation that has no history. Thrice happy is the nation that has a glorious history. Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checked by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much because they live in the grey twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.

If we are to be a really great people, we must strive in good faith to play a great part in the world. We cannot avoid meeting great issues. All that we can determine for ourselves is whether we shall meet them well or ill.

The timid man, the lazy man, the man who dis-

trusts his country, the over-civilized man, who has lost the great fighting, masterful virtues, the ignorant man and the man of dull mind, whose soul is incapable of feeling the mighty lift that thrills "stern men with empires in their brains"—all these of course shrink from seeing the nation undertake its new duties. These are the men who fear the strenuous life, who fear the only national life which is really worth leading. They believe in that cloistered life which saps the hardy virtues in a nation, as it saps them in the individual ; or else they are wedded to that base spirit of gain or a greed which recognizes in commercialism the be-all and end-all of national life, instead of realizing that though an indispensable element, it is after all but one of the many elements that go to make up the true national greatness. No country can long endure if its foundations are not laid deep in the material prosperity which comes from thrift, from business energy and enterprise, from hard, unsparing effort in the fields of industrial activity ; but neither was any nation ever yet truly great if it relied upon material prosperity alone. All honour must be paid to the architects of our material prosperity ; to the great captains of industry who have built our factories and our railroads ; to the strong men who toil for wealth with brain or hand : for great is the debt of the nation to these and their kind. But our debt is yet greater to the men whose highest type is to be found in a statesman like Lincoln, a soldier like Grant. They showed by their lives that they recognized the law of work, the law of strife ; they toiled to build a competence for themselves and those dependent upon them ; but they recognized that there were yet other and even loftier duties—duties to the nation and duties to the race.

We cannot sit huddled within our own borders

poverty, respecting everybody's conscience, encouraging every one to develop his own faculties and disfavoured (in fact strictly forbade) compulsion in religion. He abolished usury, gave equality to women, declared all men (without distinction of caste, colour or creed) equal before law, prescribed a poor-tax (to be collected from the well-to-do) for the benefit of the destitute, abolished absolute monarchy, encouraged trade and commerce, inculcated humaner methods of warfare, and allowed war to be waged only in self-defence or in defence of the weak (all aggressive warfare to be eschewed) and placed the acquisition of learning both secular and religious on a highest footing than other religious duties. The message of such a man deserves our earnest consideration, and I place the same before you briefly, knowing that you have no prejudices, and that your one concern is to see India in the vanguard of progressive nations.

The Prophet was not a mere dreamer but a very practical man. He did not give us mere theories but worked out in practice what he taught. His own example, as well as that of his companions, serve as beacon-lights to all those who believe in his message.

He did not call his religion after his name, but called it Islam which means to live in harmony with the Divine laws which govern all creation from the humblest clod of earth to the highest type of beings. He laid so much stress on acquiring a knowledge of the universal laws that he told his followers to go even to the ends of China in search of knowledge. On another occasion he said, "The ink of the scholar is more sacred than the blood of the martyr." On still another occasion he observed: "Knowledge is like the lost camel of the Muslim, take hold of it wherever you come across it. It was in obedience to these behests of the Prophet that the Arabs gath-

ered the knowledge of India and Greece, Egypt and China, and after improving and adding to it passed it on to all seeker after light. But as an act of gratitude they called Mathematics *Hindsa*, showing that they had taken it from the Hindus ; and called medicine *Unani* showing that they had learnt its rudiments from the Greeks.

The Arabs ransacked the oceans and prepared charts and invented the compass. They were the first to introduce mile-stones, to light the public streets, to make pure water available to all house-holders by means of tubes both for drinking and ablutions. They invented the sewing needle. It were they who laid the foundations of modern chemistry, and it was at their universities in Spain that the European scholars learnt to do research work in all arts and sciences, unhindered by prevailing ideas. They established libraries wherever they went, and took equal delight in learning from others as well as teaching them whatever they themselves knew.

Islam teaches toleration. Since God is one, all men are brothers, and as He is not partial He has been sending His teachers and prophets from time immemorial to every people in every age. We are therefore taught in the Quran to respect the preachers of all the religions that came before it, and regard the Holy Prophet to have completed the work commenced by the previous prophets. We believe in the law of evolution, in matters, religious as in matters secular. The teachings brought by the earlier prophets were suited to the needs and circumstances of the people among whom they preached, until the time came when humanity having retained as it were its majority, the Holy Prophet of Arabia appeared completing the religious structure commenced by his predecessors,

and giving us teachings which provide for all our needs and are suitable for all times, as they are based upon the fundamental laws of nature and conduce to the highest good of all humanity.

It was remarked by an American writer recently that the civilisation of the West is based upon three great principles to which the French Revolution gave birth, *viz.*, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Let us see how far this assertion of the American authoe is justified by the present state of society in Europr or America. Let us take for instance liberty. In Europe and America the majority has a right to legislate for all and the minority is bound to obey the laws made by the majority. Surely it cannot be said that the majority always consists of the wisest, the most virtuous and the best and fittest people. Rather our experience shows that the saints, philosophers and scientists are generally in a minority. What right has the majority to frame laws for the minority and why should the latter be compelled to abdicate their consciences in favour of the former? Herbert Spencer has given the following definition of liberty :—

“Every one is free to do that which he likes provided that he interferes not with the equal liberty of any other man.” Keeping this definition in mind there is no liberty enjoyed by the minority in the West. Whereas in Islam the Quran declares the fundamental laws which govern both the majorities as well as the minorities. There is only one law for all. Whether we are ruled by a Caliph or a Sultan or by a parliament, none of them can change the laws of the Quran which are meant for the good of all. Our rulers can only give effect to those laws and have no right to legislate to the detriment of any member of society.

As regards equality not much of it is found in the West. There we find extremely rich and extremely poor, the Lords and the Commons. Some are so rich that they cannot even count their wealth while others are so poor, that they do not know where to lay their heads. On the other hand Islam does not merely talk of equality, but has framed laws to give practical effect to this spirit of equality. For example during prayer times all the Muslims, rich and poor, high and low, the black and the white, stand shoulder to shoulder in the mosque. Secondly, a poor-tax called *Zakat* is collected from the rich for the benefit of the poor. Every well-to-do person has to pay one-fortieth ($1/40$) part of his income, which is collected by the state and kept in deposit for the benefit of the poor, who can always resort to it as a matter of right and not as a matter of charity. Thus there are no destitutes left in a Muslim society because this is a fund which is always there to help those in need.

Our common experience tells us that if poor people are not helped in their misfortunes, they are often tempted to steal, to commit robberies, to cheat and to commit frauds and other crimes. We have then to employ police to arrest them, magistrates to try them, and build jails to imprison them. All the expenses for employing the police and the magistrates, to construct jails and to feed the convicts inside them, have to come from the pockets of the rich by means of taxation. Whereas Islam says, "Better give them *Zakat* voluntarily, so that they may happily employ it to remove their destitution, instead of feeding them in jails. This will breed love and gratitude on the part of the poor for the rich, and the rich will look upon the poor as their comrades.

Next, our law of inheritance does away with capitalism. However rich a man may be, his prope-r

ly at his death is divided among his heirs, which includes his sons, daughters and widow, so that money keeps on circulating. The reason why the sons get double the share of the daughters is that at the time of marriage, the sons have to give dowers to their wives, while the daughters, at the time of their marriage, receive dowers from their husbands. Thus their shares get equalised.

Next, Islam has prohibited the giving or taking of interest. Giving or taking interest makes the rich go on becoming richer and the poor go on becoming poorer and so leads to some people being too rich and the others being too poor. The rich become haughty and lazy and the poor lose their self-respect and are over-worked. That often leads to fear on the one side and hatred on the other and sometimes results in bloody revolutions. To prevent that, Islam has condemned the giving and taking of interest. A great English writer says that there is not enough wealth in the treasury of any government to carry on a modern war for more than one week without floating a war-loan. If interest was prohibited no one would lend money to any government without interest and therefore the Government will not be able to go to war. What the League of Nations has not been able to accomplish would be achieved and wars would become a thing of the past.

Islam has also prohibited the storing of gold or silver in our houses, so that gold and silver may always remain circulating for the benefit of society and should not be uselessly locked up. A good instance of what happens by storing up gold and silver is the case of America. During the last war, America lent large sums of money to some of the fighting nations which have been repaid in gold and silver. All that gold and silver is lying useless in the vaults of American

Banks. At present there are ten million unemployed people in America. It has been rightly remarked by an American Senator that the reason of their unemployment is that Asia and Europe have not got sufficient gold or silver to buy goods from America, so their factories have stopped work, and this led to great unemployment. Now if the gold and silver which is lying useless in America should be given back to Europe and Asia they would be able to buy American goods, the American factories would start work again and there will be no unemployment in the country.

Islam says instead of lending money on interest we should invest our money in trade. If you open a factory, many labourers will find work in it and the importers and the exporters, the railway companies and the shipping companies, would all be benefited. Trade makes up honest because we soon learn that we cannot succeed in business without honesty. Trade teaches us the art of government because we have to use all our faculties for pleasing our customers. So we learn to rule human heart, whereas interest destroys the nations because all wars are carried on by money borrowed on interest.

Next, Islam gives equal rights to women. Women can hold property. There can be no marriage without the consent of a woman and she has the free right to divorce, called KHULA. Islam says for every man there is a woman and for every woman there is a man, so we must be careful in selecting our partner. Should there be disagreement after marriage, the husband and the wife should each appoint an arbitrator to make peace between them. If peace cannot be restored, rather than be always unhappy, let there be a divorce. After the pronouncement of the divorce by the husband, three months are given

to them within which they can reconcile. If no reconciliation takes place, divorce becomes absolute, and both are free to marry according to their choice. Whereas in English society there can be no divorce by mutual consent. It is necessary in England to go to a Court of law and to prove adultery and cruelty in order to enable a woman to obtain a divorce. Besides, divorce proceedings are so expensive that they are beyond the reach of the poor. Still it is remarkable that neither Christianity nor Hinduism allowed divorce. Christian countries have passed laws allowing divorce, and the Hindus are trying to get a law passed which will enable Hindu women to obtain divorce under certain circumstances. That shows how the whole world is coming to adopt the principles inculcated by Islam.

The permission of having more than one wife under certain circumstances does not bear hardly upon the women, as the conditions laid down in the Quran are that the husband must be able to do equal justice to them all. He has to pay them their dowers, and the first wife can stipulate at the time of her marriage that the husband shall not marry a second wife during her life time. Islamic law allows every woman to make it a condition of her marriage that in case of disagreement with her husband she will have the right to divorce herself. This protects her from the whims of her husband. Besides, the second wife cannot be married without her own consent. So that if a woman is averse to polygamy she need not marry a man who has got another wife living. Thus the women in any particular town or village can abolish polygamy by passing a resolution that no woman should marry a man who has already got a wife. But at the same time, whenever the male population happens to be decimated by a war, the right to marry a man who has already got a wife, pre-

vents the compulsory virginhood of thousands of women as in Europe.

Islam lays down that we must treat our slaves well. We must feed them as we feed ourselves, and clothe them as we clothe ourselves, and allow them to emancipate themselves. So that Islam has taken away the sting of slavery, whereas in America though slavery was abolished in the letter it still exists in spirit. If a Negro is seen kissing a white woman he is burnt alive.

The reason why the Prophet did not abolish slavery with one stroke of the pen is that this would have led to a rush of the emancipated slaves upon the labour market. It would have been impossible for them all to find work immediately in order to supply their needs, and their consequent starvation would have driven them to violent revolution and useless bloodshed. Islam therefore brought about the reform in a more humane form.

Islam has done away with the distinctions of nationality and colour. All men are brothers, and the whole world is our homeland. As the great Poet Iqbal says, "China is ours, and Arabia is ours and India is ours, we are Muslims, the whole world is ours." So that instead of nationalism we have internationalism and do not hate anybody.

At the time of the Muslim Pilgrimage people of all nationalities collect at Mecca. This League of Nations has been meeting every year for the last fourteen hundred years. They all feel like brothers and imbibe the spirit of the oneness of humanity.

Islam says we must not take anything for granted but use our own reasoning to discriminate be-

between the right and the wrong. We must search for knowledge and discover the laws of nature. We must study history to understand what leads to the growth or the degradation of the nations. There is no difference between religious knowledge and secular knowledge; all knowledge is sacred, and every mosque used to be a university where all kinds of knowledge used to be imparted to the Muslims, who were formerly in the vanguard of learning as long as they were true to these commandments of their religion.

Islam preaches universal brotherhood, there is no bar of nationality or colour, and we are taught to be merciful even to our enemies. According to Islam, our best interest lies in the good of all, for all men are regarded as members of one body. If the body suffers, all members suffer. We must therefore all co-operate. Islam has substituted co-operation for competition which is ruining Europe. According to Islam, we must co-operate with the good, wherever we find them, and we must not co-operate with the evil-doers, even though they be our relatives. Islam thus brings all the good people of the world on one platform. The Holy Quran says that the most honourable among you near God is he who is the most faithful to his duty.

