Writings of
ALLAMA
ABDULLAH
YUSUF ALI

Compiled by
MUHAMMAD HANEEF SHAHID

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Guidance and Knowledge

Narrated Abu-Musa: The Prophet (PBUH) said: The example of guidance and knowledge with which Allah has sent me is like abundant rain falling on the earth, some of which was fertile soil that absorbed rainwater and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. (And) another portion of it was hard and held the rain water and Allah benefited the people with it and they utilized it for drinking, (making their animals drink from it) and to irrigate the land for cultivation. (And) a portion of it was barren which could neither hold the water nor bring forth vegetation (then that land gave no benefits). The first is the example of the person who comprehends Allah's Religion (Islam) and gets benefit (from the knowledge) which Allah has revealed through me (the Prophet PBUH) and learns and then teaches it to others. The (last example is that of a) person who does not care for it and does not take Allah`s Guidance revealed through me (He is like that barren land).[1]

1. Summarized Sahih Al-Bukhari; Arabic - English Translated by Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Maktaba Dar-us-Salam, Riyadh, 1994., page 89.

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficient, the Most Merciful!

Introduction

When the name of Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali, C.B.E. 1917; M.A., L.L.M. (Cantab.); F.R.S.L.; F.R. Empire S; M.R.A.S.; Barrister-at-Law of Lincoln`s Inn[1], comes on our lips, our mind at once goes to 'One of the Luminaries of Islamic Learning', 'A Rising Star' who devoted his whole life for the cause of Islam and its Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Most of the people know him as a Translator of the Noble Quran, but when we study him deeply and thoroughly, we come to the conclusion that this person whom we call Abdullah Yusuf Ali had `many-fold` personality. Besides being a 'Translator and Commentator of the Holy Quran`, he was an old I.C.S (Indian Civil Service). Islamist, historian, educationist, Barrister, writer, Journalist, etc. We have come to know that thousands of Non-Muslims world-wide have entered the fold of Islam by studying the translation and commentary rendered by this great 'Servant of Islam'.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali was born on 4th April, 1872 in Surat in a Dawudi Bohra family. His father taught him Arabic and from his early childhood, he developed a 'love for the Holy Quran its rhythm and music and wonder at its meaning`.[2] In this regard he himself writes:

"It was between the ages of four and five that I first learned to read its Arabic words, to revel in its rythm and music, and wonder at its meaning. I have a dim recollection of the 'Khatm' ceremony which closed that stage. It was called 'completion': it really just began a spiritual awakening that has gone on ever since. My revered father taught me Arabic, but I must have imbibed from him into my inner most being something more,--something which told me that all the

1. According to our letter dated 24th August, 1996 and in reply from the Lincoln' Inn dated 3rd September, 1996 Abdullah Yusuf Ali got admission on 14th November, 1891 and was called to the Bar on 27th January, 1896.
2. Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan. Vol. 33, No. 3, July 1995, page 64.

world's thoughts, all the world's most beautiful languages and literatures, are but vehicles for that ineffable message which comes to the heart in rare moments of ecstasy. The soul of mysticism and ecstasy is in the Quran, as well as that plain guidance for the plain man which a world in a hurry affects to consider as sufficient. It is good to make this personal confession, to an age in which it is in the highest degree unfashionable to speak of religion or spiritual peace or consolation, an age in which words like these draw forth only derision, pity or contempt."[3]

After remaining for a few years at the Anjuman-i-Islam School, Bombay, he shifted to a missionary school, Wilson's School, and after Matriculation joined Wilson's College, Bombay. Abdullah Yusuf Ali had very brilliant academic record. He won a Latin prize and obtained a Fellowship in Greek history which contributed to the Hellenic influence on his mind. He was awarded a scholarship by the Government of Bombay and proceeded to study at St. John's College, Cambridge. He obtained a 'Tripos' in 1895 and also studied Law. He was called to the Bar on 27th January, 1896. He took the ICS examination and came out with flying colours.

He made friends with Englishmen like George Birdwood and Roland K. Wilson and became an Anglophile like his contemporaries Jinnah and Iqbal. He climbed rapidly up the rungs of the ICS ladder, as the author mentions, and became a protege of James Mesto, Governor of U.P.[4]

Abdullah Yusuf Ali joined the I.C.S. in 1895, worked as Assistant Magistrate in 1896; Joint Magistrate, in 1899; Assistant Sessions Judge in 1902; Subsequently Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate; Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Finance Department, 1907; acted as Deputy Secretary, 1911-12; He got retirement from the Indian Civil Service in 1914. He was President, U.P. Industrial Conference, Agra, 1909; President, All-India Muhammadan Educational Conference, Nagpur, December 1910; Lecturer on Hindustani, Hindi and Indian Religions, Manners and Customs, School of Oriental Studies, London University, 1917-1919; Chairman of Special Committee and Member of the Committee on India, Imperial Institute, 1916-1919; President of Indian Students Prisoners of War Fund, 1916; Lecture Tour in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, April-May 1918 and in Holland, October-November 1920; Sarf-Khas Counsel, Hyderbad Deccan, 1919-1920; Revenue Minister.

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3. The Glorious Quran; Translation and Commentary, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, page iii.
4. Review on Searching for Solace, by M. A. Sherif. Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan. Vol. 33, No. 3, July 1995 page 64.

Hyderabad Deccan, 1921-22; Lucknow Bar, 1922-24; Principal, Islamia College, Lahore, 1925-27; Fellow and Syndic, Punjab University, 1925-28; Member of Court, Aligarh University; Educational Tour through the Near East: One of India's Representatives to the 9th Assembly of the League of Nations, 1928; World tour through America, Hawaian Islands, Japan, China, Philippines, Straits Settlements, Ceylon and India 1929-30; through Canada from Halifax to Victoria as guest of National Council of Education, 1932; Executive Committee of World Conference for International Peace through Religion; President Sind Azad Conference, 1932; President All India Muslim Conference, Calcutta, 1932; Member Punjab University Enquiry Committee, 1932-33; Principal, Islamia College, Lahore, 1935-37; and Fellow of the Punjab University, 1935-39; Lecture tour through Canada, 1938-39.[5]

In Lahore, Dr. Yusuf Ali was acclaimed as an Allama, while he was Principal of Islamic College Lahore. He visited Aligarh and Osmania Universities. He lectured at the School of Oriental Studies, London. He loved Art circles and participated in the functions of Royal Society of Arts and Royal Society of Literature. He was at Lincoln's Inn and Lucknow Bar. He was a member of the Rotarians at Lahore. He attended a League of Nations Conference at Geneva. He presided over numerous educational conferences. What seemed surprising, he even joined the Nizam of Hyderabad's service and attended his silver jubilee in 1937. He performed Hajj and opened mosques. His travels took him to Canada, Egypt, Japan, Karbala, Malta and Turkey. He was a Trustee of Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking. He accepted the Presidency of Jamiat-i-Tanzim, a Muslim Organization set-up at Lahore. He undertook the task of presenting Islam as a progressive and liberal faith. He wrote much and has left a vast literary output.[6]

As an educationist and Principal of Islamia College, Lahore, Abdullah Yusuf Ali made many contributions to Muslim educational reform. He was against denominational institutions and opposed to religious education in its antiquated form. He participated in many educational conferences and emphasized the importance of English. In the language controversy, he was firmly on the side of English. As an inspired educationalist, he spoke on the need of character building and intellectual development. He wanted reforms in the Indian university education, and spoke about ethical ideals. Macaulay's wish was ful-

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5. Who Was Who: 1951-1960. London, Adam & Charles Black, 1967. page 14.
6. Searching for Solace. by M.A. Sherif. Review published in the Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan. Vol. 33. No. 3. July 1995, page 66.

filled. The educational system established by the British had produced a breed of Muslims who admired English culture and English character. Abdullah Yusuf Ali was for reconciliation between science and religion and he saw no rivalry between the two in Islam.[7] He was a champion of modernism and progress.[8]

Nevertheless, Yusuf Ali's monumental work remains the most standard and most respected translation in English, famous for its eloquent, elegant and poetic style. The author scrupulously gives details of the various editions and publications of Yusuf Ali's translation and briefly refers to the various reviews and comments made on several occasions.[9]

Dr. M.A. Sherif in his book, namely 'Searching for Solace', writes:

"He was vocal in his loyalty to the British as the Qadianis and like them believed that the flourishing British Empire was part of Allah's plan".[10]

This view of Dr. M.A.Sherif is refuted by one of the statement of Abdullah Yusuf Ali which he issued in connection with 'Finality of Prophethood' alongwith Allama Muhammad Iqbal, and Sir Zafar Ali, Judge of the Punjab High Court in April 1935. Abdullah Yusuf Ali was Principal of the Islamia College, Lahore at that time. As the statement is in Urdu language, so for the general interest we reproduce it hereunder:

رحمت للعالمینؐ کے بعد ہر مدعی نبوت جھوٹا اور کاذب ہے:

میرے ایک عزیز شاگرد افضل صدیقی ایم اے نے جریدہ زمیندار کی وساطت سے مجھ سے حسب ذیل استفسارات کیے ہیں:

۱- ختم نبوت کے متعلق آپ کا کیا عقیدہ ہے؟ ۲- مدعی نبوت کے متعلق آپ کا کیا خیال ہے؟

۳- آپ مرزا غلام احمد قادیانی اور اس کے متبعین کے متعلق کیا خیال رکھتے ہیں

اور جو رویہ انہوں نے اسلام کے متعلق اختیار کر رکھا ہے اس کے پیش نظر آپ اس کو کیا سمجھتے ہیں؟ ان سوالات کا جواب عریضہ ایک مسلمان ہونے کے مجھ سے بدلو راست پوچھا جا سکتا تھا۔ لیکن مجھے اخبار کے توسط سے جواب دینے میں کوئی عذر نہیں۔

۱- میرا ایمان ہے کہ حضور علیہ الصلوۃ والسلام کی ختم المرسلین کا اقرار ارکان ایمان میں سے ایک ضروری رکن ہے۔ حضور علیہ الصلوۃ والسلام کے آخری نبی ہونے میں کسی قسم کی تاویل کی گنجائش نہیں۔ جہاں تک اسلامی لٹریچر کا تعلق ہے اس مسئلہ کی حقیقت ہی واضح ہے جیسے توحید کی ایک بات غیر ممکن ہے کہ کوئی شخص نصوص قرآنی کے علی الرغم اس خیال کو اسلامی نقطہ نگاہ سے صحیح سمجھے تو بھی حالات دینی میں سے ہے کہ ختم نبوت کے مسلک کو چھوڑ کر دوسرا زاویہ نگاہ اختیار کیا جائے۔

ختم نبوت:۔ ختم نبوت تکمیل دین اور ضروریات شرعیہ تینوں مترادف الفاظ ہیں۔ مسلمان یہ یقین رکھتا ہے کہ اسلام قیامت تک کے لئے کامیاب اور واحد دستور العمل ہے۔ مسلمان کا ایمان ہے کہ حضور علیہ الصلوۃ والسلام کامل اور آخری نبی تھے اور آپؐ کے بعد کسی قسم کی

7. Please see verse of the Holy Quran (Surah 36 : 40) which reads: "It is not permitted to the Sun to catch up the Moon, nor can the Night outstrip the Day: Each (just) swims along in (its own) orbit (according to law).
8. These are the views expressed by Dr. M.A.Sherif author of Searching for Solace. The Editor do not agree with them.
9. Searching for Solace, by Dr.M.A.Sherif. Review in Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan. Vol. 33, No.3. July 1995. page 69.
10. Ibid. page 65.