After these few remarks, my esteemed brother, I affectionately invite you to enter the universal brotherhood of Islam, and to give a death-blow to all ideas of aggressive nationalism, violent communism, freedom-throttling fascism, sword-rattling nazism, atheistic bolshevism, unjust colour and caste prejudices and usury-fed capitalism. Islam is the religion of peace, brotherhood, toleration, sympathy for the unfortunate, and universal co-operation of all mankind for increasing the sum total of general human

happiness. *Assalaam alekum* (peace be with you !)

Yours fraternally,
MOHAMMAD AMIN,
(formerly Sagar Chand),
Bar-at-Law, Lahore.

July 1936

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ISLAM—The Religion of success

By **MOHAMMAD AMIN**, Bar-at-Law, Lahore

Islam does not mean mere faith. It is faith in action. It is not mere theory but practice. Mere verbal declaration of faith without obedience to the divine commands is not acceptable to God. It is hateful unto God that you say things which you do not perform (*Kabura Maqtan indillāhe untaqooloo ma la tafaloon*): Those who do merely lip service to the teachings of the Quran are styled *munafiqin* (hypocrites).

Conformity to Laws of Nature

The first principle on which the Quran lays the greatest stress is unity of God. There is only one directing mind behind all phenomena and not many. Therefore, all laws of nature are uniform and harmonious and not conflicting. The Quran says that if there had been many gods there would have been conflicts of wills and therefore chaos in the workings of nature. But that is not so. We have, therefore, to acquire knowledge in order to know those divine laws which regulate this universe and live in accordance therewith. Darwin calls it adaptation to environment.

Struggle for Existence

Nature is not static but dynamic. Science tells

us that in the inside of a pin's head (which seems so small and so hard to us) millions of atoms are ceaselessly revolving at a high speed. A struggle for existence is constantly going on and only the fittest survive. And the Quran confirms it by saying *inna akrama kun indallahe atqakum*: Those who are most faithful to their duty (live most perfectly in accord with the divine will as shown in the workings of nature) are the most perfect in His sight and therefore survive in the struggle for existence. Again and again our attention is drawn in the Holy Quran to the many races (of living creatures) who have become extinct by their neglect of divine laws.

Survival of the Fittest

In the verse *wa untumul a'launa inkuntum mo'mineen* (and you are bound to dominate the world if you believe in and follow the laws of God) we are given the theory of the survival of the fittest in a nutshell. The natural laws help the survival of those who observe those laws and the recalcitrants are defeated and destroyed. *Kana Haqqan alaina nasrul-mo'mineen* also points the same way. "And We are bound to help those who live in accordance with divine laws." All this shows that a *momin* (true believer) is one who lives in accordance with the universal laws and to the extent he does so. And success is meted out to those who do so and in proportion to their faithful adherence to the laws of nature. *Lakum ul bushra fil hayatid dunya wal akhira*: For them is good news both in this world's life and hereafter!" For our progress does not finish with this life but is endless: *Tabaqan an tabaq*. There are stages after stages of progress."

Success of God's Friends

Those who live in accordance with divine laws (which is synonymous with laws of nature *fitrat allah hillati fataran nasa alahia*, all creation is created on one plan) have nothing to fear and shall not be grieved. Such people are styled God's friends since they help His Scheme of the Universe. *Alainna aulia Allake la khaufun alaihim wa lahum yahzanun* (Verily the friends of God, no fear shall come upon them, neither shall they grieve.) At another place we are told in the Quran that if we obey God's laws there will be no occasion for God to punish us. That shows that punishment is the natural concomitant of the breach of divine laws.

Meaning of Taubid

So that *Tauhid* of unity or God means to live in strict obedience to divine laws as found working in nature, and *shirk* or polytheism means to neglect obedience to divine laws because of our wrong idiosyncrasies or obedience to unnatural laws inculcated by fools or tyrants. That will bring its own punishment. You cannot defy nature with impunity. If you drink poison you will die and if you put your hand in the fire it will burn you whether you call yourselves Muslims or infidels. And God being the First Cause of all things including the poison and the fire, we can say God punished you for your folly.

God's Laws Inexorable

Whether you call yourselves Englishmen, Germans, Arabs or Muslims you will benefit to the extent you follow divine laws and will suffer to the extent

you ignore them. The laws of God are inexorable and are no respecter of persons, nor are these laws deflected from their course by entreaties or threats. Therefore the Holy Prophet said: "One hour's serious contemplation of the divine laws (working in nature) is worth a year of adoration."

Tauba or Repentance

Such being the case *tauba* or repentance means turning back from disobedience to divine laws and obedience to the same. God tells us that when *momins* (believers) neglect divine laws to some extent misfortunes of fear, hunger and losses are visited on them as warning, just as nature sends fever pain, etc., as warning to those oblivious to its laws. This reminds the true believer of his transgression, and saying, "Verily to Allah we belong and to Him we must turn back" (*inna lillahi wa inna ilehe rajعون*) he returns to obedience to the divine laws. When he does so Allah also turns to him in mercy. *Huwat-tawwabur Rahim* (Verily He is the returning one, the merciful). So that repentance is no mere lip service of apologising, but actual turning back from disobedience of God to obedience to His will as seen in the workings of His mind in natural laws. And this is in accordance with Science. That is why the Quran styles Islam *din-e-fitrat* (releigion of nature.)

Significance of Atonement

What is atonement? According to some religions the death of some "god" or superman atones for the transgressions of his followers. The Quran lends no support to such assertion. It says that no one shall bear the burden of another—Muslims must beware

of being seduced by such non-Islamic ideas which are contrary to the sense of individual responsibility taught by Quran. The Islamic principle of atonement is summed up by the Holy Prophet in the following words :

“If you happen to do something evil—do something good in return, for good deeds wipe out the evil ones.” Just as, if a person has been over-indulgent in food, fasting will do him good. Or if a man has hurt his neighbour, reparation will do away his offence or at least mitigate it.

Cause of our Decline

Islam is the religion of nature. It appeals to those who deliberate seriously. As long as Muslims followed it with understanding, they were great. Their degradation began when they reduced its principles to lifeless ceremonials and rituals.

Pillars of Islam

By MOHMMAD AMIN, Bar-at-Law, Lahore

Islam makes incumbent on every true believer prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and Zakat. All these four injunctions carry with them so many spiritual and temporal benefits both for the community and the individual that it is worth while summing them up for general guidance.

1. Prayer is called in the Holy Quran *salat*. Before we perform the *salat* we have to make ablutions, so it is better to mention their benefits.

First we must wash our hands which is the hygiene of hands. As we have to touch all manner of things and shake hands with all kinds of people, it is, therefore, of the utmost importance to wash our hands frequently. Next we wash our mouth. This cleanses our teeth and prevents tartar as well as pyorrhoea which is a curse of this age and causes much misery. If the teeth be not properly cleaned they begin to decay and not only disfigure a man but give rise to many serious diseases. The germs which breed in the mouth get swallowed with our food and drink, and cause cancer of the stomach and other internal ailments. So washing the mouth is greatly conducive to health.

We next wash our nose from inside. When we breathe, the germs and dust which are in the air we breathe get deposited among the hair in our noses

which filter the air before allowing it to go further. If these germs be allowed to multiply in the nose, they cause irritation and lead to bad cold, which is a washing-out process on the part of nature. We can avoid many a cold by keeping our noses clean. Sometimes these germs get into the lungs and cause pneumonia and even consumption. Thus the importance of washing out the nose will become apparent.

We then wash our face. This is very refreshing and cools the eyes also. We next wash our arms up to the elbow which has a stimulating effect on the arms, however tired they may be. Next we pass our wet hands over the head and the back of the neck as also over and behind the ears. The cold water is a great tonic and makes our brains feel refreshed, removes the extra heat, and tones up the roots of the hair at the same time.

Next we wash our feet. This accelerates the circulation of blood in the body. Thus it will be seen that our *wuzu* or ablutions are both hygienic as well as vitalising.

And while purifying the body, mentally we are purifying the heart also. For all this is done with the object of making ourselves worthy of appearing in the Presence of God.

Before we go for our prayers, we hear the Azan or call to prayer. Our Azan is much more effective than the ringing of bells practised by other religions. The Azan gives us a message telling us that Allah is the Supreme Ruler, that none but Allah should be worshipped, and that prayers help the soul to attain success. It has also great propagandic value since these great truths are proclaimed five times a day by the muezzins from the minarets of the mosques all over the world. We then go to the mosques and stand

in military formation keeping our rows straight. This is a great training in working in groups. All worshippers in the mosque stand shoulder to shoulder without distinction of colour, rank in society, or nationality. This creates spirit of universal brotherhood among the Muslims.

We then listen to *takbir* which fixes our attention on the purpose for which we have assembled. The Imam or the leader of the prayer then raises his hands and places them in front of him. All the worshippers do likewise. This is wonderful training in working in unison exactly in accordance with the commands of the leader. After recitation by the Imam we bend our backs forward, then we stand straight again. We next prostrate ourselves and so on. All these movements exercise our body also and are conducive to health.

Raising our hands upwards expands our shoulders and lungs. Bending exercise strengthens our stomach and helps digestion, and prostration sends blood towards the neck, face and brain thus refreshing all these parts. So much for the physical side of the matter.

The hearing of God's words from the mouth of the leader and reverently carrying out all the prescribed movements humble the soul before the Supreme Being, our Creator, Sustainer and Protector. We draw strength and courage for the battle of life, and the soul tastes the bliss of communion with our beloved God.

After the prayer turning our head to the right and left, we send peace to people on both sides. Turning the neck so many times in our different prayers exercises the neck, and at the same time creates love in the hearts of the people to our right and left, to

whom we wish peace and the mercy of God.

Five times a day when we hear the call to prayer we wend our way to the mosque, leaving for the time being our sweet sleep of the morning, and the most important works of the day, or the society of our friends which we enjoy. Then it is a great discipline to detach ourselves from these things and hasten to perform our duty of *Namaz-e-Farz*. This engenders in our minds the spirit and importance of doing our duty at every cost and in spite of everything. People trained to do their duty in this way are much more likely to succeed in the battle of life than those who lack a spirit of duty and responsibility.

Giving up our occupations and resorting to prayer thus frequently acts as a recreation, and we come back to our occupations from the prayer with fresh energy. There is a break in the monotony. We bring back from the prayers new strength, inasmuch as our prayers remind us that God is our helper, and that it is not meet for a believer to despair of the love and mercy of God. A true believer therefore never loses heart in the most difficult affairs of life. It was for this reason that suicide from disappointment was an unknown thing among the Muslims. They always returned from their prayers armed with fresh hope and courage.

Our prayers are great solace to our hearts, inasmuch as in each prayer we ask for and receive the forgiveness of God for our mistakes, and have therefore always the courage to turn over a new leaf. Prayer restrains us from wrong-doing inasmuch as in all our prayers we ask the help of God to lead us to the path of His pleasure, the path of those on whom God showers His blessings, and implore Him to prevent us from walking in the footsteps of those who have gone

astray and incurred Divine displeasure. This constant reminder helps us to preserve our virtue and avoid all temptations to wrong-doing.

Prayer helps us to concentrate our minds. This ability of concentrating our mind on the work in hand helps our progress in all the vocations of life. Prayer teaches us to be humble and not haughty. It teaches us the spirit of equality and fraternity and the solidarity of all Muslims. Prayers teach us the spirit of punctuality, and to accomplish all our duties at their proper time.

Our mosque is not only a place of prayer but also a place of learning, inasmuch as the Imam in the Friday and other sermons reminds us our most important and immediate duties. It also serves us as club where the Muslims of a locality meet one another and exchange greetings and good wishes, thus cementing the spirit of Islamic brotherhood. If we find a brother hungry we feed him. If we find him in need of clothes we supply his need. If we find somebody missing in the mosque we enquire for the cause of his absence. If we learn that he is sick we visit him, and if we learn that he is dead we pray for his soul.

Thus prayer trains us in public and private virtues. It gives us a military training also which is useful in time of troubles. When we stand in military formations saying our prayers, it strengthens our hearts and creates awe in the hearts of those who behold us. It was once remarked by a European writer that the Muslims get sufficient exercise from their prayers to keep them in good health. Another European writer once observed that the prayers of the Muslims are much more fervent, inasmuch as a Muslim uses practically his whole body and not only a part of it in doing obeisance to his Maker.

Fasting or Saum

Every Mussalman has to observe fasting at least during the month of Ramzan. It has a great many benefit both physical and spiritual.

Once upon a time a Muslim gentleman in London was one evening invited to a dinner party by his English friends in the month of Ramzan. The Muslim went to the party fully intending to take his food only after the fast was completed. It so happened that the guests sat down to dinner at the exact time of breaking the fast. Our Muslim friend therefore thanked God for completing his fast and drank a glass of water. The English friends on hearing him thanking God asked him why he had not taken food all day long. He told them that the month of Ramazan was the month of fasting for the Muslims. A lady in the party said to him, "Do you think that your fasting day after day for whole month will please God?" The Muslim replied, "Madam, is it not a fact that in all your schools and colleges, offices and factories one month's holiday is given every year for people to rest and recuperate themselves?" "Yes," she replied, "that is so." "Well," said the Muslim, "how I do wrong if I give my stomach (which serves me faithfully for eleven months) one month's holiday every year to rest and recuperate itself?" This answer was received with hearty accumulation by the British friends of the Muslim. They further remarked that it was a fine idea and that in future they also intended to give their stomachs one month's rest and recuperation every year.

Fasting teaches us to control our desires and passions. Things that were legal and *halal* for us up to a certain time in the morning become forbidden until

sunset. This trains us to withhold ourselves from the use of things in order to please God whenever necessary. A man is sitting in his room during the day in the month of Ramazan surrounded by appetising foods, but in spite of the fact that there is nobody to see him there he does not taste anything because he feels that God is there seeing his action. Will such a man ever take things which are prohibited by God, *e.g.*, bribery? Another man sits in his room on a hot day in the month of Ramazan. There is a pitcher of cold water in his room and nobody to see him. Though very thirsty and nobody to see him, he does not take even a sip of water because he feels that God is seeing him, and that he is keeping the fast. Will such a man ever drink prohibited things, *e.g.* intoxicating liquors? A young couple recently married sit in their room on a day of Ramazan and nobody to see them, but they do not in any way misbehave because God is seeing them observing the fast. Can they ever be guilty of adultery? Thus it will be seen that fasting, by teaching us to control our passions, makes us highly moral beings.

Fasting teaches us sympathy for those destitute people who have to suffer the pangs of hunger on account of poverty. It teaches us that in performing this duty all Muslims are alike with rich or poor, high and low.

The Holy Prophet says that it is very meritorious to get up early in the morning to take some food or *sahari* before the fast begins. This getting up very early in the morning every day for the whole month of Ramazan teaches us the habit of early rising which is good for our health, and good for our soul (for we can utilise the early morning hours for remembering God) and good for our business. It is not only food and drink which is prohibited during a fast, but also

anger, backbiting and other evil proclivities of the mind, thus training us to become ideal citizens. Moreover during the month of Ramazan we have to be more lavish in bestowing charities than at other times.

Zakat

It is obligatory on every Muslim possessing any property to give away 1-40th part of it every year to the state for the benefit of the poor. This is not an income tax but a property tax. The money thus collected is sufficient to remove the destitution of all poor people in the state, and as it amounts only to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the property of those who have to pay it, it causes no hardship to them.

Our common experience tells us that if poor people are not helped in their misfortunes, they are often tempted to steal, to commit robberies, to cheat and to commit frauds and crimes. We have then to employ police to arrest them, magistrates to try them, and build jails to imprison them. All the expenses for employing the police and magistrates, to construct jails and to feed the convicts inside them, have to come from the pockets of the rich by means of taxation. Whereas Islam says, "Better give them *Zakat* voluntarily so that they may happily employ it to remove their destitution instead of feeding them in jails. This will breed love and gratitude on the part of the poor for the rich, and the rich will look upon the poor as their comrades."

Out of the *Zakat* fund collected by the state are helped the widows and the orphans, the wayfarers, the slaves, who want to purchase their liberty, people undergoing imprisonment for their debts, the poor

people newly converted to Islam, and the captives held to ransom.

Haj or Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage to Mecca is also incumbent on all Muslims who can afford the expenses, provided there be no impediments in the way. The Muslim pilgrimage has great many advantages, both political, social and economical as well as religious.

When we start on the pilgrimage we have to take with us the necessary expenses. This teaches us to spend in the path of God and do away with the spirit miserliness. When we start on the journey we leave behind us our wives and children, our carriages and servants and all the comforts of home life. This trains us in the public virtue of leaving every thing when the occasion arises to go out to serve our country or our religion.

When we go for pilgrimage we pass through many lands and acquire new experiences which widen our knowledge. Also we are habituated to a voyage.

When we reach Arabia our hearts are gladdened to see the homeland of Islam. And when we proceed towards Mecca we leave behind all unworthy thoughts and are filled with a love of goodness. And when we put on the *Ihram* or the pilgrim's dress we feel a spirit of simplicity, and seeing all Muslim pilgrims wearing the same simple dress we realise that all Muslims irrespective of rank, colour or nationality are brothers. And when performing the *Tawaf* or circumambulation of the Ka'ba we see the Muslims from all over the world in the same kind of dress

and doing the same things, we feel the universality of Islam and equality of all Muslims.

Every year at the time of the Muslim pilgrimage Muslims from all the nations of the world meet at Mecca. This forms as it were the Muslim League of Nations, which meets every year, and affords the Muslims a golden opportunity to consult together and devise scheme for the welfare of the Muslim nations. The League of Nations founded by Wilson of America did not last even fourteen years, but this wonderful Islamic League of Nations has been going on for nearly fourteen hundred years and, by the Grace of God, will last till Doomsday. As traders also visit Arabia from all over the Muslim world at the time of pilgrimage the benefits of an industrial and commercial exhibition can also be learnt in the bazars of Mecca.

The Ka'ba, being the first place of worship built by the command of God and having been visited in the course of long centuries by millions of saintly men and women, has acquired such holy atmosphere that our souls derive the greatest spiritual sustenance from our sojourn near the Ka'ba during the pilgrimage. While in Arabia for the purpose of pilgrimage we can also visit the cave of Hira where the Holy Prophet received his first revelation and the cave of Saur where the Holy Prophet uttered those soul-inspiring words, "Grieve not for God is with us" and the Masjid-i-Nabavi in Medina where millions of saints have prayed to Allah since this Holy Mosque was built by Holy Prophet. Visiting such places exercise a tremendous spiritual influence upon our souls. We also see there the tombs of the Holy Prophet and the other saints and heroes of Islam and are thereby influenced for the good.

While in Arabia we take the opportunity to visit

the historical places of Islam which impress the lessons of Islamic history upon our souls. For example the field of Badr reminds us how three hundred and thirteen true Muslims overcame a thousand opponents. So our hearts are strengthened and we do not feel afraid if we happen to be in a minority in some country. The field of Uhud reminds us how a victory changed into defeat when a few Muslims disobeyed command of the Prophet. This impresses upon our hearts the importance of obeying all the commands of Allah and the Holy Prophet.

When returning from the pilgrimage, we can visit the Muslim countries, and thus increase our love for each other, and learn what we can from each other's experiences.

The Emancipation of Muslim Women

By MOHAMMAD AMIN, Bar-at-Law, Lahore

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

If I were asked which is the most important item in my programme for raising the position of the Indian Muslims to the highest level of progress, I would say unhesitatingly the education of our girls and the endowment of our women with all those rights which are given to them by our *Shariat*.

The greatness of England is due in a great measure to the fact that in England the women receive the greatest respect and are given a liberal education. England was first in the field in this matter (among modern nations) and therefore she reaped the greatest benefits. The other Western countries followed suit. It was the realisation of this fact which made Kamal Ataturk devote so much of his time and energy in raising the position of Turkish women, and the advanced Turkey of to-day gratefully acknowledges his efforts in this behalf. The Turkish example has been followed by Egypt and Persia, both of whom have been crowned with glory by the advancement of their womanhood. My heart bleeds with grief when I see the degraded condition of Muslim women of India, and I pray to God that he will raise some reformer in India who would devote his whole life to the betterment of the Indian Muslim woman's position. In the meantime I appeal to such noble souls as Mrs. Khadija Yakub Hasan, Mrs. Shah

Nawaz, Miss Khadija Feroze-ud-Din of Lahore, Madam Fatima Begam of the *Khatun* weekly and Miss Meherbanoo, M. Visram to take up the work of the uplift of their less fortunate sisters and thus to earn the gratitude of the coming generations.

Our Holy Prophet (peace be on him) has said that "whoever doth good to girls will be saved from hell-fire." With his last breath on his death-bed he exhorted the Muslims to be kind and considerate to their women-folk. And no other great man has done even half as much to raise the position of woman as he did. According to our *Shariat* Muslim woman is entitled to a thorough education like her brother, She is entitled to adorn all those public offices which (before the day of the Holy Prophet) were regarded as the monopoly of man. She is entitled to inherit property, to hold property and to acquire property in her own name. In marriage she is a free agent and cannot be married against her will. She has free right to divorce called *Khula*. She is entitled to the custody of her children in preference to her husband. In marriage she is an equal partner. According to our jurists a husband has no right to inflict his will on his wife without her consent. (She can refuse to bear him children and cannot be compelled to do so unless she consents of her own free will). She cannot be compelled to cook her husband's food and can demand payment for the service; she can even demand payment for suckling the children of the marriage: All these rights are accorded to the Muslim woman by our *fiqh*. A knowledge of the rights conferred by our *Shariat* on woman will excite the admiration of the most advanced woman writer of Europe and America.

But when we look at the actual state of things in India we have to bow down our heads in shame. Man

has deprived woman of her elementary rights, and as a result he has deprived himself of the benefit which Muslim society received from an educated, independent and sturdy womanhood in the early days of Islam. Woman has become a burden to herself and to society and consequently a drag on progress. As remarked by the late lamented Pākhtā', the laws of the *Shariat* are natural laws, and the consequences of transgressing them are unavoidable, not for Muslims only but for everyone. Ignorance of law is not excuse for anybody to escape its penalties—least of all in the case of the operation of natural laws, can the mere plea of ignorance exempt man from undergoing the natural consequences of transgression. The fool who does not know that fire will burn him is burnt by fire like anybody else. And the excuse of ignorance, in the case of Muslims of the *Shari'at* is worse than the offence; since they, of all mankind, should have that special knowledge which it is their mission to convey to mankind.

The Holy Prophet has said: "Woman are the twin halves of men." The rights of women are sacred. See that women are maintained in the rights granted to them. Do Muslim women in India even know what their rights are? Equality with men before the law is theirs according to the *Shariat*'. And who is seeing that they are maintained in the rights granted to them by the sacred Law? In India to-day women have no legal protector or defender. Where is that woman Judge, who, according to our great Imam Abu Hanifa, ought to be in every city to deal particularly with cases touching women's rights.

There is nothing in the Quran or the sayings of the Holy Prophet to justify the inhuman practice of depriving women of the natural benefits which God has decreed for all mankind—sunshine and fresh air

and healthy movement, or her life-long imprisonment causing death by consumption or anaemia of thousands of women every year; and God knows how many babies. Decency and modesty is enjoined by the Quran, but not imprisonment within the four walls of the houses. Rather the Quran tells us to keep wicked and unchaste women confined to their houses (to prevent them from misbehaving). If the same punishment of confinement to houses is inflicted on innocent and chaste women, will not such injustice excite the wrath of Allah ?

The injustice which we did to our girls and women has brought as its punishment our present humiliation and degradation. Let us be penitent before God for our transgressions in this behalf, and give practical proof of our penitence by restoring to woman all those rights of which she was so unjustly deprived. If we do so, I have no doubt that future will have a happy turn for us and Allah will again shower His favours on us as He did on the early Muslims. If men and women will co-operate to make each other happy, the general happiness of society will increase, and our houses will become like paradise instead of like hell.

The Message of Mohammad

By F. GILANI, M.A. of Meerut College

Intuition higher reason, and it has played a prominent part in the evolution of man for the last seven thousand years. Gifted geniuses broke through the sanctum of the mysterious, studied the invisible and proclaimed the truth to their fellow men. They examined the constitution of man's being, they discovered the intentions of the Maker from within his wonderful make, and pointed out the ideal. They unveiled the great scheme behind the universe. They summoned humanity to the path of progress. They were the pioneers of their race. And the Prophet of Arabia, whose message will be summarised in this article, spoke the last word on the religion of the world.

The aim of religion is the development of man. The man is visible, the man is also invisible. The body has a constitution. The soul too has a constitution. The development of each must be on the lines of its own constitution.

“God gave everything its make, and guided it (on its lines.”

The two constitutions are radically different. For, body is extensive, living in space and time. The soul is intensive, free from the limitations of both. Body is finite, the soul is infinite. Body is only a

1. Al-Quran, XX : 50.

glimpse of the man. The soul is the real man, the eternal, the mighty whose growth knows no barriers, whose possibilities are vaster than the universe.

Yce, the two constitutions are not divergent, or they would not permit co-existence for any span of time. The development of the one can never come in conflict with the other. The nourishment of the one never presupposes the starvation of the other. Man has laboured under a hallucination, and has imagined a clash between the body and the soul. He only confounded the acquired with the natural, the foreign with the native.

Religion explains the constitution of the soul—the real man, and aims at his development. The development is apparently two-sided—the development of the individual and the evolution of the race. The former assists the latter, the latter hastens the former. Both are the means, both are the ends.

“Pursue the course (Din) faithfully. It is the process of unfolding planned by God on the lines of which He has unfolded man. No change is possible in God’s make. This is firm religion. But most of them do not know,”

“It needs not that I swear by the sun-set redness, and by the night and its gatherings, and by the moon when at her full, that from state to state shall ye be carried onward.”

He constituted and developed.³ He balanced and guided.⁴ And he evolved man stage by stage.⁵ This is the story man’s past, this is going to be the history of his future.