نبوت اور رسالت کا احیاء ملت کے قوائے ایمانی کے لئے سخت مضر ہے۔ نبوت اگر جاری رہتی ہے تو اس کے لیے اولین مستحق وہ خوش قسمت لوگ تھے جنہوں نے انوار نبوت سے سب سے زیادہ استفادہ کیا اور جب وہ لوگ باوجود اس قدر رفعت منزلت صرف اطاعت پر نازاں اور خوش رہے تو کوئی وجہ نہیں کہ ہم حد سے بڑھ کر استحقاق دین کا ارتکاب کریں۔

مدعیان نبوت اور مصبی امراض: (۲) حضور علیہ الصلوۃ والسلام کے بعد مدعی نبوت کوئی صحیح الدماغ آدمی ہے تو وہ کسی طرح بھی شائستہ اور قابل احترام نہیں۔ اسلامی کتب میں مسلمہ کذاب کہا گیا ہے۔ اس لیے حضور علیہ الصلوۃ والسلام کے بعد ہر مدعی نبوت جو اپنے آپ کو مسلمانوں کے سامنے اور معیار کفر و اسلام پیش کرے جھوٹا کہا جائے گا۔ میرے خیال میں اس قسم کے تمام لوگ مصبی مرض میں مبتلا ہوتے ہیں۔ اس لیے اس قسم کے دعاوی کا انتساب ان کی طرف سے کچھ عجب نہیں۔

(۳) مرزا غلام احمد قادیانی کا مذہبی لٹریچر ہرگز ایسی اہمیت نہیں رکھتا کہ اس کا پڑھنا دوق اور اہل علم کے لئے از قبیل ضروریات ہو' اس لیے قدرتاً میرے جیسا انسان اس کے مطالعہ سے محروم رہا ہے۔ میں نہیں جانتا کہ مرزا کے دعاوی اور دلائل کیا ہیں؟ لیکن مجھے جمہور علمائے اسلام کے علم پر پورا بھروسہ اور اعتماد ہے اس لیے میں مرزا کے متعلق علمائے اہل سنت والجماعت سے کوئی الگ رائے نہیں رکھتا'۔

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(۱) ختم رسالت' علامہ سر محمد اقبال' علامہ عبداللہ یوسف علی' سر ظفر علی سابق جج ہائیکورٹ کے قادیان ممکن بیانات شائع کردہ سید سرور شاہ گیلانی دفتر تنظیم مساجد لاہور 1935' صفحات ۷ تا ۱۰

Translating the Holy Quran and writing its commentary is not an easy task. It is a gigantic and uphill task, which needs scholarship, perseverance, patience and a long span of time. Abdullah Yusuf Ali cherished this ambition for more than forty long years. He has very clearly and in details explained the history of his Project, the scope and plan and the objects he had held in view. In the 'Preface' to the First Edition (1934) of the Glorious Quran, he writes:

"It may be asked: Is there any need for a fresh English Translation? To those who ask this question I commend a careful consideration of the facts which I have set out in my Note on Translations. After they have read it, I would invite them to take any particular passage in Part 1, say ii. 74 or ii, 102 or ii. 164 in the second Part and compare it with any previous version they choose. If they find that I have helped them even the least bit further in understanding its meaning, or appreciating its beauty, or catching something of the grandeur of the original, I would claim that my humble attempt is justified.

It is the duty of every Muslim, man, woman, or child, to read the Quran and understand it according to his own capacity. If any one of us attains to some knowledge or understanding of it by study, contemplation, and the test of life, both outward and inward, it is his duty, according to his capacity, to instruct others, and share with them the joy and peace which result from contact with the spiritual world. The Quran--indeed every religious book has to be read, not only with the tongue and voice and eyes, but with the best light that our intellect can supply, and even more, with the truest and purest light which our

heart and conscience can give us. It is in this spirit that I would have my readers approach the Quran.

I have explored Western lands, Western manners, and the depths of Western thought and Western learning, to an extent which has rarely fallen to the lot of an Eastern mortal. But *I have never lost touch with my Eastern heritage.* Through all my successes and failures I have learned to rely more and more upon the one true thing in all life--the voice that speaks in a tongue above that of mortal man. For me the embodiment of that voice has been in the noble words of the Arabic Quran, which I have tried to translate for myself and apply to my experience again and again. The service of the Quran has been the pride and the privilege of many Muslims. I felt that with such life experience as has fallen to my lot, my service to the Quran should be to present it in a fitting garb in English. *That ambition I have cherished in my mind for more than forty years.* I have collected books and materials for it. I have visited places, undertaken journeys, taken notes, sought the society of men, and tried to explore their thoughts and hearts, in order to equip myself for the task. Sometimes I have considered it too stupendous for me,--the double task of understanding the original, and reproducing its nobility, its beauty, its poetry, its grandeur, and its sweet practical reasonable application to everyday experience. Then I have blamed myself for lack of courage,- the spiritual courage of men who dared all in the Cause which was so dear to them.

Two sets of apparently accidental circumstances at last decided me. A man's life is subject to inner storms far more devastating than those in the physical world around him. In such a storm, in the bitter anguish of a personal sorrow which nearly unseated my reason and made life seem meaningless, a new hope was born out of a systematic pursuit of my long-cherished project. Watered by tears, my manuscript began to grow in depth and earnestness if not in bulk. I guarded it like a secret treasure. Wanderer that I am, I carried it about, thousands of miles, to all sorts of countries and among all sorts of people. At length, in the city of LAHORE, I happened to mention the matter to some young people who held me in respect and affection. They showed an enthusiasm and an eagerness which surprised me. They almost took the matter out of my hands. They asked for immediate publication. I had various bits ready, but not even one complete SIPARA. They made me promise to complete at least one SIPARA before I left LAHORE. As if by magic, a publisher, a katib (calligraphist to write the Arabic Text), an engraver of blocks for such text, and a printer were found, all equally anxious to push for-

ward the scheme. Blessed be youth, for its energy and determination. "Where others flinch, rash youth will dare".

Gentle and discerning reader! What I wish to present to you is an English Interpretation, side by side with the Arabic text. The English shall be not a mere substitution of one word for another, but the best expression I can give to the fullest meaning which I can understand from the Arabic Text. The rhythm, music, and exalted tone of the original should be reflected in the English Interpretation. It may be but a faint reflection, but such beauty and power as my pen can command shall be brought to its service. *I want to make English itself an Islamic language.*

I have adopted mainly that of the Egyptian edition published under the authority of the King of Egypt. This will probably be accepted in Egypt and in Arabic speaking countries, as those countries generally look up to Egypt in matters of literature. I am glad to see that the text shortly to be published by the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam of Lahore is following the same system of numbering.

In translating the Text, *I have aired no views of my own, but followed the received Commentators*...To discuss theological controversies or enter into polemical arguments, I have considered outside my scope.

How much greater is the joy and sense of wonder and miracle when the Qur'an opens our spiritual eyes! The meaning which we thought we had grasped expands. New worlds are opened out.

The Publisher, Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, has thrown himself heart and soul into his work and I hope the public will appreciate his efforts.

One final word to my readers, Read, study, and digest the Holy Quran. Read slowly, and let it sink into your heart and soul!

I have been able to perform the Pilgrimage to the holy city of Makkah and the sacred territory around it and seen with my own eyes the city and territory of Medina with all the country around and between the holy cities. I have realised for myself the scenes in which the revelations came which I have humbly sought to interpret. I hope that some glimpses of this experience will have been conveyed to my dear readers.[11]

While dedicating the Glorious Quran, Abdullah Yusuf Ali wrote:

To all who love and reverence the Book,

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11. The Glorious Quran; Translation and Commentary, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Lahore, Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1934. 1938. Preface to First and Third Edition, pages iii - vii.

And earnestly strive to find in it,
Not a reflection of their own fancies,
But a clue to Unity, Discipline,
And the Call to higher matters of the spirit,
I dedicate this humble effort at Interpretation,
The fruit of my life. Thought, and Study![12] When the Holy Quran along with English Translation and Commentary (with Arabic Text) was published in 1934, well known Orientalist H.A.R. Gibb, while reviewing it wrote:

"Mr. Yusuf Ali, too, of course, has aimed at something more than a bare rendering. In addition he has tried, 'greatly daring,', to reproduce something of the rhythm of the original by the use of unrhymed free verse, each line of which begins with a capital. The rhythmical quality is certainly present, but the viewer must confess that the effect is, in his opinion, altogether unhappy. The translation itself contains many happy turns of phrase, but is marred by several lose and sometimes fanciful rendering.

In both works, however, the actual translation is perhaps of less importance than the commentary. We are in reality dealing with two highly individual recensions. Each has the interest of presenting, in Mr. Yusuf Ali's words "the picture which their own mental and spiritual vision presents to themselves", and each is the work of a man of wide culture, with long training and experience, not in academic or theological seclusion, but in the busy life of politics and public service. Both are modernist, in the sense that they reject the formalism of the rigid orthodox tradition, and maintain the characteristic of modernist doctrines, such as free will and the symbolical interpretation of legendary narratives and of the descriptions of the future life. There is, however, a significant difference between them. Mr. Yusuf Ali's commentary is mainly "practical" and homiletic. Both are well worthy of the attention of those interested in the modern development of Muslim thought".[13]

During his stay in Europe, Abdullah Yusuf Ali was closely attached to religious as well literary societies. He was member of Royal Society of Arts and Royal Society of Literature. He rendered remarkable services during his Presidentship of the London Muslim Literary Society, of which Brother Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall was an

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12. The Meaning of the Illusstrious Quran, Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali. New Delhi. Kitab Bhavan. 1978, page iii.
13. School of Oriental and African Studies Bulletin. Vol. 8. Nos. 1-3, 1935-37, page 243.

active member.[14] He delivered a number of lectures and contributed articles at the stage of London Muslim Association which were published in the Islamic Review. He did not miss any celebration which was held in connection with `Eid-ul-Fitr`, `Eid-ul-Azha`, and `Birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhmmad (PBUH)`. He delivered a number of `Sermons` on `Friday` while he was in London.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali was a great `Linguistist` and had full command on a number of languages. He knew Hindi, Gujrati, Marati, Talungi, Urdu, Persian, Arabic and English. When he became the Principal (1925-27) of the Islamia College, Lahore, he did unique reforms in the education field. He was associated with so many Associations, i.e. Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam, Anjuman-i-Islamia, Idara-i-Ma`arif-i-Islamia, etc. He was not only a close friend of Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, but also a great lover of his poetry.[15] When in 1927, the Islamia College, Lahore became an `arena of politics`, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, became fed up with it and left the College. It was Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, who urged the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam Managing Committee to request the Allama, i.e. Abdullah Yusuf Ali to join the College. Consequently, on the request of the Managing Committee, Allama Iqbal forced upon Abdullah Yusuf Ali to come to Lahore and take over the charge of the Principalship of the College.[16] Abdullah Yusuf Ali nearly attended every annual function of the Anjuman and ceremony of the College and delivered lectures.

Maulvi Feroz-ud-din of Ferozesons (Lahore) founded the daily "Eastern Times, Lahore and its first issue appeared on the 10th September, 1931, Abdullah Yusuf Ali edited the newspaper for some time, yet right from the beginning until 1940, Abdul Hamid Khan's name appeared as its Editor".[17]

It is usually said that Abdullah Yusuf Ali besides translating and writing commentary of the Holy Quran only wrote one or two books. But it is not correct. He not only wrote dozens of books on various subjects, but also contributed a great number of articles to different journals. We have the honour to give details of his writings for the interest of the general public. 1. A Monograph on Silk Fabrics produced in the North-Western Provinces and Outh, Allahabad, 1900: 2. Life and Labour in India, 1907: 3. The Indian Muhammadans, 1907:

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14. Islamic Review. October 1917. Vol. 5, No. 10, pages 398 - 99.
15. For details see `Rajal-i-Iqbal`, by A.R. Arooj. Karachi, Nafees Academy, 1988, pages 328-29.
16. For full details see 'Iqbal Aur Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam' Lahore, by Muhammad Haneef Shahid, 1976, page 128.
17. Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan, Lahore,. Vol. 25, No. 3, July 1988, page 35, with reference to Source Material on Muslim Freedom Movement, by Ahmad Saeed.

4. Mestrovic and Serbian Sculpture, 1916; 5. Indian Section in Expansion of the Anglo-Saxon Nations, 1920; 6. Wilson's Anglo Muhammadan Law (6th ed.), 1930; 7. Muslim Educational Ideals, 1928; 8. Making of India, 1925; 9. Islam as a World Force, 1926; 10. India and Europe, 1926; 11. Three Travellers to India, 1927; 12. Social and Economic Conditions in Mediaeval India (in Urdu) 1928; 13. Fundamentals of Islam, 1929; 14. Personality of Muhammad, the Prophet, 1929; 15. Moral Education; Aims and Methods, 1930; 16. Personality of Man in Islam, 1931; 17. Imam Husain and his Martyrdom, 1931; 18. Mediaeval India, 1932; 19. Religious Polity of Islam, 1933; 20. English Translation and Commentary on the Quran, 1934-38; Rev. ed. 1939-40; 21. Life and Literature, 1936; 22. Religion and Social Equality, 1936; 23. Islamic History; Its Scope and Content, 1936; 24. Idea of Salvation in Islam, 1939; 25. The Message of Islam, 1939; 26. A Cultural History of India during the British Period, 1940[18].

Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali, a great 'Servant of Islam' and 'One of the Luminaries of Islamic Learning 'who devoted his whole life for the cause of Islam and the Islamic Ummah, and whose Translation and Commentary of the Holy Quran has been published throughout the world without any restriction of 'copyright' and claim died a very tragic death, on the 10th December, 1953 in St. Stephen Hospital in Fulham. There were no relatives to claim his body and arrange for the funeral. He was burried in the Muslim Section of Brookwood cemetery in Surrey according to the Muslim Shariah. So in these enigmatic circumstances, ended the remarkable life of Abdullah Yusuf Ali at the age of 81.[19]

Al-Haj Nawab Sir Nizamat Jung wrote the following poem entitled 'In Memorian', in memory of Abdullah Yusuf Ali; a distinguished Servant of Islam:

Ay, you have played in life a noble part,
Before your Allah by service of mankind,
Desiring naught but good within your heart,
Undaunted by the ills before, behind.
Life raised your upward gaze from height to height
Like those who toiled of yore in Islam's cause
And sacrificed all earthly gain for Right--
Heroes revering Allah in Natures' laws.

18. Who Was Who; 1951 - 1960. Vol.5. London, Adam & Charles Black, 1967, pages 14-15.
19. Islamic Future, Vol. 12. No. 65. January-February 1997, page 10.

Your task on earth fulfilled, your toils are o'er
Unblemished stands your record here, and there!
Serene your soul abides for evermore,
Untouched by earth cares, and undismayed.[20]

Mr. M.A.R. Khan of Hyderabad Deccan, lamenting his tragic death wrote:

"Death removes from our midst one other great scholar in the person of Allamah Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Educated first at Wilson College, Bombay, and subsequently, in England, he had put in only 19 years service when he decided to retire from the ICS and devote himself to the task of advancing higher education in India. In 1919 when a new constitution was promulgated under the sanction of H.E.H. the Nizam and Sir Ali Imam was appointed President of the Executive Council, the portfolio of Revenue was placed in charge of Allamah Abdullah Yusuf Ali with Nawab Fasih Jung as Secretary.

He represented India at the League of Nations Assembly in 1928. His talents won him greater success in the field of letters than in that of administration. He has won enduring fame through the publication of an excellent English translation of the Holy Quran the work which reproduces the sacred text together with valuable notes and commentary (based, it is said, largely on Shah Abdul Qadir Dehlawi's standard translation and other works of repute), is the favourite reading of numerous English scholars and the late Sir Dennison C. Ross, Director of School of Oriental Studies, London, was of the opinion that

"The whole presentation is superior to any that has appeared hitherto".

The work is a monumental addition to Islamic literature".[21]

Paying glowing tributes to Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali the Chief Editor of 'Yaqeen International' wrote:

"A great scholar and translator of Quran Majeed Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali was an outstanding educationist, a scholar of renown especially for his meritorious and Herculian task of translating into English of Quran Majeed. He was a noted historian in his own right.

Although the medieval period of Indian history had been Allama's main interest all along, the most enduring fame that Allama Yusuf Ali ever won was through the publication of his English trans-

20. Islamic Culture. Vol. 28, 1954, page iii.
21. Islamic Culture: the Hyderabad Quarterly Review. Vol. 28, 1954. page iv.

lation of the Holy Quran which he got published in early forties with notes and commentary, along with the text in Arabic".[22]

A word about this book. These are the lectures, articles, addresses, sermons and writings from the pen of Al-Haaj Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali, which are being presented to our esteemed readers in book form for the first time. The book consists of Five Chapters. Chapter One deals with the writings about Islam, the Religion of Allah, whereas Chapter Two with the Life of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Chapter Three with the Noble Quran. Chapter Four relates to Indian History and Chapter Five which is the last chapter covers Education, Hindustani or Urdu, Modern Hindustani Drama and Urdu Orthography.

We are grateful to all our friends and well-wishers for their guidance, help and cooperation whatsoever. May Allah bless them all!

Our thanks are due to our brother Sh. Shahzad Riaz who has undertaken the responsibility of the publication of this unique and valuable book. It will not be out of place to mention that Sh. Muhammad Ashraf is the pioneer in publishing the Islamic Literature in Pakistan, and it is creditable that it was he who, first of all, published the English Translation and Commentary of the Holy Quran by Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali in 1934. Although, Sh. Muhammad Ashraf is no more with us but his sweet memories dwell in our hearts. May Allah, the All-Mighty, bestow His mercy upon his soul and may he rest in peace and tranquillity! Ameen!

Brother Shehzad has undertaken this huge task and we can say without any shadow of doubt and fear of contradiction that he has proved his worth with the production of unique Islamic literature which has won recognition worldwide. We, from the core of our heart, congratulate him for this marvellous production and hope that he will produce more valuable Islamic literature for the 'Seekers of Truth' in future. All our prayers and best wishes are with him.

Muhammad Haneef Shahid,
King Saud University,
Riyadh.
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

15th Ramazan, 1417 A.H.

22. Yaqeen International, April 7, 1981, page 274.

CHAPTER 1

Religion: Islam

- The Message of Islam
- Religion and Social Equality
- Sister Religions
- Eid-al-Fitr Sermon
- The Religion of Rabindranath Tagore

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

The Message Of Islam

INTRODUCTION

Allah's Purpose With Man

1.—Glory to Allah Most High, full of Grace and Mercy; He created All, including Man.

To Man He gave a special place in his Creation.

He honoured man to be His Agent and, to that end, endued him with understanding, purified his affections and gave him spiritual insight, so that man should understand Nature, understand himself, and know Allah through His wondrous Signs, and glorify Him in Truth, reverence, and unity.

2.—For the fulfillment of this great trust Man was further given a will, so that his acts should reflect, Allah's universal Will and Law, and his mind, freely choosing, should experience the sublime joy of being in harmony with the Infinite, and with the great drama of the world around him, and with his own spiritual growth.

3.—But, created though he was in the best of moulds, man fell from Unity when his Will was warped, and he chose the crooked path of Discord. And sorrow and pain, selfishness and degradation, ignorance and hatred, despair and unbelief poisoned his life, and he saw shapes of evil in the physical, moral, and spiritual world, and in himself.

4.—Then did his soul rise against himself, and his self-discord made discord between kith and kin; men began to fear the strong and oppress the weak, to boast in prosperity, and curse in adversity, and to flee each other, pursuing phantoms, for the truth and reality of Unity was gone from their minds.

5.—When men spread themselves over the earth, and became

many nations, speaking diverse languages, and observing diverse customs and laws; the evils became multiplied, as one race or nation became alienated from another. The Brotherhood of Man was now doubly forgotten--first, between individuals and, secondly, between nations.

Arrogance, selfishness, and untruth were sown and reaped in larger fields; and Peace, Faith, Love and Justice were obscured over masses of men, as large tracts of land are starved of sunshine by clouds floating far on high.

6.—But Allah in His infinite mercy and love, Who forgives and guides individuals and nations and turns to good even what seems to us evil, never forsakes the struggling soul that turns to Him, nor the groups of men and women who join together to obey His Will and Law and strengthen each other in unity and truth, nor the Nations that dwell in mountain or valley, heat or cold, in regions fertile or arid, in societies that roam over land or seas, or hunt, or tend flocks, or till the soil, or seek the seas for food or oil or fat or gems, or dig out from the bowels of the earth precious stones or metals or stored-up heat and energy, or practise arts and crafts, or produce abundant wealth by machines of ingenious workmanship, or live a frugal life of contemplation: for all are children of One Allah, and share His loving care and must be brought within the pale of His eternal unity and harmony.

The Light of Allah's Revelation

7.—And so this light of eternal Unity has shone in all ages and among all nations, through chosen Apostles of Allah, who came as men to dwell among men, to share their joys and sorrows to suffer from them and with them,--aye, and to suffer more than falls to ordinary mortal lot,--that so their message and their life might fulfil the eternal and unchanging purpose of the Most High,--to lead man to his noblest destiny.

8.—Ever this eternal light of Unity, this mystic light of Allah's own Will, has shone and shines with undiminished splendour.

The names of many Messengers are inscribed in the records of many nations and many tongues, and many were the forms in which their message was delivered, according to the needs of the time and the understanding of the people; and manifold were the lives of the Messengers, and manifold also was the response of their people; but they all witnessed to the One Truth: of Allah's unity, might, grace, and love.

9.—As the records of man are imperfect, and the memory of man unstable: the names of many of these Messengers are known in one

place and not in another, or among one people and not among others; and some of their names may have perished utterly; but their message stands one and indivisible, even though it may have been forgotten, or twisted by ignorance, error, superstition or perversity; or misunderstood in the blinding light of time or tortuous Circumstance.

The Voice of Unity

10.—Many were the faiths in the composite world of Western Asia, Northern Africa, and Europe, and many were the fragments of ancient wisdom, saved, transformed, renewed, or mingled; and many new streams of wisdom were poured through the crucibles of noble minds,--prophets, poets, preachers, philosophers, and thinking men of action; and many were the conflicts, and many the noble attempts reaching out towards Unity, and many were the subtle influences interchanged with the other worlds of further and Eastern Asia,--aye, and perchance with the scattered Isles of the Pacific and the world between the Atlantic and the Pacific.

11.—At length came the time when the Voice of Unity should speak and declare to the People, without the need of Priests or Priestcraft, without miracles save those that happen now and always in the spiritual world, without mystery, save those mysteries which unfold themselves in the growing inner experience of man and his vision of Allah;—to declare with unfaltering voice the Unity of Allah, the Brotherhood of Man, and Grace and Mercy. Bounty and Love, poured out in unstinted measure for ever and ever.

12.—And this great healing light shone among a people steeped in ignorance, brave and free, but without cohesion or union, simple and rude, but with an easy familiarity with Nature, accustomed to Nature's hardships and her rugged resistance to man, but dreaming of the delights of gardens and fruitful fields, cruel, yet with a rough sense of equality and wielding a tongue, flexible, beautiful, and able to respond, with brevity and eloquence, to the sublimest thoughts which man could conceive.

13.—Who were fit to be vehicles of this light?-- Not men intoxicated with words and mysteries, men whom politics had debauched or tyranny and subdued, men whose refinement had ended in vices, who saw Nature only through books or artificial conceits, or in moods which bred softness, indolence, or luxury, who spoke of love and justice, but practised gross selfishness between class and class, sex and sex, condition and condition; and had perverted their language, once beautiful, into jargons of empty elegance and unmeaning futility.

14.—For the glory of Hellas, and her freedom and wisdom has departed; Rome's great systems of law, organisation, and universal citizenship had sunk into the mire of ecclesiastical formalism, and dogmatism, and exclusive arrogance; the living fire of Persia's Prophet scarce smouldered in her votaries of luxury; in India, countless castes and kingdom cancelled the unity of Buddha's teaching; the wounds of China had not yet been healed by T'ang culture; and Japan was still a disciple of China.

15.—Then, in the sacred city of pagan Arabia, shone a light that spread in all directions. It was centrally placed for the bounds of the world of men's habitations in Asia, Europe and Africa. It made the Arabs the leading nation of culture and science, of organised enterprise, law, and arts, with a zeal for the conquest of Nature and her mysteries.

Muḥammad (P.B.U.H)

16.—Behold! there was born into the world of sense the unlettered Apostle, the comely child, noble of birth, but nobler still in the grace and wisdom of human love and human understanding; dowered with the key which opened to him the enchanted palace of Nature; marked out to receive--to receive and preach in burning words the spiritual truth and message of the Most High.

17.—Others before him had been born in darkness beyond the reach of history; others again it pleased Allah to send as Messengers, preaching, working in the dim twilight of history, wherein men fashion legends after their own hearts, and dimly seek a light afar, remote from the lives, mean and sordid, such as they knew.

18.—But Muḥammad came in the fullest blaze of history; with no learning he put to shame the wisdom of the learned; with pasture folk he lived and worked, and worn their love; in hills and valleys, caves and deserts, he wandered but never lost his way to truth and righteousness; from his pure and spotless heart the Angels washed off the dust that flew around him; through the ways of crooked city folk, he walked upright and straight, and worn from them the ungrudging name of the Man of Faith (*al-Amīn*) who never broke his word.

19.—To the Praiseworthy (Muḥammad) indeed be praise; born in the Sacred City (Makkah) he destroyed its superstition; loyal to his people to the core, he stood for all humanity; orphan-born and poor, he envied not the rich, and made his special care all those whom the world neglected or oppressed,—orphans, women, slaves, and those in

need of food or comforts. mental solace, spiritual strength, or virtucs, downtrodden in the haunts of men.