Man’s soul (*ruh*) is a ‘directive energy’ (*amr*).⁶ It claims ‘intellect’ and ‘courage’ as its main forces.

1. XXX : 30. 2. LXXXIV : 17-20 3 and 4. LXXXVII : 23
5. LXXXIV : 19. 6. XVII : 85.

Intellect implies the awakening of the soul that looks deeper into things, assigns them their true values and employs them for its own good. A clear intellect presupposes independent and balanced thought. And when it is marshalled by courage it unfolds the mysteries of universe—the visible as well as the invisible—makes brilliant conquests, extensive and intensive, and claims a closer affinity to God. Imagine man's possibilities.

“See ye not how God has put under you all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and has been bounteous to you of His favour both in relation to the seen and the unseen?”

Courage is the grit and ‘go’ of man's spirit. It is the dash of life. It is a divine power liberated in man to fulfil the intentions of the Creator. ‘The development of man is entrusted to ‘intellect’ and ‘courage.’ Intellect, without courage, breeds everything between gross superstition and pessimistic philosophy. Courage, bereft of reason, runs amok and terminates in barbarism. In the primitive man the two stood apart. In cultured man the two cooperated, and built up civilizations, developed arts and sciences, and even discovered religion.

The gifted seers studied the lines of development in the constitution of the human soul. The intentions of the Maker were apparent in the make of man. They discovered man's capacities and counted his attributes most of which lay dormant in him. They dived into the invisible behind the universe. They saw the same attributes in the Spirit of the universe potent to an infinite degree. They established the identity of the two, discovered the similarity between the two, and declared the affinity between the two.

God is the Spirit of the universe, the rational energy of the universe, the Great Soul behind the universe. His rationality is manifest in the scheme of the creation, in the balance of the firmament, in the wonderful constitution of man's spirit. He is the life of the universe. He is the light of the universe. Yet, the universe cannot contain Him. The universe and He do not coincide geometrically. The universe is extensive. He is intensive, and therefore infinite.

Similarity between human soul and God is rather anticipated than attained. It speaks of his possibilities rather than of his possessions. God's attributes exist in man's³ soul, so far as man's³ soul is constitutionally fit to develop them in itself. His aim is to be Godlike. He is the aspirer. God is the ideal. The happiness of his spirit depends on his race towards God. For, happiness consists in progress, not in space. And happiness is eternal when the progress is towards the infinite. The Quran nowhere speaks of union. It only talks of nearness.

“O Man, thou must strive hard to thy Lord, then thou wilt approach Him.”

“There is no boon with which he (man) could be rewarded except seeking that face of his Lord the most High.”

The Creator helps man on his march towards his ideal. He has taken upon Himself the responsibility of developing. And his intention for developing extends to everything.⁴ God becomes the co-worker of man in this work. The very existence of His attributes presupposes their manifestation. But as a rule, man must take the initiative.

1. LXXXIV : 6.
3. VI : 12

2. XCII : 19,20.
4. VII : 155.

“God will not change the condition of Men, till they change what is in themselves.”¹

So man must work for himself, work on the lines of his constitution, and work in the direction of his ideal. His constitution speaks of the intentions of his Maker. Working according to the intentions of his maker means surrendering to the Will of God. This is what is meant by Islam (*i. e.*, surrender). Islam is active surrender, not passive. It is a surrender to a friendly power, not an enemy. It means supplementing your will to the Will of God. A Muslim is not *Murda badasti-i-ẓinda*, as some Sufis thought. He is *ẓinda badast-i-ẓinda*. Working according to the intentions of his Master again means *ibadit* (*i. e.*, service). Islam does not stop at lip-service. It is not confined to worship, and verbal devotion. It demands solid work on one's soul-striving on the path laid out for him by God.

“Whatsoever wished the next life (to be prosperous) and strove for it with efforts while believing aright, the effort of all such people was recompensed.”²

This work is twofold.—prayer (*salaat* and *zikr*) and progressive action (*amal-i-salch*).

Prayer is the first step. It is an effort to intensify one's yearning for his ideal—God, as much as a craving for His assistance in the work of his development. The greater the intensity of his yearning for his ideal, the stronger its influence over his conduct in daily life. If he keeps his ideal always in view or craves for it several times a day, he can miss few opportunities of progressing towards his goal.

Man discovered higher religion seven thousand

1. XIII : 12.

2. XVII : 19.

years ago when a higher race sprang out of the new race planted a beacon of wisdom in Babylonia. The light radiated to the east and the west. Egypt and Aryana grasped the divine truth next. Syria, Persia, Greece and China followed suit, and Arabia revived the true religion, improved upon it, and set the world aglow. The world took nearly six thousand years to build up a system for the development of man. As a rule, every religion formed the same conceptions of God and man and employed the same methods. Read between the lines of scriptures, and search behind the faiths and practices. The truth is present everywhere. God was pointed out as the ideal by every seer. His attributes were counted. Babylonia counted fifty-one. Syria and ancient Persia completed a century. The Hindu scored to a hundred and eight. The attributes served as the names of God, and man tried sometimes one and sometimes the other as His chief name.

It is here that man stumbled. His conception of the ideal was defective. His ideal presented only one attribute. The other attributes receded into the background. So the development of human spirit could not be uniform. The period of six thousand years show a long history of man's struggle against this difficulty. The Hindu tried Ishwar (Master), Brahma (Creator), Parmatma (the Great Soul). The Persian called him Ahura Mazda (the All-knowing), and Khuda (the Independent). The Greek named him Zeus (the Light). The Chinese imagined him as Young and Yin (the Creator). The Hebrew, like the Hindu, tried a number of his names one after another—Alion (the High), Shoddai, El or Elohim (the Almighty), Jehova or Yahweh (the Independent), and Gadd (the Father). The Hindu made an ingenious attempt to improve upon his conception of the ideal. He set up a Tri-murti, a god with three faces repre-

representing Brahma (the Creator), Vishnu (the Preserver) and Shiv (the Destroyer and Rejuvenator). It was an effort to keep at least three attributes of God prominent in the worshipper's mind. But some philosopher preached long before the battle of Mahabharat that the universe was immobile. It was a block universe, and nothing could be added to it. So the worship of Brahma (the Creator) was given up, and the Hindu community divided itself into two groups—the Vishnuites and the Shivites. Thus an honest attempt came to an end.

The Arabian Prophet detected the mistake of humanity. He saw that the Unity of God was shattered, and man could never develop his spiritual self unless a comprehensive chief name was assigned to God. All the attributes of God must be equally conspicuous in the Chief name to enable man to develop all the attributes of his spirit. So he gave out to the world the *Ism-i-Azam* (the Chief Name) that solved the difficulties of man once for all. It was *Allah*, the Adorable, the Ideal, the One Whom man was designed to follow. It is the most comprehensive name covering all the divine attributes. It is unity symbolised. To preserve the unity further he added the word *Samad* (the unanalysable), whose attributes cannot be conceived of as independent of each other. His Allah is a Numerical Unity as also a Concrete Unity.

“Say, Allah is a Unity, Allah is unanalysable.”¹

This is the greatest contribution of Mohammad to the Religion of humanity. He perfected the great system the world was evolving for its development. It is the entire human race, and not Arabia alone,

1. CXII : 1, 2.

that is addressed in the following verse of the Quran.

“To-day I have perfected for you your religion, and completed My gift to you.”¹

When the ideal is perfect and the course is explained, man's task is made simple. When the ideal is also the Maker, the Protector and the Developer, success is sure, provided man takes an active initiative.

Service to God (*Ibadat*) mainly consists in progressive actions (*A'omal-i-Saleh*). Human soul is impressionless when it is ushered into this life. It is innocent. It comes only with capacities. Conscious actions make it or mar it.

“Every soul carries the effect of its actions.”²

Actions which contribute to its development are the progressive actions. The Quran has not enumerated them all. A few of them have been mentioned. For the rest a hint has been thrown to man.

“Say, I take refuge with the sustainer of the dawn of reason against the evil of what He has created.”³

The creation of God is neither good nor bad. Good and evil accrue from everything under different conditions. Man is warned against the evil of everything. This is the general law to guide man on the path of progress. The wrong move on the part of man is named by Quran as *Ithm* (falsehood) and *Zanb* (retrogression). Sins may appear in a thousand and one forms. But each one is ‘falsehood’ and ‘retrogression’ on the path planned by God.

1. V : 3.

2. LXXIV : 3.

3. CXIII : 1, 2.

An effort to escape a sin a *taqwa* (guarding one's self). The Quran does not believe in the sinful origin of soul. Sin is not inherent in man. It is foreign to the soul. The soul is constitutionally inclined to progress, and not to retrogress. So it can turn back any moment it realises its mistake. *Tauba*, which is generally understood as repentance, literally means turning or inclining. It implies a sincere return to the path. And spiritual progress being intensive, it is free from the limitations of time. It mainly depends on the amount of sincerity in one's behaviour.

"Say, O My servants, who have wasted their souls, do not despair of God's mercy. He will save you from all your sins. He is Forgiving and Benevolent. And return to your Sustainer, and surrender to His intentions before affliction visits you. For, then you will not be helped."¹

The progressive action is the pious act. While the false move is one that obstructs the progress of the individual or that of the society. Every progressive action develops man's spirit, as every physical exercise strengthens his body. Providence works on the principle of prompt payment, and never keeps its reward in arrears. The collective effect of accumulative action will assume incomprehensible proportions in the distant future and create heaven or hell for the subject.

There is a climax for the body. The soul is free from such limitations. Its capacities are vaster than one can imagine. Potentialities once awakened in it through progressive actions give it a start on the path of eternal progress which crosses the barriers of death and scales the heights our imagination fails to measure.

1. XXXIX : 53, 54.

Islam and New Order

An open Letter to President Truman

By **MOHAMMAD AMIN**, Bar-at-Law, Lahore

Tennyson sang: "The old order changeth yielding place to new." You are busy trying to usher in a new and better order for the world so that all may enjoy the four freedoms. In this connection you will find great instruction and inspiration in the Holy Quran which lays down the rules for the peace, prosperity and progress of all peoples irrespective of colour, creed or country.

The Quran teaches that no nation should transgress against another nation, nor should one state transgress against another, but that nations and states should co-operate with each other for the purpose of advancing the interests of the whole of humanity. It forbids some nations and states and individuals from uniting with each other in order to conspire against other nations or states or individuals. On the other hand it teaches that nations and state and individuals should covenant with each other to restrain each other from aggression, and co-operate with each other in advancing those that are backward.

The Quran reminds those whose ancestors had attained dignity and honour as the result of noble efforts that is their duty to maintain that dignity and honour by their own noble efforts, and it warns them against looking down upon others

who have not been blessed in the same way.

They should take no pride in proclaiming their own greatness but should take pride in helping others to become great, for true greatness belongs only to him who tries to raise fallen humanity to greatness.

The Quran forbids nations and individuals to make propaganda against each other for haply they may be better than themselves. Propaganda against each other strengthens hatred and prevents the parties from seeing any good in each other.

The Quran says to the wealthy, you have been charged with the duty of looking after the poor, and you must set aside one-fortieth of your substance every year for the relief of poverty and distress, and for the advancement of those who lack the means of advancement. It teaches them not to enhance the disabilities of the poor by lending money to them on interest but to help them with free gifts and free loans, pointing out that wealth is not given to a man so that he may spend his life in luxury and riotous living, but that he should use it for the advancement of the whole of humanity. It teaches the poor not to be filled with envy against the rich as envy is injurious to our bodies and souls, but they should do their best to better their positions by all honest endeavours. It directs the Government to afford facilities for the poor sections of the community for such advancement, and not to permit all wealth and power to be concentrated in a few hands.

It says to those who have been endowed with abundance of physical health and strength that they should not behave oppressively towards the

weak nor treat contemptuously those who suffer from some physical defect or blemish ; for these ought to excite one's sympathy rather than one's contempt.

It has regulated the rights and duties of the employer and the employed. It says to the employer, you must render to the workman his full due before his perspiration is dry, and should not look down upon those who work for you, for they are your brothers whose care is entrusted to you by God, and who are the true supporters of your prosperity. It says to the workman, when you are engaged to execute a piece of work for somebody, you should discharge your obligation honestly and with due care and diligence.

Again it lays down fair rules for the guidance of the rulers and ruled. It says to the rulers that the authority vested in them is not their private property, but is a trust, and that they should discharge the obligations of that trust to the uttermost like upright and honest people, and should carry on Government in consultation with the people. It says to the ruled, the power to choose your rulers has been bestowed on you as a gift from God and you should, therefore, be careful to vest only such persons with governing authority as fully deserve it, and after vesting this authority in them you should give them your fullest co-operation, and should not rebel against them, for if you do so, you are merely seeking to demolish that which your own hands have built.

I pray to God for your success in all your noble endeavours.

Lahore :
June 1945.

Yours, etc.,
MOHAMMAD AMIN.

Secret of Happiness

By **MOHAMMAD AMIN, Bar-at-Law**

The present age may be called an age of cynical disbelief and to this, in my humble opinion, most of our unhappiness is due. Religion in the real sense has been at a discount and man has tried to do without God. The result is before us.