20. His mother (Ḥaḍrat Āmina) and his fostermother (Halīma Sa'diya) loved and wondered at the child; his grandfather, 'Abdul Muṭṭalib, of all his twice-eight children and their offspring, loved him best, and all his sweet and gentle ways; his uncle Abū Ṭālib, loth though he was to give up the cult of his fathers, knew well the purity of Muḥammad's mind and soul, and was his stoutest champion when the other chiefs of Makkah sought to kill the man who challenged in his person their narrow Pagan selfish lives.

21. To his cousin 'Alī, the well-beloved (Murtadhā), born when he was thirty, he appeared as the very pattern of a perfect man, as gentle as he was wise and true and strong, the one in whose defence and aid he spent his utmost strength and skill, holding life cheap in support of a cause so high, and placing without reserve his chivalry, his prowess, his wit and learning, and his sword at the service of this mighty Messenger of Allah.

Muḥammad's Mission

22.–Not till the age of forty did he receive the Commission to stand forth and proclaim the Bounty of Allah, and His gift, to lowly Man, of knowledge by Word and Pen; but all through his years of preparation he did search the Truth; he sought it in Nature's forms and laws, her beauty and her sterm, unflinching ways; he sought it in the inner world of human lives, men's joys and sorrows, their kindly virtues and their sins of pride, injustice, cruel wrong, and greed of gain, scarce checked by the inner voice that spoke of duty, moral law, and higher still, the Will Supreme of Allah, to which the will of man must tune itself to find its highest bliss.

23.–But he grew steadfastly in virtue and purity; untaught by men, he learnt from them, and learned to teach them; even as a boy of nine, when he went in a trade caravan with Abū Ṭālib to Syria, his tender soul marked inwardly how Allah did speak in the wide expanse of deserts, in the stern grandeur of rocks, in the refreshing flaw of streams, in the smiling bloom of gardens, in the art and skill with which men and birds and all life sought for light from the Life of Lives, even as every plant seeks through devious ways the light of the sun.

24. Not less was he grieved at Man's ingratitude when he rebelled and held as naught the Signs of Allah, and turned His gifts to baser uses, driving rarer souls to hermit life, clouding the heavenly

mirror of pure affections with selfish passions, mad, unseemly wrangles, and hard unhallowed loathsome tortures of themselves.

25.—He worked, and joyed in honest labour; he traded with integrity to himself and to others; he joined the throngs of cities and their busy life, but saw its good and evil as types of an inner and more lasting life hereafter; people gladly sought his help as umpire and peacemaker because they knew his soul was just and righteous; he loved the society of old and young, but oft withdrew to solitude for Prayer and inward spiritual strength; her despised not wealth but used it for others; he was happy in poverty and used it as his badge and his pride,[1] when wealth was within his reach but not within his grasp, as a man among men.

26.—At twenty-five he was united in the holy bonds of wedlock with Khadija the Great, the noble lady who befriended him when he had no worldly resources, trusted him when his worth was little known, encouraged and understood him in his spiritual struggles, believed in him when with trembling steps he took up the Call and withstood obloquy, persecution, insults, threats, and tortures, and was a lifelong helpmate till she was gathered to the saints in his fifty-first year,--a perfect woman, the mother of those that believe.

27.—There is a cave in the side of Mount Ḥira some three miles north of the City of Makkah, in a valley which turns left from the road to 'Arafāt, to which Muḥammad used to retire for peaceful contemplation: often alone, but sometimes with Khadija. Days and nights he spent there with his Lord. Hard were the problems he revolved in his mind,--harder and more cross-grained than the red granite of the rock around him,--problems not his own, but his people's yea, and of human destiny, of the mercy of Allah, and the age long conflict of evil and righteousness, sin and abounding Grace.

28.—Not till forty years of earthly life had passed that the evil was lifted from the Preserved Tablet and its contents began to be transferred to the tablet of his mind, to be proclaimed to the world, and read and studied for all time,--a fountain of mercy and wisdom, a warning to the heedless, a guide to the erring, an assurance to those in doubt, a solace to the suffering, a hope to those in despair,--to complete the chain of Revelation through the months of divinely inspired Apostles.

29.—The Chosen One (Muṣṭafā) was in the Cave of Ḥira. For two years and more he had prayed there and adored his Creator and wondered at the mystery of man with his corruptible flesh, just grow-

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1. Alludes to the Holy Prophet's saying: "Poverty is my pride".

ing out of a clot, and the soul in him reaching out to knowledge sublime, new and ever new, taught by the bounty of Allah, and leading to that which man himself knoweth not. And now, behind! a dazzling vision of beauty and light overpowered his senses and he heard the word *'Iqraa!"*

30.–*"Iqraa!"*--which being interpreted may mean "Read!" or "Proclaim!" or "Recite!"--The unlettered Apostle was puzzled; he could not read. The Angel seemed to press him to his breast in a close embrace, and the cry rang clear "Iqraa!" And so it happened three times; until the first overpowering sensation yielded to a collected grasp of the words which made clear his Mission; its Author, Allah, the Creator, its subject, Man, Allah's wondrous handiwork, capable, by Grace, of rising to heights sublime; and the instrument of that mission, the sanctified Pen, and the sanctified Book, the Gift of Allah, which men might read, or write, or study, or treasure in their souls.

31.–The well was lifted from the Chosen One's eyes, and his soul for a moment was filled with divine ecstasy....

When this passed, and he returned to the world of Time and Circumstance and this world of Sense, he felt like one whose eyes had seen a light of dazzling beauty, and felt dazed on his return to common sights. The darkness now seemed tenfold dark; the solitude seemed tenfold empty; the mount of Ḥiraa, henceforth known as the Mountain of Light, the mere shell of an intense memory. Was it a dream? Terror seized his limbs and he straightway sought her who shared his inmost life, and told her of his sense of exaltation, and the awful void when the curtain closed.

Muḥammad's First Disciples

32.–She understood, rejoiced, and comforted him: gave strength to his shaken senses; wrapped up in warmth his shivering body, unused as yet to bear the strain and stress of an experience rare to mortal men. She knew it was no dream or delusion. She went and consulted her cousin Waraqa, a devout worshipper of Allah, in the Faith of Christ, learned in spiritual lore. He listened and with her rejoiced that he, Muḥammad, was Allah's Chosen One to renew the faith.

33.–She said: Blessed be thou, Chosen One! Do we not see the inner life,--true and pure? Do not all see thy outer life,--kind and gentle? Loyal to kin, hospitable to strangers? No thought of harm or mischief ever stained thy mind, nor word ever passed thy lips that was not true or stilled not the passions of narrower men, Ever ready in the

service of Allah, thou art he of whom I hear witness: There's no god but He and thou art His chosen Apostle.

34.—Khadija believed, exalted in faith above all women; ʿAlī, the well-beloved, then a child of ten, but lion-hearted, plighted his faith, and became from that moment the right hand of Islam; Abu Bakr, the Sincere, the True-hearted, the man of wealth and influence, who used both without stint for the Cause, the sober Counsellor, the inseparable friend, never hesitated to declare his faith; and Zaid, the freedman of Muḥammad, counted his freedom as naught compared with the service of Muḥammad and Islam. These were the first fruits of the mission: a woman, a child, a man of affairs, and a freedman, all banded together in the equality of Islam.

The Task Before Muḥammad

35.—The revelation had come, the mission and the inspiration. But what was it leading to?

It was a miracle, but not in the sense of a reversing of Nature Muṣṭafā's vision was linked with Eternity, but he was no soothsayer foretelling passing events; the mysteries of knowledge were being opened out, but his message was no mere esoteric doctrine, to be grasped by a few in contemplation, fleeing from action; nor was it the practice of single of social monasticism, undisturbed by the whims or passions of life.

He was asked to stand forth, to preach, to declare the One Universal Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful, and to lead men to the Right and forbid the Wrong.

36.—The Wrong?--The selfish pride of birth, the massing of power and wealth in the hands of a few, the slaughter of female infants, the orgies of gambling and drunkenness, the frauds of temples and idols and priests, the feuds and arrogance of tribes and races the separation of Sacred and Profane, as if the unity of All Life and All Truth did not flow from the unity of Allah, Most High.

37.—He was loyal to his family, but could he support their monopoly of power?--To his tribe, but were the Quraish the only creatures of Allah?--To the temple of Makkah, but could he wink at Lāt and ʿUzzā, and the other monsters, whose worship killed the spiritual growth of Man?--To the earlier Revelations, but could he hold with the superstitions and falsehoods, the dogmas and creeds which went against reason and nature, and the inner light which was now fanned into flame by the Will of Allah?

38.—And so his very virtues and loyalties pointed to offence and conflict, mockery and misrepresentation hatred and persecution, threats, tortures, and exile for him and his, and martyrdoms, wars, revolutions. and the shaking of the foundation of history and the social order.

But Islam meant the willing submission of his will to Allah, the active attainment of Peace through Conflict.

39.--And he gave that submission, not without effort, even as Moses did before him, and Jesus in the agony of the garden of Gethsemane.

The Qur'ān Revealed

40.--For three and twenty years, in patience, conflict, hope, and final triumph, did this man of Allah receive and teach the Message of the Most High.

It came, like the fruit of the soul's own yearning, to teach profound spiritual truths, answer questions, appeal to men in their doubts and fears. help and put heart in them in moments of trial, and ordain for them laws by which they could live in society lives of purity, goodness, and peace.

41.- These messages came as inspiration to Muḥammad as the need arose, on different occasions and in different places: he recited them. and they were recorded by the Pen: they were imprinted on his heart and mind, and on the memory of his living disciples; as the body of sacred Scripture grew. it was arranged for purposes of public prayer and reading.

This is the Book, or the Reading, or the Qur'an[1].

RELIGION AND SOCIAL EQUALITY

Religion is not only concerned with Philosophy or belief but also with all the different spheres of life, individual and social.

In this respect Islam has the great advantage, among the great world religions, of having its teacher and founder as a great historical

1. The Message of Islam; a bird's eye view of the contents of the Holy Quran, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Lahore. Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1976.

personality whose every action in life was well known to all people, whether they believed in his mission or not.

In the early days of the Prophet's ministry, the humble and the lowly, the slaves and the dependents, the women, the orphans and those who were kept down in society, gathered round his lovable personality. Born of the bluest blood in Arabia, he was poor and he loved the poor. The proud Quraish leaders made this a matter of reproach against the Holy Prophet. They started persecuting him and those who followed him. They could see nothing against his character, because he was known to be truthful and universally acknowledged to be kind and considerate to all men. The only thing they could say was that he was a visionary. They tried to alienate from him those who had faith in him, by pointing out how poor and helpless he was from a worldly point of view. They persecuted him and put him into all sorts of difficulties.

They knew that he was prepared for personal sacrifices of all kinds. So they started persecuting those who believed in him. They thought, that as they were the humble and the lowly, the poor and the unprivileged, they could easily detach them from his Message by making their lot still more uncomfortable. They tortured the slaves. They restricted the liberty of the women.

They stopped such doles as the poor used to receive. But all this made the early Muslims stronger in their faith, because they saw that the man whom they followed was a just and righteous man, and was prepared to suffer himself all those injuries, and more than those injuries, which were inflicted on his followers.

He suffered more than his followers suffered, because he took their sufferings on himself in addition to the pain which he suffered. He continued to face all dangers in the city of Makkah, but he encouraged some of his little band of devoted followers to go to foreign countries with his blessings and remain there until the danger in Arabia was past. A certain number of them went to Abyssinia, which was a Christian country. They carried with them their faith and their attachment to their leader. When they went up before the King of Abyssinia they spoke enthusiastically about the simplicity, the justice, and the kindness and generosity of the new Message which he had brought. The King of Abyssinia, although he was a Christian, and although the enemies of Islam sought to poison his mind, listened to the story of these emigrants and was much impressed. He gave them an asylum. That is one historical reason why, after the lapse of more than thirteen centuries and a half, Muslim feeling is still entirely with Abyssinia in the unequal war which it is waging against a strong and

well-armed power, which seeks to enslave it in all its pride of race and military equipment.

While these humble followers were thus sent off for a time out of harm's way, the noble Prophet stood his ground firmly and doggedly, taking upon himself and his immediate circle, who refused to leave him, the brunt of the persecution. He continued to deliver the Message which he had received from Allah, without fear and without favour. The Quraish chiefs were even willing to give him power and worldly advantages if he would cease to speak against their gods of selfishness, injustice, and oppression, but he refused. Some of them came secretly to him and said that they would be willing to admit him into their privileged ranks if he would throw off the mass of poor people and slaves who had gathered round his personality. He indignantly refused to do so. He continued to preach, and to look after the poor and the unprivileged, and they gave him unquestioned fidelity. Indeed, their faith began to increase from day to day when they saw his firmness, his kindness, and his absolute adherence to their cause.