So long as the Muslims lived in accordance with the teachings of the Quran they enjoyed peace, prosperity and power and were the happiest people in the world. It is their falling away from that teaching which is responsible for most of their troubles.

Islam teaches the way to true happiness. Since God is good, if we live in accordance with His will, no evil can befall us. He is absolutely good, hence all that befalls from Him must be regarded as good since evil cannot proceed from good. The evil that men suffer is due to their own errors. Hence if men regulate their lives in accordance with the teachings of God, "No fear shall come upon them, neither shall they grieve," says the Holy Quran.

God is our best well-wisher. He is our Creator and He sustains us. He loves us. He has the fullest knowledge of all our requirements and the power to grant them. He therefore is in the best position to teach us what to do, and to help us in all our undertakings, to attain true happiness.

In order to discover His will we must resort to the Holy Quran in which He revealed the path which leads to success and happiness. Men who follow their own opinions are often led into mistakes through their shortsightedness, and their unbridled passions which do not take account of the rights of others. But God who loves all has given us laws which ensure justice to all, and therefore lead to co-operation and good-will instead of envy and hatred and mutual destruction.

The Quran teaches us that God is the sustainer of all, that He has created sufficient sustenance for all, therefore it is wrong to think that the maintenance of our existence calls for the destruction of others. On the other hand the universal co-operation of all men of good-will will facilitate the millenium of which the world has always dreamed.

In order to attain this end Islam teaches us the following rules:

1. We must love God, to whom we owe our all, who is our best well-wisher, and from whom soul draws the necessary strength to accomplish its constant progress to a higher and higher life.
2. We must respect the teachers of all mankind since they all derived their inspiration from God.
3. We should faithfully carry out all the commandments of God knowing that since He is good only good can come from the All-Good. The limitations which God has placed on our passions are for our own good just as a doctor in prohibiting certain things intends only his patient's good. The apparent evils we have to suffer in doing God's will are seeds of future good as the bitter medicines which, a

patient has to take lead to his health and strength.

4. We should not worry but should cultivate a hopeful temperament knowing that our interests are safe in the hands of God whose laws we obey.

5. We must lead an active life, pursuing the path of the establishment of the divine law as enunciated in the Holy Quran. For this purpose we must reverently study the divine law, live in accordance with it, and lovingly preach it to others.

6. If we do this, great is our reward with God, for it was to do this that all the Prophets came. We will thus be following in the footsteps of the Prophets and God will love us and His blessings shall follow us wherever we go. Because thus we shall be making ourselves instruments of divine will, and those whom God favours must succeed and prosper.

7. How we are to accomplish the divine will was taught by the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) by his own example. The Prophet lived in accordance with the teachings of God and has left behind him the lesson of his own practice for all the occasions of life. For his life covered all phases of human activity, and history has preserved for us a complete account of his doings, since it is the will of God that his life should serve as beacon-light to all seekers after truth for all time to come. We must, therefore, carefully study his life and follow in his footsteps.

We must live in the presence of God who is the source of all light and truth and happiness. His light will dispel our darkness of ignorance. He being the source of all virtue, evil will not approach us in His presence. And He being the source of all happiness, our hearts will radiate happiness and joy if we fill

our hearts with His remembrance. "Verily to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return," will be echoed by our souls and save us from all anxiety and grief.

The Power of Silence

Everybody knows how Mahatma Gandhi observes days of silence from time to time. Silence develops our spiritual powers and is recommended both in the Quran and the sayings of the holy Prophet.

A man asked the holy Prophet for good advice. The Prophet said, "Upon thee is enjoined a long silence; for verily that would drive away Satan and be helpful to thee in the affairs of thy religion." On another occasions the Prophet said: "Eat little, talk little, and sleep little." Too much talking exhausts our spiritual powers and we thereby lose the habit of meditation, deliberation and reflective contemplation. It is well known how the holy Prophet spent years in the cave of Hira in silence and prayers, Buddha spent year in silence and contemplation, Christ spent years in silence and communion with God. All *sufis*, mystic and *yogis* love silence and peaceful communion with God. Wrangling and disputations lead to bitterness and hate.

When Zakaria prayed for a son and God revealed to him that his prayer was accepted, he said: "My Lord! appoint a sign for me" God said: "Thy sign is that thou shouldst not speak to men for three days except by signs; and remember thy Lord much and glorify Him in the evening and the morning." What was meant by

this injunction was : “ Silence for three days will so strengthen thy spirit that thou wilt see with thy spiritual eye the fulfilment of thy prayer.

“ Silence and secrecy ! ” cries Carlyle. “ Altars might still be raised to them (were this an altar-building time) for universal worship. Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together, that at length they may emerge, full-formed and majestic, into the daylight of Life which they are henceforth to rule. Not William the silent only, but all the considerable men I have known, and the most undiplomatic and unstrategic of these, forbore to babble of what they were creating and projecting. Nay, in thy own mean perplexities, do thou thyself but *hold thy tongue for one day* ; on the morrow how much clearer are thy purposes and duties ; what wreck and rubbish have these mute workmen within thee swept away, when intrusive noises were shut out ! Speech is too often not, as the Frenchman defined it, the art of concealing Thought, but of quite stifling and suspending Thought, so that there is none to conceal. Speech, too, is great, but not the greatest. As the Swiss inscription says : *Sprechen ist Silbern, Schweigen is goldern* (Speech is silver, silence is golden) ; or, as I might rather express it, Speech is of Time, Silence is of Eternity.

“ Bees will not work except in darkness ; Thought will not work except in silence, neither will Virtue work except in secrecy.”

Women's Debt to Prophet Mohammad

BY ANDRE SERVIER

If we were to go by the commandments of the Quran and the sayings of the Prophet, the Muslim woman might be regarded as enjoying favourable treatment. The desire to raise woman's status shows itself in all the sermons of Mohammad, and indeed the Arab woman does owe a great deal to him. Before his time she was a sort of inferior being, without legal position, a slave to the good pleasure of the male. Mohammad did his best to do away with the barbarous customs of which she was the victim.

Exhortations to kindness abound in the Quran :

“Fear the Lord, and honour the womb that bare thee . . . O Believers ! It is not lawful for you to make yourselves the heirs of your wives against their will, nor hinder them from marrying again when you have put them away, so that you may take away from them a portion of what you have given them. Be kind in your behaviour towards them. If you wish to change one woman for another, and you have given one of them a hundred dinars, let her keep it all.

“Are you keeping your wife ? treat her properly. Are you divorcing her ? do it generously.”

There is the same spirit of benevolence in the sayings of the Prophet collected in Hadith : “ God

commandeth you to be kind to your women ; they are your mothers, your daughters, your aunts.”

In his own actions Muhammad set the example of kindness. One day he ran races with his wife Ayesha, and she won, but the second time it was the Prophet who won. Then Mohamamad said to her : “The game is equal, O Ayesha.”

One day some negroes played some games outside his house. The Prophet asked Ayesha to see the games ; but, in order that she should not be seen by the audience, he placed her between two doors of the house and stood in front of her, remaining in this position until she had finished watching the players. Then, when his wife had returned to her own apartments, the Prophet addressing the company said : “The best of Believers is he who shows the most gentleness and delicacy towards women. The first among you is he who is most amiable with his women, and I am better than you as regards my own.

Before his death, Mohommad again insisted in favour of women’s cause.

“Treat women well ; they are your helpers and they can do nothing by themselves ; you have married them on the security of God and you have taken possession of them with divine words.

As regards women the Quran lays down :

“Bid the women who believe to lower their eyes, to observe continence, to allow none but their apparent charms to be seen, to cover their bosoms with a veil, to let none but their husbands see their charms . . . Woman must not wave their feet about in

a way to display their hidden charms.”

The Prophet said: “Virtuous women are obedient and submissive.” One day a woman asked the Prophet what were her duties towards her husband; to her he replied: “A wife should not leave her home without her husband’s leave.”

If account be taken of the usual customs of his day, it cannot be denied that the Prophet sensibly ameliorated the position of woman. His words were applicable to his time and not to the future. If he had lived in our times, given his temperament, it is most probable he would have accepted the present progress. Unfortunately the orthodox interpreters of the *Qur’an* and the *Hadith* in the narrowness of their minds, are holding to the letter rather than the spirit of the sacred texts, and thus rendering further improvement impossible.

The present day Muslim woman lives in ignorance, and hands over her ignorance and prejudices to the children she rears. Herself a slave, she gives her children slaves’ souls, together with all the vices of a servile nature—dissimulation, lying, and deceit.

The Curse of Intoxication

In the pre-Islamic days the Arabs were greatly addicted to drinking of intoxicants. When the Quran forbade the use of intoxicating drinks the Muslim Arabs became the most temperate nation upon earth. This shows the great spiritual power of the Prophet of Islam, that one word from him an entire nation gave up the use of intoxicants. The efforts of all other reformers to wean their nations from the curse of drinking have failed.

Toxin means poison. To intoxicate means to poison. Intoxicants poison the blood and brain to produce the result which they do. Scientific experiments in England and America show that intoxicating drinks even in the smallest doses injure the tissues, and both the heart and the brain suffer. The Quran, therefore, as a perfect code of life, could not but absolutely forbid the use of intoxicants.

This is what Dr. Charles Richet of Paris, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology, has to say on the subject :—

“Now I denounce one of man’s most monstrous follies, which it would have been perfectly easy to avoid. By dint of unremitting toil, men have devised a product by means of which they intensify their degradation and bestiality. They have taken enormous trouble to make themselves ill and unhappy. They might live in serene simplicity, feeding in the

same way as all created animals ; but they must needs invent a hideous poison, the use of which they have spread and regulated.

It is revolting enough that any one should eat decaying meat, but the use of decaying vegetables is worse. For as they decay, the sugary vegetables produce a terrible poison, which is alcohol. And so, instead of the lawful normal food which the great law of nature ordains and recommends, man revels in putrid vegetables. I say putrid, because alcoholic fermentation is only decay, exactly like any other putrefaction.

Wine, cider, beer, are depraved, corrupt, putrefied foods. They are rejected with disgust by every living thing. But man is the exception. Were it only on account of his taste for drink, man would deserve to be set apart from the whole animal creation.

Homo Stultus (stupid Man) dotes on the poison of alcohol—there is no such thing as *Stultum animal*.

Beautiful clusters of luscious grapes flushed with rose or gold, exquisite to look upon and delicious to taste, are flung pell-mell into a huge vat, crushed, trampled and mutilated until they become hideous. A sickening smell arises from them. Then come Yokels who leap about half-naked in the vat and infect this superb food with their filthy feet. These splendid grapes become anxious pulp where all sorts of vermin, microbic or otherwise, breed freely. Juicy apples of exquisite hues, hanging like jewels on our fine trees, are thrown into rotting heaps where they are left to putrefy to heighten the flavour of the liquor—and it is from this disgusting mess

that man makes one of his favourite drinks.

Into these ignoble products does man succeed in transforming these two adorable fruits of the earth, and there is nothing more hideous than this profanation.

If we were prepared to drink these purified liquors until we made ourselves sick—but no! we go much further. We have succeeded in extracting their pernicious essence. Man is not content to drink this putrid mess; he extracts its innermost essence till he finally draws from the rotten grape a sure and active poison—alcohol—marvellous, mighty alcohol.

Certainly fermented grapes, apples, hops and cherries, are very impure foods, but they still retain some degree of nourishment. We cannot tolerate this. We have found out how to condense their impurity into poisonous liquor easily produced in vast quantities, which stores up the toxin of the fermented juice. And so, thanks to his treacherous intelligence, man has fallen far below the level of the beasts.

Is there any need to dwell upon the toxic power of alcohol? Taken in moderate doses it disturbs the digestive functions, murders sleep, causes a transient stimulation quickly followed by intellectual fatigue. Taken in strong doses it paralyses all our senses, makes us lurch and vomit, and extinguishes the feeble glimmer of reason which flickers in our poor minds. It soon overcomes the strongest man and turns him into a raging beast who with empuiled face and blood-shot eyes, bellows forth oaths and threats against his surroundings and insults imaginary enemies. Never in any animal species

not among pigs, nor jackals, nor donkeys, is such ignominy to be found. The ugliest thing in creation is the drunkard, a repulsive being the sight of whom makes one ashamed to belong to the same living species.

If this poison is constantly taken, then, infallibly, reason perishes utterly. The liver enlarges, the hair falls out, the hands shake, the gait becomes unsteady. A hard drinker is an old man at thirty. Through nights of sleeplessness and madness he hiccoughs incoherent phrases. A disgrace, I repeat, a disgrace which dishonours us all.

It is the drunkards who fill our hospitals and lunatic asylums. By devising this unnatural product, unknown to animals, man has increased his sorrows.

There is no more striking proof of man's inferiority to animals than alcoholism.

To sum up :—

1. The poison of alcohol is not found in nature. It is a chemical product created by our own industry. Therefore the resultant evil is wrought by our own will.