Once, when the forces of hatred were gathering strong against him, he left the city of Makkah to go to the little city of Taif, about three days' journey from Makkah. Taif is a beautiful little oasis and is well watered. It produces grapes, pomegranates, dates, figs, and all the delicious fruits that it is possible to grow in Arabia. Being on high ground its climate is comparatively cool and healthy. Many of the leaders of Makkah had estates or orchards there, and maintained numerous bodies of slave to work for them. He carried his Message to this place, in order to show them that Allah's Message was for all His creatures, and that, before Allah, rich and poor, noble and lowly, slave and free, all have their rights. He was assaulted by the arrogant aristocrats, and beaten and tortured. The slaves who followed him were also beaten and tortured. He did all he could to look after them, and to help them, and he drew on himself still further the indignation of the rich sybarites of Taif. They sought to kill him and left him nearly dead. But in all his sufferings his one thought was to serve Allah and to serve his fellow-men, to whatever rank or degree they belonged. He prayed to Allah to forgive the ignorant and the arrogant, and to improve the lot of those who were suffering and in distress.

In that time of stress and difficulty, not one of his followers ever retracted his faith. They knew that his personality was absolutely true and self-sacrificing, and they gave him the same self-forgetful love which he showered upon those around them. Their devotion to him was not like the devotion of ordinary men to their leaders. It stood the test of every temptation and trial. It formed the nucleus of that cement

which made the new Muslim society an unconquerable force in Arabia and in the world.

A few years passed, and things became more and more impossible for him in his native city of Makkah. He sent off the weaker and more helpless of his followers to the city of Medina. People had come to him from Medina to tell him that they believed in him and in his mission, and to offer him an asylum from the persecutions of the ruthless clique that held sway in Makkah. He remained to the last in Makkah along with those most closely connected with his mission, such as Hadhrat Ali and Hadhrat Abu Bakr. But, having sent off the majority of his followers safely to Medina, he performed his famous journey in company with a single companion, namely, Abu Bakr. That fateful journey became the starting point of a new era in history, called the Hijri Era.

When he arrived in Medina, the chief inhabitants of the city welcomed him with enthusiasm. But his advent was most welcome for two classes of people. Those who had been oppressed by mutual feuds, welcomed him as a deliverer. Those who had been poor and neglected, found in him a man who looked into their affairs and gave them the self-respect which comes from being associated with great leaders. For each of his Makkan followers he established a bond with a similar Helper in Medina. In establishing these bonds of friendship and assistance, the test was not that of wealth and influence: it was purely a test of personal need, and zeal for the cause. Rich and poor, high-born and plebeian, learned and ignorant, were all linked together in one common brotherhood. The effect on the life of Medina was marvelous. Tribes and groups of people who had been at war with each other were now united in a noble cause. Their private life was purified. Their civic life was raised to dignity. Their religious life was cleared of superstitions. altogether we have a picture of a community that lived in Medina, united and able to withstand and beat off the attacks of their enemies.

Thus did Islam start its social and collective life. Its message is addressed to rich and poor alike. It speaks with particular tenderness and solicitude to the down-trodden and those who are unfortunate in life. The Holy Qur-an (Sura 90) speaks of the steep and difficult path of righteousness, and mentions four searching tests:

Are you prepared to give freedom to slaves?
Will you provide food for those suffering from hunger?
Will you care for helpless orphans and kindred?
Will you lend a helping hand to anyone down in the dust?

It further commends the following virtues:
Faith;

Mutual encouragement in virtue and well-doing;

Mutual compassion for all.

Let us consider for a moment what this means. Who is a slave? In the old world the lot of the slave was a hard one. He was the absolute property of his master. He was ill-treated and starved. The Teacher of Islam said: "Free the slaves wherever possible, but in any case feed them with the same food which you eat, and clothe them with the same clothing which you wear." No wonder that many of the emancipated slaves preferred to live in freedom under the flag of Islam, rather than fly to other conditions where men's minds and souls were in bondage.

In later times the Christian nations of Europe brought the institution of slavery to a fine art. They caught and enslaved thousands of men and women in Africa, shipped them under horrible conditions across the seas to America, and made them work in plantations like beasts under the lash, and without any regard to human relationships, such as arose in domestic slavery. So far did their inhumanity go that at length awakened the conscience of the better minds among themselves. A strong anti-slavery campaign was started, and the slave-trade came to an end by law. Later, slavery itself was abolished. But even to-day, in the United States of America, the emancipated Negro finds himself in an economic and social slavery, worse than the old domestic slavery against which so much has been written. He is segregated from the white population. He is not allowed to travel in the same carriages or compartments in trains or trams. He is taught in separate schools. He is even asked to worship in a separate church.

Even where these conditions do not exist, are we clear of the spirit of slavery anywhere except in Islam? In the most advanced countries of Europe there has been, for the greater part of the 19th century, a kind of economic slavery against which the collective conscience of mankind is now in revolt. There are new movements all over the world. They are demanding that the classes which have hitherto been kept down shall be treated on terms of social and economic equality. Their demands have not yet been completely met, but every year sees this movement breaking fresh ground. The women demand and are obtaining their rights in law, in property, and in public life. The children--and especially the orphans-- are recognised as having their rights. Even the criminals are recognised as having claims on Society. The depressed and disfranchised classes and communities are becoming conscious of their rightful place. Nothing can resist this

movement, founded as it is on the laws of justice and common sense. Islam has recognised these claims from the very beginning. In Islam they will have their complete fulfilment.[1]

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SISTER RELIGIONS

The first of the proposed series of lectures under the auspices of the Central Islamic Society, the Hon. Sec. of which is Shaikh Mushir Hosain Kidwai of Gadia, was held at the Eustace Miles Restaurant, Charing Cross, on Friday, 6th October 1916. Tea was also provided.

The lecturer was the Rt. Honourable Lord Headley, and the chair was occupied by Haji Khawja Kamal-ud-Din, supported by Prince Abdul Karim, the President of the Society. Syed Ehsan EI Bakry (Egypt) and Mr. Khaja Ismail (Hyderabad) received the guests with the Hon. Secretary.

Among those present were:--Prince Abdul Karim of Sachchin (President), Haj Khawja Kamal-ud-Din (Woking), in the chair; Rt. Honorable. Lord Headley (Lecturer), Rev. Maulvi Sadr-ud-Din, Mr. Pickthall (Buxted), Hon. Mr. Abbas Ali Baig (India Office), Mr. Yusuf Ali (Rd. I.C.S.), Mr. and Mrs Sen, Mr. and Mrs. Ahmed Varisi, Princes Onroussoff (Russia), Viscount de Potier (France), Honble. Lady Seafield; Honble. Lady Caroline Grant, Mr. Hassanally (Karachee), Mr. and Mrs. Duse Mohamed, Syed Ehsan El Bakry (Egypt), Manzalovi Bey, Mr. Khaja Ismail (Hyderabad), Syed Erfan Ali (Calcutta), Mr. Kadirbhoy (Bombay), Dr. Anverudin (Madras), Prof. And Madam Leon (Liverpool), Mr. and Mrs. Tremayne, Prof. Belsha (Bagdad), Mr. Wajidali Khan and Mr. Sarver Ali Kidvai (Rampur), Mr. and Mrs. Ismail, Mrs. Maurressen (Belgium), Mr. Shauky V. Hussano (Egypt), Mr. Suleiman (Sudan), Mr. Abdul Qayum Malik (Aligarh), Mr. Belal Nur Ahmad (Jullunder), Mr. Grubb, Mr. and Mrs. Hope Nicholson, Mr. Sidney Muggeridge, Miss Judge, Mrs. Howell, Mrs. Smith, Mr Qasim Howell (Woking), Mr. Nazir Ahmad (Punjab), Mrs. Taylor, Miss Symonds, Miss Oldland, Miss Timanus, Miss Sakina Potter, Mr. J. Nasilhek, Mrs. Athelstain Baldwin, Mr. Edmund Russel, Mrs. Windham, Mrs. and Miss Ford, Mr. and Mrs. Hughes (French W. Africa), Mr. and Mrs. Clinton, Mr. Ghani, Miss Redingtom, Mrs. Paizer, Miss A. A. Smith, Mr. and

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1. *Islamic Review*. September 1936, Vol. 24, No.9. pp. 342-348.

Mrs. Sait (Brighton), Mr. J. Wright Kirk, Shaikh Mushir Hosain Kidwai of Gadia, and others.

The lecture hall was overcrowded. The Earl of Clarendon, Sir Dunlop Smith, and others who could not attend because of previous engagements had sent letters of regret.

While opening the meeting, Shaikh Mushir Hosain Kidwai said:--

Ladies and Gentlemen, Sisters and Brothers,--Before formally introducing to you Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, our worthy chairman this afternoon, allow me to tell you something of the Society in response to whose invitation you have so kindly come. This association, which is now called the Central Islamic Society, was founded in 1886. It has several objects, as detailed in its circulars, but that object in furtherance of which this function has been arranged, is to remove the misconceptions of the people of this country in regard to Islam and Muslims. Islam has been terribly and maliciously maligned in this country. People here have been led to form fantastic and grotesque notions about Islam and Muslims. The majority of the people here do not know anything of Islam, and those who have come to know something, to them it has been most grossly misrepresented-- misrepresented not only in its religious character but in every respect, social, moral, and even political. There are not many people in this country who know the fact that 400,000,000 people, spread almost all over the world, follow Islam. There are not many people in this country who know the fact that it is their duty to be conversant with the traditions and scruples of Mussulmans, as the number of Mussulmans in the British Empire itself is over 80,000,000, i.e. double the whole population of England. Not only the masses, but even responsible statesmen have sometimes shown culpable ignorance of and criminal indifference to the sentiments and susceptibilities of Mussulmans, and thus have done harm to the interests of the Empire. Even if they have sought information they have gone to wrong sources which they knew were not independent or unbiased. The Central Islamic Society, which is an absolutely independent organization, and which represents different parts of the Muslim world, is always ready to help everybody who cares to know anything about Islam or Muslims of any part of the world or on any affair. If any of you want any information please drop a card to me at the Society's office, 158 Fleet Street E.C., and I will do my best to supply the information desired.

This Society is, as its very name implies, Islamic; i.e. its members are those who call themselves Muslims. But please do not think for a moment that is an exclusive body. It is not exclusive: it is universal. Persons of every denomination are always welcome to all its

functions, and can also join the Society as Associates. If a proof of this were wanted, this gathering itself can be cited, in which we can see people of different nationalities, colour, race, countries, and creeds sitting shoulder to shoulder with fraternal goodwill.

The motto of the Society is the Qur-anic verse, "*Wa' tasemu bi-hablilah jamian wa la tafarruqoo,*" which means "All of you [the whole humanity] hold fast one cord, the cord of Allah, and do not make divisions." This Society could not be exclusive when it calls itself Islamic. Universality is one of the most unique characteristics of Islam. One Allah above and one nation below is the Ideal of Islam. This universality is not found even in those religions which are sisters of Islam and have blood ties with it. All of you know that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have come from a common stock, yet while the Jews say that Israelites alone are the Chosen People of Allah, while the Christians say that only those can get salvation who believe in the Saviourship of Christ, Islam proclaims;--

"*Innal lazeena amanu wal lazina hadu, wal nasara, wal sabe-ina man amana billah wal yaumal akhirate wa' amela salehan fa la-hum ajrahum 'anda Rubbihim wa la Kh'aufun 'alaihim wa la hum yehzinoon.*"[1]

Mr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Mr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali was then called upon to take part in the discussion. His speech was remarkable in its elocution and eloquence, and was highly applauded.

He said that he came to listen and not to speak, but he could not disregard the chairman's call. He was glad to welcome Khwaja Ka-mal-ud-Din back after an extended tour among the Muslims of India. Never was the feeling of "sister religions" more necessary than it was at the present day. Sisterhood not only implied relationship, but also a sentiment. He would not say that sisters in a family never had a dif-ference among themselves. But it was expected of them to show sym-pathy and understanding, and a loving-kindness which would make the burden of life easier.

The sisterhood of religions was meaningless unless it implied a brotherhood of mankind. That phrase "brotherhood" was on every one's lips. But we had to guard ourselves against the tendency to do only lip service to a phrase. The slaughter of mankind was at the pre-sent moment proceeding at the rate of thousands per day. Should we

1. Holy Quran, Surah Al - Baqara (Cow) 2 : 62 -- Editor.

not uphold the banner of Brotherhood as the rallying point in the reconstruction of the new world that was coming?