2. This poison is a recognised poison. We all know this. The noxious effects of alcohol are as obvious as the light of the noonday sun. It is common knowledge that it is a poison, and yet people persist in poisoning themselves.

3. Kings, Parliaments, Academies, Ministers, all those who claim to lead the masses, though well aware that alcohol degrades the people, do nothing to prevent this degradation. This is not merely

stupid, but shameful.”

It speaks volumes for the wisdom of Prophet Muhammad that thirteen hundred years ago, when the whole world indulged in drink, he called attention to its evil effects and forbade its use.

Adultery and Monasticism

“And go not nigh to fornication,” says the holy Quran, “for it is an indecency and evil is the way.” All religions more or less condemn adultery but the Quran tells us not to go near it, that is to say, avoid all those actions which tend towards adultery. It has therefore given us social laws which, while allowing the satisfaction of natural desires in a proper and harmless way prevent this evil and all its concomitants.

Adultery leads to breaking up of marital relation, production of bastards, disgrace of families, degradation of society, and ravages of venereal diseases. On the other hand, lawful wedlock leads to love and affection between husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister. It creates the spirit of discipline, and self-sacrifice, and provides a favourable soil for the growth of spirituality.

Islam also condemns monasticism which does violence to the natural feelings that God has implanted in the heart of human beings not only for the perpetuation of the race, but also that they may taste the joys of unselfish love and fellow-feeling.

It is a great pity that Western novelists while disparaging marriage, hold up adultery to the admiration of their readers, painting its so-called joys in glowing colours. They are, therefore, responsible for the great wave of immorality which has over-

whelmed society in Western lands.

This is what the great French doctor Charles Richet has to say on the subject from the scientific point of view :—

“What an absurd anomaly are vows of virginity whether of man or woman ! One of the noblest—I would even venture to say one of the holiest—functions of humanity is to give birth to human beings. If there be any goal in our existence—which is in the last resort admissible,—it is to perpetuate our species by new generations. Therefore to condemn oneself to unending virginity is to violate the primeval law imposed on every living being. Yet do we not see in churches and monasteries monks and nuns who think to attain holiness through virginity ? A strange holiness which consists in disregarding the divine laws !

“If these Vestals, these Capuchins, these Carmelites, these Dominicans, these Jesuits, these Fakirs were accessible to reasons, I should tell them that by their vows of virginity they were flying in the face of the manifest will of God in whom they believe. They insult their Creator by claiming to know better than He does, and by impudently disobeying the supreme law which He has laid down for every living being.

“Have I not the right to declare that man, deceived by the errors of his puny intelligence, has put himself out of harmony with the unity of life ? He alone, in the vast realm of nature, imposes virginity upon himself. He is, therefore, the only living thing which is absurd. In saying that we must respect God’s handiwork : I am nearer religion than priests themselves.

“As a physiologist, studying the springs of the living machine, I have been slowly and surely led to a straightforward formal conclusion, which is, that our body and soul are, in their normal state, so admirable, that any modification, far from being for the better, is for the worse; and instead of perfecting, degrades. Natural life is the ideal of a wholesome, happy, potent life. To believe that we progress by suppressing the generative function is as mad as to hope to attain a higher morality by fasting and scouring. True botiness consists in the regular and moderate use of our normal functions. Wise and sound nature has clearly shown us her will when she provided us with the various organs. We insult her by pretending to know better than she does.

“Not only do we insult, to which she remains supremely indifferent, but, what is far worse, we are stupid in our treatment of ourselves. Isn't it crazy to suppose that we can devise anything mightier than Love for the development of our moral energy?”

Next speaking of syphilis learned doctor continued :

This is a disease which man voluntary seeks out in its den. Sexual intercourse with an infected person is the sole and sufficient cause. No one can maintain that this intercourse is involuntarily. Therefore, syphilis is involuntary illness.

The origin of it is a recognised joke. O muddle headed man! This laughable disease is terrible. The skin is thickly covered with eruptions and hideous pustules. The gums are ulcerated and the hair falls. Waking headaches murder sleep. The voice becomes raucous and the breath foul. Prema-

ture senility overtakes the unhappy victim. Later on the bones are attacked by necrosis. The sight may be affected. Tumours break out on the limbs. Later still, the nervous system is deranged. Then come atrophy and ataxia which such agonising pains that they drive the sufferer to suicide; and different forms of paralysis, especially general paralysis, that most ghastly degradation of body and soul.

Out of every hundred lunatics who rot in our asylums, there are forty alcoholics and forty syphilitics. People who are ravaged with venereal disease are sterile. If by chance a child is born, it is a diseased, miserable little object which, luckily, will probably only live a few hours or a few days.

A comic disease indeed! Perhaps so in its early stages and for the onlookers. But later when the victim must endure his misery for two years, ten years, twenty years, or for a life time! No, verily, if this disease is food for mirth, it is a dreary sort of farce.

What is really serious is that society does nothing to protect its members. A certain syphilitic prostitute in garrison town infected 24 per cent of the strength of the regiment quartered there. At the rate of ten clients a day, which was her average, that made 300 soldiers a month. And these three hundred unlucky young men went away to scatter broadcast the inexorable plague with which they were smitten among other prostitutes, their mistresses, their fiancées, and their wives.

There is no prevention and no restriction. Nothing is done to stem the rising tide of this disease, one of the most hideous plagues which afflict humanity.

People argue that individual liberty— that sacred fetish—must be respected. But the liberty of the individual is a ghastly jest when it involves the granting of complete licence to spread the most horrible of all infections.

Chemists are forbidden to sell two grammes of laudanum. Now it is more dangerous to touch a syphilitic person than to swallow two grammes of laudanum. After taking the drug one is stupefied for a few hours, but the next day one forgets all about it ; whereas a sharp attack of syphilis shortens and poisons the remainder of a man's existence.

Why is a syphilitic free to infect fifty people when his illness is at its worst ? Why is he allowed to marry ? The liberty of the individual, forsooth ! As matter of fact, no one bothers his head about the reform of his morals. Individually and collectively, we are blind enough never to give a thought to our health, the greatest of all our blessings !”

Monasticism

“There is no monasticism in Islam,” says the Holy Prophet. This world is not in bad itself. So we should not renounce its blessings in betaking us to a life of asceticism. The mischief lies in the misuse of God’s gifts and not in their use. For God has not created anything in vain.

Islam teaches us to develop all our faculties, spiritual, intellectual and physical, to their highest pitch. It also teaches us to develop all the natural resources of the earth by means of science. We must then share the blessings of God with all mankind and help each other to develop ourselves and be happy. Injustice is prohibited. Charity, sympathy and service of humanity are the key-notes of Islam.

There has been a misapprehension in the minds of those who have favoured monasticism that unless we strangled our natural instincts they would land us into mischief. Islam says: “No do not kill your faculties but employ them for the good of humanity.”

This is illustrated by a parable. It is said that a king was in the habit of walking about his capital every night in disguise in order to discover that no one was oppressed. One night he met a party of four persons whom he suspected to be robbers. So he joined their company to see what they were up to.

One of them said that he understood the language of animals. Another said: "I am gifted with such a sense of smell that I can find out with its aid where a treasure is hidden." The third said: "I know the art of opening a lock, however intricate it be." The fourth said, "I am gifted with a power better than that which any of my other companions possesses, for I happen to see once a person's face even in darkness, I can recognize him ever afterwards, though he be hid amongst a thousand people. They all inquired of the new friend what art he possessed, whereupon he said, "I possess this extraordinary power that if I chance to see a person sentenced to be hanged, and if I nod my head at him he is at once set at liberty." "This is mighty good!" they said, and this should make us bold to-night to commit burglary on the king's treasury.

They all set out together. On their way they met a dog who barked at them. The new friend asked of the one who knew the language of lower animals, "what does this dog say?" It says, said he, "there is king among you." When they came to the treasury, its locked door was opened by the companion who knew the art of opening intricate locks, and they entered in it and the treasure was soon searched out, where it lay hidden, by the person who possessed the extraordinary sense of smell amongst them. After their work was over, they separated and the king went to his palace.

The next day it was given out that the king's treasure was stolen during the night. After trying his officers' skill in tracing out the burglars, and finding them wanting in it, the king gave the clue to his officers of the burglar's whereabouts. The burglars were tried and the judge sentenced them to death.

The thieves consulted themselves saying the dog said : One of you is a king, so perchance our fifth companion was our king in disguise who gave us away. They therefore requested to be presented to the king in order that they may beg for his mercy. They were ushered in the presence of the king and the person blessed with extraordinary distinguishing power said to him : "Each of us has shown his art to thee, O king ! Now do thou also nod the head to set us free, from the gallows."

The king nodded the head and set them at liberty. He then ordered them to be usefully employed, according to their different faculties, for the benefit of the public.

Similarly, say the *sufis*, when Lord Love will preside in our hearts, he will, like the king in the parable, employ all our faculties, like the four thieves, in work conducive to our and to society's benefit. So what is needed is the love of God and not the starvation of our faculties and powers. We must use all our faculties in such a way as benefit both ourselves and mankind in general. When we love God our hearts will feel pleasure in serving God's creatures instead of injuring them. Such has always been the case with prophets and saints.

Islam and Science

Islam teaches us that God is the Creator of the Universe and that "He has not created it in sport." There is purpose behind the creation of man and of everything. That the highest success of man lies in his discovery of the purpose of his creation and in fulfilling that purpose. Man by fulfilling the mission appointed for him by God goes on developing his personality and becomes a friend of God (*Khaleef-Allah*), and co-operator with Him in His creative evolution and His vicegerent (*khaliifa*) on earth. In this consists man's highest bliss (*paradis*).

Opposition on the part of man to the purpose for which he has been created leads to man's degeneration (*fall*) and misery (*hell*). It therefore behoves man to gratefully accept his high destiny and devote himself actively to the accomplishment of the grand purpose of his creation. God helps those who help God in His Noble design of creative evolution which will be accomplished in spite of the opposition of the ignorant. "They desire to put out the light of God by their breaths, but God will perfect His light averse though the misbelievers be." (Quran 61 : 8).

God tells us in the Quran at another place that all created things are for the benefit of man and he should therefore acquire science in order to be able to make the best use of God's creation and Man should not give himself to superstition and

ignoble conjectures but work out scientific truths by observation, contemplation, experiment, measurement, comparison and other methods open to intellect. To help man to discover spiritual truths regarding the purpose of man's creation, and the way to his perfection, success and happiness, God has revealed His will to the prophets and saints who possessed the necessary qualifications and ability to receive divine revelation. Thus God has provided man not only with his physical needs but also with the requisite knowledge and guidance for his spiritual progress,

It had become customary with the philosophers and scientists of the nineteenth century to refer all phenomena to accidental beginning. They did not explain the origin of life on this plane nor the purpose of the evolution which they said was going on. The present century marks a welcome change in the right direction. This is what Director Charles Richet of Paris, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology in 1913, says about it :—

“Since I exist, since I think, since I suffer, I have certainly the right to ask the reason of my existence my thought, my suffering !

“What is my business here? What is required of me? Why life? Why death? Who gave me thought? And to what purpose? Must I always go on my way, knowing neither the cause nor the object of my journey?

“Why do I pass from infancy to old age through a thousand griefs without discovering the reason for this headlong career?

Yet I am something, a very small thing by all

means, but still an *ego*, a very tiny man, but still person who likes to be noticed.

“As Montaigne said, what sort of monster is this drop of semen from which we are sprung, which carries in itself the thoughts and tendencies of our fathers !

“The foundation of Psychology is the nervous system. How can cells, those tiny sacks filled with a semi-liquid substance greasy for oxygen, be capable of thought, which involves moving outside material sphere ? How can diminutive pulpy mass retain the memory of some faint emotion which stirred it these thirty years by gone ? The memory ! What a world, passing our comprehension. How will this humble cell imagine during conceptions in which this universe is represented. How will it conceive abstract ideas like truth, space, justice and duration of time ? How can what is mobile, frail, and unstable attain to the idea of the immobility, strength and stability ? Here again I do not understand.

“Let us suppose that someone has counted all the specks of grit in a heap of sand that each pebble in it has been weighed, measured and drawn. What will it profit me, this meticulously accurate enumeration, if I still know nothing of the remote causes for the existence of that heap of sand, nor of its ultimate destiny ? Therein lies the real interest. That is what I want to know. So much so that on the day when I am convinced that I am never to know anything about my pile of sand beyond the number, weight and shape of the pebbles which go to make it, I shall lose all my zest for this irksome task ! Why are there, these stones which I count and describe ? Who put them there ? What is their true meaning ?

To understand why living things exist and men endowed with a modicum of intelligence would be to penetrate, though ever so little, into the cosmos . . . somebody will eventually demonstrate the mathematical relations of gravity, light, heat and electricity, but all to no purpose, for the same dreadful problem will always confront us—what are we here for?

“Art then is human, science is human, and at no point does man’s intelligence penetrate the absolute.

God through His Prophets comes to the aid of man and enlightens humanity with things which are beyond its ken. The souls of the prophets are so delicately attuned to higher things that they can feel and see things which are invisible to us and like sensitive instruments; such as the radio and barometer, record things to which ordinary mortal remain quite insensible. Shakespeare says :

“There are more things in heaven and earth,
Horatio.

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

Milton also mentions how angels surround us on all sides of whose presence we remain ignorant. The spiritually-tuned souls receive intimations which no gross ear can hear :—

So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity,
That when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lacky her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt :
And, in clear dream and solemn vision,
Tell her of things no gross ear can hear ;
Till oft converse with heavenly habitants.

Begins to cast a beam on the outward shape,
 The unpolliuted temple of the mind,
 And turns it by the degree to the soul's essence
 Till all be made immortal ; but when lust,
 By unchaste looks, loose : gesture and foul
talk,
 But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
 Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
 The souls grows collected by contagion,
 Imbedies, and imbrutes, and till she quite lose
 The divine property of her first being.

Doctor Charles Richet beautifully illustrates this point in the following words (showing that there are unsuspected forces, spiritual and others of which we are now ignorant, but of which we will by degrees gain knowledge as we go on progressing) :—

“Are there any scholars—or even any illiterate people—ingenious enough to be convinced that matter has properties besides, those which are perceptible to our senses? If we had never put a piece of iron near a magnet, we should never have suspected that mighty forces were vibrating in it. Huxley tells us how one day he put his head between the two poles of a large magnet, capable of lifting 300 kilos. ‘Then,’ he said, ‘an extraordinary phenomenon occurred: I felt nothing whatever.’ Magnetic force, however great the energy of its radiation, does not affect any of our senses, and was only revealed to us by chance. We should never have known anything about it, if there had not been a bit of iron to betray it.

“Imagine an animal with no sense of smell at all. He would have no idea of what smell can be. Creatures without a retina would know nothing of what is meant by the word *light*, yet they could live!

They would inhabit a dark world full of sounds if they had an apparatus for hearing, and resistant if they had organs of touch, but they would understand nothing of light and shade. Having no visual mechanism, they could imagine absolutely nothing of these varied and complex images which at every second of our lives convey to us the idea of colours.

“Analysis of the elementary laws of physics teaches us that electric forces are quivering everywhere with a tremendous intensity. To observe this, we only need galvanometer. Then, thanks to the deviation of the needle, these energies become evident. They can be regulated, their vibrations can be registered. We are therefore, surrounded on every hand by forces sometimes weak, sometimes enormously strong, which have no effect on our senses, and of which we can only form an idea by means of a very special experimental apparatus. If this is lacking, we impudently assert that there is nothing there because we observe nothing. If we had no galvanometer, we should have no suspicion of the electric and magnetic forces which are seething round us. But they would exist none the less.

“Physicists have demonstrated that electric currents of great intensity, when they are of brief duration or (which comes to the same thing) of high frequency, do not affect our sensitive nerves; yet they are strong enough to light an electric lamp. The body may be traversed by currents strong enough to make light, and yet we are not conscious of any sensations whatsoever.

Here then are tremendous forces, to which we are quite insensible, not being adapted to them, and which we can only know through mechanical contri-

vances. *How many other forces doubtless exist, for which no mechanism is available! and of which therefore we remain in utter ignorance.*

It is very likely, almost certain indeed, that many powerful forces are circulating in the world of which we are totally unconscious, because we have neither sensational apparatus to feel them, nor physical apparatus to reveal them.

Science, however, does not authorize us to state that there is nothing there. A deaf man would make a fool of himself if he maintained that there was no such thing as noise in the universe, and mankind would be equally stupid if they claimed to be initiated into all the energies of nature through the medium of their five poor senses. Only a man of very low intellect would dare to say. All the forces of the universe are mentioned in our treatises of physic, gravity, light, heat and electricity. There can't be any more.

If by some chance, for chance bears fruit often than genius, a new force were to be discovered, it would be no cause, for stupefaction far beyond a doubt many unknown forces are acting round us in this vast universe, of which only a few properties are dimly known to us.

Men move in *a very limited material and moral world*. They go no further, and do not dream that any other may exist—crazy illusion which they cherish to their dying day.

All the forms and movements are mere appearances, and possibly conceal other tremendous forces beyond our conception, since we have nothing to put us on their track. These forces are far more a

sealed book to us than, for example, Hamlet's soliloquy is to an oyster gaping on the beach. We evolve not only amidst the unknown and unknowable, but amidst the misunderstood and the incomprehensible. So be it! Then why is there intelligence? and an intelligence which, in defiance of its weakness, aspires to knowledge?

Nothing would be more delightful than to lean upon good, solid, unshakable axioms, which would never give way under the repeated shocks of our intellectual divagations but which would uphold us by the strengths of their inflexible rigidity, and so prevent us from straying into the paths of conjecture."

The unshakable axioms for which the learned Doctor has expressed his insatiable longing will be found by him in the Quran which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad for the guidance of humanity, and which affirms the teachings of the prophets who preceded him. The Doctor admits that knowledge is not confined to that which we already know. The Holy Quran says: "If all the trees were to become pen and all the oceans to become ink, they would not be sufficient to write down the wisdom of God. This shows the bounds of knowledge are illimitable inasmuch as the source of all knowledge, God, is boundless. And the prophets whose souls are in tune with the Infinite can receive knowledge from the great Unknown which is not accessible to all mortals, just as finely tuned radio can capture from the atmosphere the music which we could not hear with our unaided ears.

In our everyday life we have to believe a good deal on trust. We believe in what our doctors, lawyers, friends, neighbours, newspapers, history

bodies tell us. Otherwise it would be impossible to carry on life. The prophets deserve to be believed above all others, inasmuch as they lead pure lives and are unselfish and self-sacrificing, having no reason to lie or to deceive. If we can believe verdicts of scientists even though we do not possess the requisite scientific training to test their theories, we should much more believe the prophets whose teachings, as regard unseen things, we may not be able to test (not having the requisite spiritual training at the moment). But as we develop spiritually the truth of their teaching becomes more and more apparent to us.

The Saintly Khwaja Hasan

Hasan was born at Medina in the year 19 A.H. and died 110 A. H. living to the ripe age of 91.

Once while Hasan was preaching in the mosque on the blessings of having a good and just ruler, and was depicting character of tyrant in bold colours, the Governors (Hajjaj the tyrant) entered the mosque followed by his soldiers with drawn swords. The people said to one another; "Now will Hasan bridle his tongue." But Hasan went on speaking boldly, growing warmer and warmer over his theme, till Hajjaj, admiring his boldness got up and said: If anyone wants to see a bold fellow, here is one in the person of Hasan.

Hasan was so humble that he never thought himself better than his fellow creatures. One day on the banks of the river Tigris he saw a negro, sitting with a woman in the company, and a bottle before him. Hasan said to himself: "Perhaps I am better than he, for I am no drunkard, neither am I immoral with women." As he was thus thinking a boat passed along the waters, was caught by a strong wind, and capsized. The crew seven in number struggled in the water for their lives. The negro jumped in, saved one after another six of the number, and turning to Hasan said: "Come and save the seventh for thou thinkest thyself better than me. O Hasan, I am not a drunkard. The bottle contains only water and the woman whom

thou seest is my mother." Hasan never afterwards considered himself better than any of his fellow creatures.

A story is told about the saint's love of animals. He bargained to purchase a horse from one of his acquaintances, for the dumb creature had got maimed and had exercised the saint's pity. The acquaintance was only too glad to get rid of it. During the night the acquaintance saw in a dream a lovely plot of land and a beautiful horse grazing on it, and on inquiring to whom it belonged he was told that it belonged to Hasan, the lover of lower animals. Next day the saint's acquaintance went to him and asked him to cancel the bargain as, he said, from what he had seen in his dream, he now appreciated how noble it was to be kind to the dumb creatures. But the saint would not cancel, as he had also seen the same dream during the previous night, and the acquaintance left his house disappointed.

Next night the saint saw in his dream a spacious mansion in Heaven far better than the plot of land and the horse grazing upon it which he had seen the previous night, and inquiring to whom it belonged, he was told it belonged to the person who was lenient in his dealings with his fellow creatures and treated them with love and kindness. The saint next day went to his acquaintance and according to the desire of the acquaintance cancelled the bargain.

That Hasan appreciated the responsibility of a leader can be gathered from his taking a lesson to his heart from an answer he received from a drunkard, whom he saw reeling and going on with unsteady steps in one of the muddy streets of Qasora. He told him to keep his steps steady

otherwise he might get a bad fall, whereupon the drunkard answered, "O Imam of the Muslims! I would clean myself of the dirt easily enough if I tripped, but it would be sad both for thee and thy followers if thou trippest, and couldst scarce clean thyself of the dirt that would cling to thee for ages." Hasan took the lesson to heart and told his followers to warn him instantly they found him in the wrong.

Hasan had a keen sense of humour and even trifles afforded him food for reflection. Seeing a child carrying a candle he asked him whence had the light of the candle come. The child remained embarrassed for a time, but presently a blast of wind blew out the light, and the child said in triumph; "Tell me, sir, where has it disappeared and I shall tell you whence did it come." Thus Life's flickering flame appears from whence one scarcely knows, and vanishes by a sudden blast of death.

Hasan says: "A woman's answer once went right to my soul. She came running to me bare-headed complaining of her husband's conduct towards her. I asked her to go and cover herself properly and then come to me. She said: O Imam of the Muslims! I have so lost my senses in the love of a creature that I am not conscious of my own self. Hadst thou not informed me of it, I would have run on to the bazaar unconscious of my not being properly covered; but wert thou as much in love with thy Creator as I am with one of His creatures thou wouldst not have noticed my bare arms and head."

Hasan says: "I was on the terrace of my house when I heard my neighbour's wife giving the following warm sermon to her husband: 'Hast thou lost thy senses? I have been with thee for these forty

years, thy partner in all thy sufferings. I never complained of thee even if thou didst not supply me my wants, and endured for thee the cold of winter and the hot weather of summer. I maintained thy honour in thy fellow men's eyes, and submitted to thy slightest wish. But I will never submit to this thing. Thou wantest to take another partner in thy love preferring her to me. I will never allow thine eyes to settle on another woman's beauty. I will seize the Imam's skirt and complain bitterly of thee before him.' Hasan says, this reminded him of the Lord's word: 'Verily God forgiveth not the taking of other partners unto Him, but except this. He forgiveth to whom He pleaseth.' The love that one should bear towards his Lord must be unalloyed pure and selfless.

A Few Sayings of Hasan

(1) A sheep is better than an unawakened human being, for the sheep is called away by the shepherd's voice from grazing on weeds that would harm him; but the Word of God does not call away a human being, steeped in pleasure of this world from things that stifle his higher faculties.

(2) There is no greater pestilence on this earth than one who always utters vain words, and who ever remains silent without observing and judging upon things around him is deeply set in ignorance; and the glance which goes without drawing a lesson goes in vain.

(3) Whosoever is sound in sense has always moments of silent contemplation and communion with his heart, searching out and discovering in those moments truths which lay hidden before, and

which leap upon his tongue when the occasion calls them forth.

(4) Sincere piety reaches the point where nothing but truth comes upon the tongue of its possessor whether he be in anger or out of temper; where his limbs are never misused in the perpetration of that which is forbidden by the Lord, where not a single thought passes his mind which is not approved of his Lord.

The Sainly Muslim Missionaries in India

By DR. MURRAY TITUS, Ph.D., D.D.

Throughout the history of Islam in India the missionary, or the itinerant preacher, has been a relatively important factor. His work has not received anything like the attention that it deserves, from the standpoint of the results accomplished. It must not be thought that the Muslim preachers were organized for their propaganda work in any modern way. Usually they have been individuals, endowed with piety and religious zeal, frequently men of learning, who, through their own personal interest in the spread of Islam, and inspired with divine call, have been content to wander from place to place and gather disciples.

The period of this individualistic missionary activity extends from the beginning of the eleventh century right up to the present time, though with considerable irregularity. The records show that there were very few missionaries in the first two centuries beginning with the time, of Mahmud's invasions. But, in the thirteenth century A. D. well-known names begin to appear particularly that of Khwaja Muin-ud-Din Chishti of Ajmer. The fourteenth century A. D. seems to have been the time of the greatest display of missionary zeal; since the number of missionaries of whose names and work we find a record exceeds that of any other singly century. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries

following showed a tendency to a decline in missionary work. However, we know that quiet personal work must have gone on all time, as it does at the present day, resulting in numerous accession to the Muslim community.

One of the earliest missionaries of whom we have any record was Shaykh Ismail, who came to Lahore about the year A. D. 1005. He belonged to the Bukhara Sayyids, and was distinguished both for his secular and religious learning. It is said that crowds flocked to listen to his sermons, and that no unbeliever ever came into personal contact with him without being converted to the faith of Islam.'

To the eleventh century also belong Abdullah a missionary from Yaman, who began his work of preaching in Gejrat about the year A.D. 1067. It is said that through the performance of his miracles many Hindas were converted to Islam. The Bohras regard him as their first missionary.