Islam was a landmark in the history of mankind, because it laid its emphasis on the germinal ideas which mould our ultimate destiny. Little minds always dwell on the ephemeral and the accidental. What we had to do was to see that we fastened our attention on the great things that mattered. If *we did so we should find that Islam stood for a number of ideals in life and practice,* of which, he (the speaker) would mention three.

First there was the destruction of idols. There were three hundred and sixty of them at the Kaaba, which our Prophet destroyed. But this destruction was only a prelude and a symbol. *There were more than 360 millions of idols in the moral world and in the world of ideas. We all have our public idols and our private idols.* Each age has its own idols. Hundreds of them crumble to pieces, but thousands of them are ready to take their places. The idols of Superior and Inferior Races, of Colour and Complexion, of Culture, of Physical Force, were running rampant, and people bent their knees and worshipped them. What were we doing to destroy these idols? They would need for their destruction the blood of countless martyrs.

Secondly, there was Privilege to be unseated--Proud Privilege that ever scorned the struggling soul. It took many different forms. One was sex privilege, that poisoned the life of the home at its very source. When the woman or the girl child was kept down, the process was demoralizing at the very heart of our life. In this matter our own sad lapses made critics jeer at Islam. *But they forgot what Islam had done for the sex. It gave woman equal status before the law. It gave the girl child protection from the barbarous practices of the "Age of Ignorance."* In that age, when a male child was born there was rejoicing, but there was lamentation when the *girl child was born, and she was exposed and quickly destroyed. One of our Prophet's most burning denunciations referred to this very evil.*

Thirdly, there was to be an *honest and fearless pursuit of truth.* No mysteries, no high-sounding phrases, no self-tortures, no vicarious salvation. *No priesthood*--privileged or otherwise--was to stand *between man and his Maker.* We--men and women--were to press forward to *discover the truth and to act on it.* We were not to flinch and think: Where will this truth lead us? *We were to place before ourselves the eternal ideals implanted in our souls by Allah.* Those were

to be our banners. We were to uphold them--in *unity, strength, and brotherly and sisterly love.*

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'ID-AL-FITR (1361 A.H.) SERMON

The 'Id is a festival of rejoicing. This year there are not many facts over which we can rejoice, either in the Muslim world or in the world at large. But the great merit of our religious festival is that it is independent of the condition of the outer world. Religion *deals with an inner world, whether in the individual or among mankind. If we order our lives wisely that inner world will not be obscured by the clouds outside, but will rather send forth powerful rays to penetrate the gloom, doubts and uncertainty without. For gloom there is not a word to be said. Gloom often leads to despair and despair is an attitude absolutely inconsistent with faith and religion. No truly religious man ever allows himself to be cast down by despair.* The darker the prospect the more it stirs the religious sense to action, the stronger is the call for that which is at the core of our being, the more lively is our perception of the need of Allah and the guidance of Allah. The man or woman who shows a cheerful spirit in the *adverse circumstances is the one who can call his soul his own.* In the world without, clouds bring hope to the husband man and to all who are asking for rain. They tend to create in them an inner feeling of satisfaction.

What about doubts? They say that modern tendency is to cultivate doubts in all things. I do not think that such a negative tendency will help. Certainly the cock-sure attitude of ignorance is to be condemned. Meet every new situation with a due sense of our own shortcoming but with a stronger and stronger reliance on the providence of Allah. The more uncertain the chances of life, the more is there a call on our moral fiber to assert itself and prove itself superior to the material factor without. Nor is there any room for *uncertainty in the faith of Islam. That faith does not rely on any dogma. It does not build itself on abstract theological arguments.* It is based on the proved fact of our outer and inner life.

"Have We not made the earth as a wide expanse,
"And the mountains as pegs?
"And (have We not) created you in pairs,
"And made your sleep for rest,

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1. *Islamic Review.* November 1916, Vol. 4, No. 11, pp. 522-24.

"And made the night as a covering,
"And made the day as a means of subsistence?
"And (have We not) built over you the seven firmaments,
"And placed (therein) a Light of splendour?
"And do We not send down from the clouds water in abundance;
"That We may produce therewith corn and vegetables,
"And gardens of luxurious growth?
"Verily the Day of Sorting Out is a thing appointed."

--The Holy Qur-an 78 : 6 -- 17

It is on faith in these that it bases its assured faith that Allah is a just Allah, before whom can stand neither folly nor falsehood, neither inaptitude nor deceit. From this it follows that our life should be pure and holy even in this work-a-day world, for after all, the uncertainties will pass away and what will be left will be worthy things that deserve to stand before the glorious throne of Allah.[1]

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THE RELIGION OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE[2]

In speaking of the religion of a great artist or thinker, we are not concerned with the outer circumstances of worship or organisation. We do not deal in labels. We have nothing to do with herd instincts, or with the embodiment of the conventional or the institutional. These are usually blinkers to keep the erring "soul" straight, which might otherwise stray to paths not good for it in its unredeemed state. Even a hard-headed physician like Sir Thomas Browne soared from the "wingy mysteries in divinity and airy subtleties in religion" to that other book of revelation, Nature, "that universal and public manuscript that lies expansed unto the eyes of all." With artists there may be a religion even in a conflict with religion as orthodoxy understood. Wagner lost all reverence for "religion" from the date of his confirmation ceremony at the age of 14. And yet we may gather from his powerful dramas and music a truly spiritual expression of soul-music which may well be called religion. In a poet like Wordsworth it is usual to speak of a religion of nature. Perhaps it would be truer to speak of a religion of nature and humanity, art and spirit. To come to contemporary Englishmen, we have Richard Jefferies, beloved of all

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1. *Islamic Review.* March 1943, Vol. 31, No. 4, pp.100-101.
2. A Paper read to the Royal Society of Literature, London.

who are in love with what he calls "mind-fire." His religion escapes from written tradition and systems of culture to what he calls experiences of "soul life."

The religion of Rabindranath Tagore is to my mind the most striking feature in his personality, his poetry, his educational ideals, and his life. It would be futile to seek labels for him or to compare and contrast him with other poets or teachers either in India or in the West. If we must relate him back to formative influences in his own life and surroundings or his heritage and racial or cultural strains, it will not be necessary to dwell long on these. While we can understand his mind, art, and spiritual cravings better by relating them back to such influences, we must seek the core of his message in his own personality as a creative artist.

His English biographer, Mr. E. J. Thompson, calls him "a child of Hindu culture."[3] That expression is hardly adequate even if we take the widest definition of Hindu culture. It is certainly true that some of his finest songs have a tinge of Vedanta Pantheism. But the Vedanta postulates a great impersonal Being, the basis of all Reality, while Tagore's most characteristic note is that of a personal Allah imagined and described in glowing forms and colours. These are of course metaphorical, but the Formless One is invested with attributes which bring Him into clear-cut personal relations with His votaries. Tagore, especially in his later writings, constantly quotes and bases his conclusions on the Upanishads. But the conclusions themselves point in new directions, and it is fairer to his genius to ascribe at least some of his work to other influences, personal, inherited, or assimilated. His attacks on caste bring him nearer to the teaching of the Buddha, to whom he has paid generous tribute. The Vaishnava poetry of Bengal, the Shakta poems of Ram Parshad, which are almost like folk-poems in Bengal, and the Shaiva poems of the Tamil saints of the South, all strike a personal note of Bhakti or devotion to a personal god or goddess. But when we remember the abuses to which some of this earlier poetry was put, we shall understand the greatness of Tagore all the more in the greater refinement of personality and the more modern outlook of religion which we find in his work.

Tagore's family comes of a Brahman stock, but many generations back, under Muslim rule, they broke with the Brahmans and were called Pirilis for their social and cultural associations with the Muslims. The Sufi poetry of the Muslims finds a perceptible echo in Tagore, although it is unacknowledged and may be unconscious. The

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3. E. J. Thompson: *Rabindranath Tagore, Poet and Dramatist (1926), p. 267.*

tradition of the break with the Brahmans and Pandits found further expression in the unbending conduct of the poet's grandfather, Dwarkanath Tagore. On his return to India from England in 1842, he defied the Brahmans and refused to perform the Prayaschit ceremony in token of repentance for having eaten and associated with non-Hindus. This mutual aversion between the Pandits and Tagore continues to the present day, and is responsible for part of the unpopularity which his work in Bengali had to suffer until world-wide fame lifted the poet up from the provincialism of his detractors.

The most recent and perhaps most powerful influence in the formation of Tagore, as influences go in the formation of genius, has been that of British culture. This is also unacknowledged and can hardly be unconscious. His family was among the first notable families of Bengal that came under British influence. They were among the earliest supporters of the liberal religious movement which began with Raja Ram Mohan Roy under British and Muslim influences. When the movement took definite shape as a reformed church, the Brahmo Samaj, the Tagore family was among its most influential leaders, and waged a fierce war against idolatry, both in writing and in practice. In the matter of caste the Tagore family remained conservative, and the more democratic members who disapproved of caste seceded into the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. Rabindranath, born into the Adi Brahmo Samaj, which allowed caste, himself tried, without success, to abolish caste from the Adi Brahmo Samaj. He has also attacked time-honoured social practices like child-marriage. He has been accepted as an honorary member of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj.

The growth of all the vernaculars in India, and especially Bengali, shows the intrusive influence of English culture on the Indian mind during the last century and a half. In this way some of the ideas of the English mind have penetrated into circles not educated in English, through the general intellectual atmosphere of India. But the direct study of the English language and English literature has produced an influence on the choicer spirits, whose importance cannot be overrated. On account of this influence a great deal of the higher thought in India derives its impulses from Western cultural movements. Even the strong reaction against the West, which has set in, in the last two generations in India, and which is expressed in a poetic and beautiful form in Rabindranath, would not have been possible but for that influence and the methods and ideals which it placed before the Indian mind. It has been asserted and denied that Christian mysticism is one of the formative elements in the religion of Rabindranath Tagore. In so far as British and Western influences have penetrated India, the

influence of Christianity is self-evident. But mysticism in all ages and under all religions has a kinship and affinity which must be allowed for, and it would not be wise or right to press the claims of any organised religion as an exclusive factor in the work of a poet and artist like Rabindranath.

Nor must we fall into the mistake of supposing that we can crib and confine so elusive a religion as that of a creative artist into a system of philosophy. I know that Professor Radhakrishnan has written an imposing volume on the philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore. Among the theses he tries to prove are: the utter bankruptcy of Western materialism; the reconciliation of the old Vedanta doctrine with that of a personal Allah; and the reconciliation of modern science with Hindu philosophy through the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore. I confess that to me the attempt appears to be a hopeless failure. It is absurd to label Rabindranath Tagore. His work as a poet would be of less value if it were merely a re-hash or a restatement of an ancient school of thought. The absurdity is heightened when he is hailed with such epithets as "an optimist[1] .." Creative minds, those that reach the higher regions of poetry, are not optimists or pessimists. They describe their inner experiences. They put down their vision in words. It has to be understood as a poet has to be understood, in terms of joy and beauty, and feeling, and not dissected and reduced to a system. Religion, says Rabindranath Tagore[2] "is directly apprehended; it is not to be argued and analysed like metaphysics." To treat it like metaphysics would be almost as great a fault as "to shackle the Infinite and tame it for domestic use[3]."

I said that the key-note of Rabindranath's religion is a personal Allah. This personality is imaged as a king, as a beggar, as a lover, as a playmate, as a bridegroom, as a father or mother, as a traveller, as a musician or as a world-filling light. But in spite of these vivid descriptions of His personality, Allah still remains the unknown Allah, except to those who have seen Him as it were face to face. Such a vision is for the inspired. How can they reveal it to the ordinary man? This is how the Gitanjali[4] expresses it:--

"I boasted among men that I had known you. They see your pictures in all works of mine. They come and ask me 'Who is he?' I know not how to answer them. I say, 'Indeed I cannot tell.' They blame me and they go away in scorn. And you sit there smiling.

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1. S. Radhakrishnan: Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore (1918) p. 281.
2. Creative Unity (1922) p. 14.
3. *Ibid.* p. 16.
4. Gitanjali No. 102.

I put my tales of you into lasting songs. The secret gushes out from my heart. They come and ask me, 'Tell me all your meanings. I know not how to answer them. I say, 'Ah, who knows what they mean!' They smile and go away in utter scorn. And you sit there smiling."