In the twelfth century we meet with the name of Nur-ud-Din more generally known as Nur Satsagar, the name which he adopted in deference to the Hindus. He was sent from Alamut, in Persia, the headquarters of the Grand Master of the Ismailis, and came to Gujerat in the reign of Siddna Raj (A.D. 1094-1143). It is said that he was instrumental in the conversion of the Kanbis, Kharwas, and Karis, all low caste folk. The Khojahs regard Nur Satsagar as their first missionary.

In the thirteenth century these are several names of importance. One of these is that of Sayyed Jalal-ud-Din of Bukhara (A. D. 1190-1291). He settled in Uch, in Sind, in A.D. 1244, and was successful in winning many converts to the faith of

Islam. Many of his descendants are still revered as saints, and even to this day his tomb is guarded by members of his family. This remarkable family has been responsible for a widening circle of religious influence. Sayyid Sulah-ud-Din and his son, Hassan Kalim-ud-Din, who laboured in the neighbourhood of Uch are likewise held to have been the cause of many turning to Islam in the thirteenth century, and the latter is said to have possessed such magnetic influence that as soon as his glance fell upon any Hindu he would at once accept the faith. Sayyid Ahmed Kabir known as Makh'um-i-Jahannam and grandson of Jelah-ud-Din, is said to have been the means of the conversion of several tribes in the Punjab.

Perhaps the most famous missionary of India was Khwajah Muin-ud-Din Chishti, who died in Ajmer in A.D. 1236. A native of Sistan in what was then East Persia, he is said to have received his missionary call to India while on a pilgrimage to Medina. The Prophet came to him in a dream and said to him: 'The Almighty has entrusted the country of India to thee. Go thither and preach in Ajmer. By God's help, the faith of Islam shall through thy piety and that of thy followers, be spread in that land.' According to the account, he obeyed the call and came to Ajmer, where idolatry prevailed under Hindu rule. One of his first converts was a yogi, the spiritual preceptor of the Rajah himself. Little by little Muin-ud-Din attracted to himself a body of disciples, whom he had won over from infidelity by his teachings. His fame as a teacher became so well known abroad that Hindus are said to have come to him in great numbers and that many were induced to embrace Islam. Even during his short stay in the city of Delhi, when on his way to Ajmer, he is said to have converted seven

hundred persons.

Late in the same century, Bu Ali Qalandar, a missionary from Persian Iraq, came to North India and settled at Panipat, near Delhi. The Muslim Rajputs of this place declare that they are descendants of one Amir Singh, who was a convert of this saintly man. Bu Ali Qalandar died there in A.D. 1324, and his tomb is still an object of veneration to many pilgrims.

The following statement of W. W. Hunter would seem to be quite a fair interpretation of the response made by the people of Eastern Bengal to the work of the Muslim missionaries :

“To these poor people, fishermen, hunters, pirates, and low caste tillers, Islam came as a revelation from on high. It was the creed of the ruling race ; its missionaries were men of zeal, who brought the gospel of the unity of God and the equality of men in His sight to a despised and neglected population.”

Missionary efforts in Bengal, as elsewhere, are attested by the graves and shrines of missionaries, who are credited with having been zealous for the spread of their. One of the earliest of these belonged to the thirteenth century, Shaykh Jalal-ud-Din Tabrizi, who died in A.D. 1244. He is said to have visited Bengal and died there, though the place of his tomb is unknown. Yet his memory is revered; and a shrine in his honour has been erected, which is visited by the pilgrims.

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries A. D. missionary work was carried on in the Panjab, Kashmir, the Deccan, Western India, and Eastern

India with increasing zeal. In the Punjab we find Baha-ul-Haq, Baba Farid-ud-Din of Pakpattan, and Ahmad Kabir known as Makhdum-Jahanian, at the height of their endeavour. The first of these is said to have converted many tribes on the plain of the Western Punjab, and Baba Farid-ud-Din is said to have been the means of the conversion of some sixteen tribes. Bulbul Shah is said to have been the first missionary to Kashmir. In the early part of the fourteenth century he converted the king of that country who took the name of Sadr-ud-Din. Later in this century A.D. 1338, the progress of Islam was greatly advanced by the coming of Sayyad Ali Hamdani who is said to have brought with him seven hundred Sayyeds. These men established hermitages all over the country, and by their influence appear to have assured the acceptance of the new religion.

In the Deccan and Western India we find the well-known Sayyad Muhammad Gisu Daraz and Pir Malabir Khamdayat at work. The latter was an Arab teacher, who came as a missionary to Bijapur about the year A.D. 1334, and began work among the peasants. Among these are to be found Muslims who claim that their ancestors were Jains converted by him. At the close of the same century, Gisu Daraz was working among the Hindus of the Poona district, where he met with success, and later was similarly successful in Belgaum. He was laid to rest from his labours at Gulberga.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Sind and Western India particularly were the scene of the labours of Muslim missionaries. In Sind and Cutch, Sayyed Usuf-ud-Din and Pir Sadr-ud-Din became famous for their work. We are told that Sayyad Usuf-ud-Din, who was a descendant of Abdul

Qadir Jailani was bidden in dream to leave Baghdad for India and convert its inhabitants to Islam. He came to Sindh in A.D. 1422, and after labouring there for ten years, he succeeded in winning over to Islam seven hundred families of the Lohana caste, who followed the example of two of their number by name Sundarji and Hansraj; these men embraced Islam, after seeing miracles performed by the saint, and on their conversion received the names of Adamji and Taj Mohammad respectively. Under the leadership of the grandson of the former these people migrated to Cutch, where their numbers were increased by converts from among the Cutch Lohanas.

Pir Sadr-ud-Din began his labours in Sindh about the year A.D. 1430. He was an Ismaili missionary who was head of the Khoja sect. He made certain concession to Hindu beliefs and customs, with the result that he won his first converts in the villages and towns of Upper Sindh. He also worked in Cutch and from these parts the doctrines of his sect spread southwards through Gujrat to Bombay.

In Gujrat and other parts of Western India, missionaries of Islam were actively engaged in spreading their doctrines. Imam Shah of Pirana and Dawal Shah Pir are two whose names are linked together in the latter half of the fifteenth century A.D. The former is said to have converted a large number of cultivators bringing about a fall of rains after two seasons of scarcity. On another occasion, meeting a band of Hindu pilgrims passing through Pirana on their way to Benares, he offered to take them there; they agreed, and in a moment were in the holy city, where they bathed in the Ganges and paid their vows; they then awoke to find themselves still in Pirana, and adopted the faith of

the saint who could perform such miracle.

Malik Abdul Latif, the real name of Dawal Shah Pir, was a son of one of the nobles of Mahmud Begarat (A.D. 1458-1511), of the Muslim kingdom in Gujarat. Many of the Cutch Muslims hold the Pir as thir spiritual leader, and assert that through the influence many Hindus were converted.

In Nasik are to be found the descendants of Shah Muhammad Sadiq, an Arabian Missionary, who came from Medina in A.D. 1568, thus following another Arabian missionary, Khwajah Khunmir Huseyni, who laboured in the same region fifty years before considerable success.

To Kashmir, towards the close of the fifteenth century, came a missionary from Talish, on the Caspian Sea by the name of Mir Shamas-ud-Din. He was a Shia and with the help of disciples is said to have been converted a large number of people.

Arnold tells of another group of people in Southern India, the Dudekulas :—

“Who live by cotton cleaning (as their name denotes) and by weaving coarse fabrics, and attribute their conversion to Baba Fakhr-ud-Din, whose tomb they revere at Penukonda. Legend says that he was originally a king of Sistan, who abdicated his throne in favour of his brother, became a religious mendicant and set out on a proseytzing mission. The legend goes on to say that he finally settled at Penukonda in the vicinity of a Hindu temple, where his presence was unwelcome to the Raja of the place instead to appealing to force, he applied several tests to discover whether the Muhammedan saint or his own priest was the better qualified by

sanctity to possess the temple. As a final test he had them both tied up in sacks filled with lime, and thrown into tanks. The Hindu priest never reappeared, but Baba Fakhr-ud Din asserted the superiority of his faith by being miraculously transported to a hill outside the town. The Raja thereupon became a Musulman, and his example was followed by a large number of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, and the temple was turned into a mosque."

Another community, found in South India that is an excellent example of group conversion by missionaries is that of Ravuttans, found in the districts of Madura, Tinnevellery, Coimbatore, North Arcot, and Nilgiris. These people assert that they were converted by the preaching of missionaries, whose tombs they venerate to the present day. Of these the leading one seems to have been Sayyed Nathar Shah (A.D. 969—1039) variously called also Nadir Shah and Nather Vali. This man who is said to have converted large numbers of Hindus to Islam, made his headquarter at Trichinopoly, after wandering much in Arabia, Persia and Northern India. His tomb is a famous place of pilgrimage in South India.

Most of these missionaries seem to have attracted followers to themselves because of their undoubted piety, which is a matter of great consideration among the Hindus. But all seems to have made an impression and won a hearing because of the simple and straightforward religious and social precepts of Islam, which exalt the Unity of God, declare the abomination of idolatry, and proclaim the equality of all believers as opposed to the oppressive system of caste, which has been for so many centuries the blight of Hinduism. So, after all due allowance is

made for the influence of the miraculous, it remains without question that, as a result of the piety and zeal of the missionaries and the message they had to proclaim, they undoubtedly did win conspicuous success.

Missionary Work Since 1800

The work of individuals has been going on as before: and having come under critical review, results can be more accurately evaluated. In the early part of the nineteenth century there was a remarkable revival of the Islamic religion in Bengal, particularly under the inspiration of the Wahabi reformers, Haji Shariatullah and his son Dudhu Mian who won many converts from among the unbelievers. Nor can the conversions be said to have stopped at the present time.

Since the middle of the nineteenth century there has been a widespread revival of Islam all over India, and the annual conversions are estimated anywhere from ten thousand to six hundred thousand.

On the Malabar coast conversions are being made from among the *Fiyans*, *Mukluvans*, or fishermen caste, from the *Cheruman*, or agricultural labourers, and other low castes. At Ponani under the auspices of the Minnat-ul-Islam Sabha, there are two schools for new converts, one for boys, another for girls. It is reported that more than six thousand converts have passed through these schools since they were organised. Those under instruction are not only given free tuition in the tenets of Islam, but are given financial assistance as well. There are sixteen branches of the Sabha in south Malabar.

Travancore, and Cochin, and extensive charities have been organised.

So numerous have the conversions from Hinduism been that there is a decided tendency for the Muhammadans, of both the west and the east coasts of Southern India to retain the aboriginal type from which they are drawn. During the decade ending in 1911, the Moppillas on the west coast increased fourteen per cent, largely through accessions from the lower classes of Hindus. In fact the increase has been so rapid as to make it possible that, in a few years the whole of the lower grades of Hindu society of the west coast may become Muhammadans. The possibility receives support from the evidence of the Census Superintendent of 1881, he wrote concerning the decrease in the number of the Cheruman caste as follows.

“This caste numbered ninety-nine thousand in Malabar at the Census of 1871, and 1881 only six y-four thousand, there ar nearly forty thousand fewer Cherumans than there would have been but for their conversions to Mohammedanism

There are many zealous Muslim missionaries working at the present time throughout India with varying results. Khwaja Hasan Nizami of Delhi has developed a considerable amount of literature in the form of tracts, pamphlets and books which are circulated through different languages of India.

When it comes to considering the classes of Hindus from which converts have largely come, it is impossible to account for the size of the numbers wholly through the militant or peaceful zeal of conquerors, traders, and missionaries. There are other elements that enter in from the side of the Hindus

themselves and from the structure of their society, that have been an aid to the spread of Islam. The first of these factors, which have been effective from the earliest times, has been the oppressive social conditions under which the low castes have had to suffer; consequently an outcast man, who wished to escape the insults and degradation imposed upon him by his social status, could easily find a welcome freedom by accepting the benefit of a system of religion which has no outcasts, and which permits the prince and the sweeper to worship together in the house of God.

In this way alone can the large numbers of so-called low-caste Muslims of India such as the weavers and oil-makers, water carriers, leather workers, and even sweepers, be accounted for. Not alone in Bengal, but in the United Provinces, the Punjab, and Western India, this process of assimilation to a higher form of social life has been going on for centuries. In the middle of the sixteenth century a very remarkable illustration of this sort occurred in the north-eastern part of the Province of Bengal. An aboriginal tribe known as the Koch became practically Hinduized; but the lower classes, on finding themselves regarded as outcasts, all became Muhammadans.

There can be no doubt that, during all the centuries of Islam in India, one of the very strongest assets has been the privilege of brotherhood, which it has held out freely to all who would come within its pale. True it is that certain aspects of the caste system are to be found among Indian Muslims to-day; but even so, these disabilities are nothing compared with those of the Hinduism from which these inherited caste-features have emerged; and Islam, even in its Hindu environment, knows no outcasts.

What Arnold says is no doubt true. It is the absence of class prejudices which constitutes the real strength of Islam in India, and enables it to win so many converts from Hinduism.

Muhammad and Teachings of Quran

By John Davenport

Edited by Muhammad Amin, Bar-at-law

Comments, Reports and Letters on the Book.

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