But this inscrutable Allah, almost careless whether the others know or understand him, is very real and personal to his devotees. He gives Himself to His devotee in love and then feels His own entire sweetness in the devotee[5]. He comes unasked, with steps unheard. His eyes are sad as they fall on his devotee. His voice is tired as he speaks low in the guise of a thirsty traveller. The devotee pours water from his jar into his joined palms. The devotee, like a Hindu woman at a well, stands speechless with shame when her name is asked. But the devotee's bliss is in memory of the water given to Allah who came in the guise of a thirsty traveller[6]. But sometimes the devotee stands waiting like a woman pining for her absent lover. She waits and waits from morning to noon and on into the shadows of the evening. She waits and weeps and wears out her heart in vain longing[7]. That is one phase. A counterpart to this phase is where the devotee is remiss in his prayers or keeps not Allah in his heart; yet Allah's love for him still waits for his love. The men of this world who love him try to hold him secure. But Allah's love which is greater than theirs keeps him free. The men of the world never venture to leave him alone lest he should forget them. But day passes after day and Allah is not seen, and yet His love, like the compelling grace of Christian theology, waits for the worshipper's love[8] .

On Allah's radiance are cast coloured shadows by man. That is Allah's *maya*. He sets a barrier in His own being and then calls His severed self in a myriad notes. This self-separation of the Deity takes body in His creature. This screen which He has raised between Himself and His *maya* creation is painted with innumerable figures with the brush of the night and the day. Behind the screen is His seat woven in wondrous mysteries. "The great pageant," says the Gitanjali[9], "of Thee and Me has overspread the sky. With the tune of Thee and Me all the air is vibrant, and all ages pass with the hiding and seeking of Thee and Me." This idea of creation as playfulness, as *Lila* or *Maya* is expounded in many forms. "If this be Thy wish" says

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5. Gitanjali, No. 65.
6. Gitanjali, No. 54.
7. Gitanjali, No. 41.
8. Gitanjali, No. 32.
9. Gitanjali No. 71.

Tagore[10], "and if this be Thy play, then take this fleeting emptiness of mine, paint it with colours, gild it with gold, float it on the wanton wind, and spread it in varied wonders. And again when it shall be Thy wish to end this play at night, I shall melt and vanish away in the dark, or it may be in a smile of the white morning, in a coolness of purity transparent." Thus human life and death or the appearance and disappearance of the phenomenal world are mere *Lila,* the play of Allah, who is the only Reality. This idea of play is further developed in the description of Allah as a Playmate. The creature plays with Him and never questions who He is. In the early morning, the creature is called from his sleep as by his own comrade and led running from glade to glade. The creature's voice takes up the tune of Allah's song and feels neither shyness nor fear. It is when the playtime is over that the sudden sight of glory bursts upon the creature. The world with all its silent stars stands in awe as with eyes bent upon Allah's feet[11].

Allah is the Infinite, the Absolute, the only Reality. Science refuses to accept the paradox of the Infinite assuming finitude. But it is the paradox which lies at the very root of existence[12]. It is for the poet to realise and reveal the mystery of the One with the Infinite, the mystery of how the Creator takes shape in His creation, and how we can feel in our own individual personality all His infinitude and all the wonderful life of Nature around us. As Tagore says in his *Fruit-Gathering*[13], "I feel that all the stars shine in me. The world breaks into my life like a flood. The flowers blossom in my body. All the youthfulness of land and water smokes like incense in my heart; and the breath of all things plays on my thoughts as on a flute."

It is not easy to express in words the relations of Allah, Nature and Man, or to reconcile the idea of a personal Allah with the idea of the immanent Essence which is in all things, and which to a Pantheist is Allah. The problem interests Tagore deeply. Apart from its poetic presentation in various moods in his hymns and songs, he has devoted a special book of prose essays or lectures, "Creative Unity," to its exposition. In a sense it is an authoritative exposition of the central core of his religion, as Bergson's "Creative Evolution" (*L'Evolution Creatrice*) furnishes the master-key to the exposition of the philosophy of motion. Only we must remember that Bergson is first a philosopher, and then a poet, while Tagore concentrates all his soul in poetry. In some respects Tagore's exposition of Creative Unity recalls paral-

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10. Gitanjali, No. 80.
11. Gitanjali, No. 97
12. Tagore's *Personality*, (1896), p. 55.
13. Fruit-Gathering, (1916) No. 98.

lels, both in fervour and in terminology, to the Muslim idea of Unity (*Wahdaniyat)* as expounded by the great Sufi mystics. In Tagore's view poetry cherishes man's faith in his unity with all existence, the final truth of which is the truth of personality. The joy of unity within ourselves, seeking expression, becomes creative. Any one individual can realise in himself an infinite variety, of substance, functions, and faculties, at any given time, as well as infinite variety in time and space. That unity in himself has the simplicity of the Infinite and reduces the immenseness of multitude to a single point. The endless show of variety can only be properly understood by the realisation of this ideal unity. We seek unity in knowledge for understanding; we create images of unity for delight; and we seek union in love for fulfilment. In love the joy is ultimate, because it is the ultimate truth.

When we realise the unity of all in one, we can understand how any one individual can feel himself a part of another or feel that other a part of himself; for both are parts of a single unity, although each in himself constitutes a unity. The harmony thus established leads to the idea of Beauty. For Beauty, according to Tagore, is the self-offering of the One to the other One.[14] Thus Beauty merges in Love and Joy. The grasp of this universal Unity leads to the idea of Perfection. Faith in Allah is Faith in the reality of the ideal of Perfection. Perhaps Tagore, with his ideas of Beauty, Love and Personality, may not accept the Vedanta doctrine of the illusory nature of the phenomenal world. He does not in so many words reject that doctrine, and he accepts the evanescence of the phenomenal world. But, as might be expected from a creative poet, Creation, Joy, Beauty, seem to him embedded in the idea of Reality. In his own words, "This world is a Creation;....a living idea,....an eternal symphony[15].

The religion of Art and Beauty is well expressed in the aphorism: "Art gives our Personality the disinterested freedom of the Eternal[16]." "Eternal" refers to time, but Art and Poetry have an extension not only in Time but in space and other categories. Poetry, according to Tagore, detaches the idea from everyday facts, and gives its wings the freedom of the Universal[17]. The Universal, the Absolute, the Eternal, as terms applied to Allah, are understood in every form of religion. Here we can apply them to the personality of man, even though that personality is detached (if it can ever be detached in Tagore's system) from the one and ultimate Reality. It would seem as if we could apply

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14. *Creative Unity* (1992), p. 19.
15. *Creative Unity* (1922). p. 35.
16. *Ibid*, p. 39.
17. *Ibid*, p. 41

these terms to human personality even through the gates of Death. I do not think that Tagore would accept the persistence of human personality in any other sense. For himself, Death is Allah's servant, Allah's messenger, who has crossed the unknown sea and brought His call. "The night," he says,[18] "is dark and my heart is fearful--yet I will take up the lamp and bow to him my welcome....I will worship him with folded hands and with tears. I will worship him placing at his feet the treasure of my heart. He will go back with his errand done, leaving a dark shadow on my morning; and in my desolate home only my forlorn self will remain as my last offering to Thee." Speaking of a lost dear one, he says[19]: "My house is small and what once has gone from it can never be regained. But infinite is Thy mansion, my Lord, and seeking her I have come to Thy door. I stand under the golden canopy of Thine evening sky and I lift my eager eyes to Thy face. I have come to the brink of eternity, from which nothing can vanish--no hope, no happiness, no vision of a face seen through the tears. Oh, dip my emptied life into that ocean, plunge it into the deepest fulness. Let me, for once, feel that lost sweet touch in the allness of the universe." The simile of a detached life being emptied out of its shell and plunged back into the ocean of existence from which it came frequently occurs in Vedantic and Upanishad as well as Sufi literature. But personally I cannot see how, if we are to accept it, we can at the same time accept the permanence of human personality.

The idea of Allah as the King of Kings occurs frequently in the Gitanjali, but each time a new facet is cut in the gem, a new quality is revealed in Tagore's idea of the Allah Godhead. One of the most daring is that where he suggests that he himself is necessary to Allah's existence, thus drawing a sharp line of contrast with the idea of the self-sufficiency of Allah. "Oh, Thou Lord of all Heavens," says he,[20] "where would be Thy love if I were not? Thou hast taken me as Thy partner of all this wealth. In my heart is the endless play of Thy delight. In my life Thy will is ever taking shape. And for this, Thou who art the King of Kings, hast decked Thyself in beauty to captivate my heart. And for this, Thy love loses itself in the love of Thy lover, and there art Thou seen in the perfect union of the two." If we grant the identity of creation with the Creator, perhaps the idea would not appear so inconsistent with the majesty of Allah as might appear to those whose theology is built on a different basis.

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18. Gitanjali, No. 86.
19. Gitanjali, No. 87.
20. Gitanjali, No. 56.

Let us take two other similes of the King. In one[21] He comes down from His throne and stands at a humble cottage door. There is a poor man singing all alone in a corner. He is a mere novice. The King has many masters of music in his hall, whom He can hear at any hour. But the song in this cottage strikes at His love and He comes down and stops at the cottage door with a flower for a prize. Another picture[22] is where the King comes to beg at the door of a beggar who himself had gone begging from door to door. "Thy golden chariot appeared in the distance like a gorgeous dream and I wondered who was this King of Kings. My hopes rose high and methought my evil days were at an end, and I stood waiting for alms to be given unasked and for wealth scattered on all sides in the dust. The chariot stopped where I stood. Thy glance fell on me and Thou camest down with a smile. I felt that the luck of my life had come at last. Then of a sudden Thou didst hold out Thy right hand and say, 'What hast thou to give to Me?

Ah, what a kingly jest was I to open Thy palm to a beggar to beg! I was confused and stood undecided, and then from my wallet I slowly took out the least little grain of corn and gave it to Thee. But how great was my surprise when at the day's end I emptied my bag on the floor to find a least little grain of gold upon the poor heap. I bitterly wept and wished that I had had the heart to give Thee my all." A simple edifying parable from the picture of a Raja and a covetous Bengali peasant, but lifted well up into the sublime by the magic of the poet's art in telling a short story.

The simile of the Fatherhood of Allah is used, but rather in an unexpected way. "I know Thee as my Allah and stand apart--I do not know Thee as my own and come closer. I know Thee as my Father and bow before Thy feet--I do not grasp Thy hand as my friends's[23]." We can picture the conditions of family life under which the tender grasp of a friend's hand can well be contrasted with the respect and reverence due to a father's "feet." But the idea of fatherhood in the Hindu system of divinity is incomplete without the idea of Motherhood, which indeed forms the central core in the Shakta system so popular in Bengal. The complementary picture is not wanting in Tagore. "When in the morning I looked upon the light I felt in a moment that I was no stranger in this world, that the Inscrutable without name and form had taken me in its arms in the form of my own mother....The child cries out when from the right breast the mother takes it away, in the very next moment to find in the left one its conso-

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21. Gitanjali, No. 49
22. Gitanjali, No. 50.
23. Gitanjali. No. 77.

lation"[24] It may be permissible to point out that this complementary idea of Motherhood along with Fatherhood in connection with the godhead, though not accepted in that form in Christian theology, has practically been adopted in the Mariolatry so firmly established in Catholic Christianity.

Apart from Motherhood, perhaps a word ought to be said about the ideal of Womanhood in the Tagore scheme. His own devotion to his wife and his daughter was profound and has inspired some of the noblest of his poetry. Speaking impersonally, he writes in his Reminiscences[25]:-- "The ultimate perfection of all womanly love is to be found in reverence;.... where extraneous cause has hampered its true development, woman's love naturally grows into worship." In his American lectures[26], he deals with the theme in greater detail. "Woman's function," he says, "is the passive function of the soil, which not only helps the tree to grow but keeps its growth within limits." The passive virtues of chastity, modesty, devotion, and power of self-sacrifice are specified as found in a grater measure in woman than in man. This may not be very satisfactory from a feminist point of view, and probably falls short of the ideal of womanhood as held by the more advanced Brahmo women in Bengal itself. I have heard Indian ladies in public meetings pouring contempt on the Sita ideal. Ultimately I believe that the ideal can only be refined and perfected by the insight of women in a freer social system than we have yet reached in India.

Speaking of human personality, especially in its creative and religious aspects, we must note two special points. They both reveal the idea of a dual personality. One is concerned with the sources of his inspiration, and the other with the springs of his Bhakti or devotion to Allah. With regard to his inspiration he developed the idea of a *Jiban-Debata*, or genius of his life, a sort of Daemon who went with him and inspired his poetry. He has always sought to derive his inspiration in solitude and from the forces of Nature. The Padma river and the endless plains round his own country home as well as the rose gardens of Ghazipur in the United Provinces or the monsoon-swept seacoast of Karwar in the Bombay Presidency, were sought out by him at various periods of his literary life, to give him contact with the spirit of the Absolute and the Eternal, Who is the centre of his religious meditations. Where poets like Wordsworth sought and took the inspiration direct, Tagore postulated this *Jiban-Debata,* or life spirit. The idea, in

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24. Gitanjali, No. 95.
25. Reminiscences, (1917), p. 166.
26. Tagore's "*Personality.*" *(1897)*, p. 172.

the poet`s own words, "has a double strand. There is the Vaishnava dualism--always keeping the separateness of the self --and there is the Upanishadic monism. Allah is wooing each individual, and Allah is also the ground-reality of all, as in the Vedantist unification. When the *Jiban-Debata* idea came to me, I felt an overwhelming joy--it seemed a discovery, new with me--in this deepest self seeking expression. I wished to sink into it, to give myself up wholly to it. Today, I am on the same plane as my readers, and I am trying to find what the *Jiban-Debata* was[27]."

In the matter of devotion he imagines in himself a greater self which is one with Allah and a little self which dogs the footsteps of this greater Self and always comes as a hindrance to his identification with the Universal Self. Let us recall the picture in his own words[28]. "I came out alone on my way to my tryst. But who is this that follows me in the silent dark? I move aside to avoid his presence but I escape him not. He makes the dust rise from the earth with his swagger; he adds his loud voice to every word that I utter. He is my own little self, my Lord, he knows no shame; but I am ashamed to come to Thy door in his company." In another song[29], he describes these two selves again at cross-purposes. One is making a wall and enclosing the other in a dungeon, in which the prisoner weeps. The builder of the wall is proud of the wall and plasters it with dust and sand lest a hole should be left. For all the care he takes he loses sight of his true being. The contrast could not be stated in clearer terms. But it is not clear how this lower or little self is to be identified with the universal system. We could understand it if we were told that our high destiny was obscured for a time by our being enclosed in 'the muddy venture decay'. We could also understand the conflict if we could suppose that a higher grace from without tried to reclaim us. The difficulty arises when we try to conceive of both the selves in actual and conscious conflict, and at the same time believe that both the selves are identified with the Universal and the Absolute. If the two selves are at different stages of spiritual evolution, how come they to be conjoined in a single personality? The problem is different from that of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, or from that raised in the Latin poet's complaint: *Video meliora proboque; Deteriora autem sequor.* But let us not pursue the question further lest we insult the poet by treating him as a psychologist. His explanation about the *Jiban Debata* puts him on the same plane as our humble selves.

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27. Thompson: Rabindranath Tagore, Poet and Dramatist. (1926) p. 114-5.
28. Gitanjali, No. 80.
29. Gitanjali, No. 29.

The freedom of the human will is postulated in Tagore's poetry, but is more particularly referred to in his prose essays called "Sadhana, the Realisation of Life," in which the problem of Personality is also dealt with. Allah has left the soul of man free. "In his physical and mental organism, where man is related with nature, he has to acknowledge the rule of his King, but in his self he is free to disown Him. There our Allah must win His entrance. There He comes as a guest, not as a King, and therefore He has to wait till He is invited. It is the man's self from which Allah has withdrawn His commands, for there He comes to court our love. His armed forces, the laws of nature, stand outside its gate, and only beauty, the messenger of His love, finds admission within its precincts[30] Here we have a daring suggestion, an extension of the Dualism of one of the old Hindu schools of philosophy. The old Dualism referred to Spirit and Matter, or to Allah and His Creation. Here there is apparently and independent will created, the human will as a reality, to be conceived of in the same plane as the divine will. But what becomes of *Karma,* the chain of causation whose consequences nothing can alter? In the soul of man, according to this passage in Tagore, "will seeks its manifestation in will, and freedom turns to win its final prize in the freedom of surrender." But what happens if there is no surrender? Are we to conceive of a Zoroastrian duality, an Ahriman against Ormazd, a discord in the midst of the "universal" symphony (if "universal" can be used in such opposition)? This of course is nowhere suggested, and we are again left in the beautiful mist of poetry, metaphor, and mystery.

In both religion and art (and we might add also conduct) Tagore's ideal aims at calm and peace and would shut out fervour, storm, and passion. His chosen home in the country, where he aims at stamping his personality on education, is called "Shanti-Niketan," the abode of peace. He would undoubtedly repudiate Keats' "Bards of Passion and of Mirth." Indeed, in express words he has shown a strange insensibility to the beauty and power of English literature. In his Reminiscences[31] he says: "In English literature the reticence of true art has not yet appeared." He describes the long course of that literature in phrases that are amazing in the mouth of one who has himself contributed to that literature. You cannot describe "Shakespeare's contemporary literature" as representing "the war-dance of the day when the Renaissance came to Europe in all the violence of its reaction" etc. Nor can you jump on to "another such day

30. Tagore's *Sadhana* (1913), p. 41.
31. Tagore: *My Reminiscences, (1917),* pp. 182--4.

in English literature when the slow-measure of Pope's common time gave place to the dance-rhythm of the French Revolution," which "had Byron for its poet." Nor can we forbear a smile when he gravely tells us that the appearance of Wordsworth and Shelley in English literature was due to the newly discovered philosophy of India, "which stirred the soul of Germany and aroused the attention of Western countries[32]." But we are not examining the *Jiban-Debata* in history or literary criticism. We are trying to see how this ideal of repose and tranquillity works out in Tagore's religion and poetry.

He conceives "the Spotless and Serene" as indeed surrounded with colours and sounds and odours but to be found ultimately in the "infinite sky" and reigning "as the stainless white radiance", where "there is no day nor night, nor form nor colour, and never, never a word[33]." But no psalm, no hymn, no work of art can give expression to forms of Beauty without fervour and warmth, without joy and passion. Fortunately Tagore's own method involves this joy, this fervour, and this passion. Many examples can be cited, but let us look at a single hymn from the Gitanjali, quivering with the fervour on the devotee's heart and running over with the music and colour in almost riotous profusion. "Let all the strains of joy mingle in my last song--the joy that makes the earth flow over in the riotous excess of the grass, the joy that sets the twin brothers, life and death, dancing over the wide world, the joy that sweeps in with the tempest, shaking and waking all life with laughter, the joy that sits still with its tears of the open red lotus of pain, and the joy that throws everything it has upon the dust, and knows not a word."[34] Perhaps the suggestion is that the ecstasy is a beginning, but the end is silence and peace.

Nor can a description of life and motion in Nature, as seen in Northern India, such as the following, be said to be illustrative of the absence of passion or enthusiasm in poetry. The passage is from *Naivedya*[35] and the translation is that of Mr. E. J. Thompson.

"In files and companies the wild geese flight
To the far south, where feather-grass flowers white
And towering tall, upon the sandbanks lone.
Again, in spring, they come; aloft, high-flown,
They float, chanting with joy."

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32. Tagore's *Creative Unity*, 1922 p. 61.
33. Gitanjali, 67 and 68.
34. Gitanjali, No. 58.

35. *Naivedya*, 25, as translated at p. 191 in E. J. Thompson's Rabindranath Tagore, Poet and Dramatist (1926).

An admirable version of a moving scene, familiar to every one who has visited the lonely islands in the great rivers of Northern India in the cold weather. Or again, take that passionate Ode to Beauty, entitled *Urvasi,* and printed in an adequate translation by Mr. E.J. Thompson in his Tagore volume in the Augustan Books of Modern Poetry. I shall content myself with just quoting four lines:--

"From age to age thou hast been the world's beloved,
Oh, unsurpassed in loveliness, Urvasi!
Ah, hear what crying and weeping everywhere rises for thee,
Oh, cruel, deaf, Urvasi."

We can hear an echo of La Belle Dame sans Merci, surely full of the deepest human passion.

But it is true that Tagore's genius in its very restlessness aims at rest and peace and finality. He has always found the noise and bustle of Western life inconsistent with the higher ideals or the spiritual quest, or the creative work of imagination. Men like Richard Jefferies have also gone to nature to seek inspiration and refresh their souls. But human nature interests them just as much as other nature. Speaking of London, Mr. Jefferries says: "The noise of the traffic and the constant pressure from the crowds passing, their incessant and disjointed talk, could not distract me[37]." A religion of active life would not fit in with the scheme of our poet. We cannot imagine him saying like Clough:

"We ask action
And dream of arms and conflict; and string up
All self-devotion's muscles."

Passages can be found in him where the devotee is enjoined to come out of his meditations and stand by the toiler in the fields[38] but the toil itself is that of silence, patience, and tranquillity, like that of the Indian riot.

We must not leave the subject of Tagore's religion without referring to his analysis of the mind of educated India with regard to religion in the days of his youth. In his Reminiscences[39] he speaks of atheism having been "the dominant note of the English prose writings then in vogue, Bentham, Mill and Comte (*sic*) being favourite authors." According to him Indian educated men fell into two classes. "One class would be always thrusting themselves forward with un-

37. Jefferies: The Story of my Heart, p. 59.
38. Gitanjali, No. 11.
39. "My Reminiscences" (1917), pp. 185--6.

provoked argumentations to cut to pieces all belief in Allah." "The other class consisted not of believers, but religious Epicureans, who found comfort and solace in gathering together and steeping themselves in pleasing sights, sounds, and scents.....under the garb of religious ceremonial. They luxuriated in the paraphernalia of worship. In neither of these classes was doubt or denial the outcome of the travail of their quest." Whatever may be thought of the statement about the dominant note of English religion in the 1880's,[40] the two classes of men holding the two different outlooks on religion still exist in educated India. To make the picture complete, we shall have to add a third class of mind, which dreams in ancient terms of the East, imagines that a spiritual outlook is the monopoly of a certain section of the East, and cannot conceive of spirituality as anything but foreign to the thought and mind of the "materialistic West." This frame of mind has perhaps been strengthened by the poet's own writings. To those of us who read differently the history of the West and of the East and of the many varied cultures of the world, such an attitude is a barrier to a development of that universality which should bring the better minds of all nations together. In India we have yet to work out a synthesis of the spiritual ideals of Muslims and Hindus, especially in their practical bearings on the everyday life of the people. That is our first need. Until we have created an understanding--a solid understanding that will endure and is based on the inner dictates of our own hearts,--we cannot face the rest of the world without our claims being at once put out of court. Subject to this, it is both right and desirable, and indeed urgently necessary, that we should study each others' spiritual ideas with a view to understanding what is new to us, and that we should communicate our own lights, and thus help to advance the interests of human solidarity among all the nations of the world.[41]"

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40. In *Gora* (Eng. Translation, 1924), he speaks of "the combination of theism and atheism, dry, narrow, unsubstantial, evolved by eigtheenth century Europe." What about Wesley?
41. Islamic Culture. Vol. 4, No. 1,1930, pp. 114 - 129.

CHAPTER 2

The Noble Prophet (Muhammad PBUH)

- The Prophet's Services to the cause of Human Morality
- Muhammad (PBUH): A Towering Personality
- The Type of Elijah
- The Personality of Man

The Noble Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

The Prophet's Services to the Cause of Human Morality*[1]

The life which we are celebrating to-day is so full of incident, so rich in moral lessons, and so far-reaching in its influence, that a whole hour or even a day would not be sufficient to do justice to it. In the few minutes I have at my disposal, I wish to draw attention to three qualities or virtues which are referred to in the Qur-an (Sura XI : 75) with reference to the Prophet Abraham, the fountain-head of Prophet-hood in our sacred history. *Inna Ibrahima lahalimun awwahum munib.* Names in these cases are symbolical. The various qualities and virtues referred to various prophets in that Sura are combined in the comprehensive mission of our Holy Prophet. He, as it were, summed up in himself the fullness and significance of the lives of all the prophets and teachers that came to instruct mankind.

People sometimes have strange ideas about a Prophet's position and functions. Some think of him as "foretelling events." This would be a very minor function and is more appropriately referred to Kahins than to the Great Teachers of mankind. The Prophet Muhammad's visions into the past and the future were concerned with far more vital matters than mere external events.

Again, some people think that a Prophet's life is so pure and sacred that everybody would honour him and welcome him. Alas, human nature, when it is worked upon by evil, descends so low that it is jealous and envious of good, that it hates some of its noblest benefactors, that it persecutes and slays those, who come to help and guide it. Were not some prophets crucified, some held up to public derision,

1. *A lecture given at the celebration of the Holy Prophet's Birthday held at the Portman Rooms, London, on 2nd May 1939.

some boycotted and persecuted till their followers were in despair and cried out: "When will the mercy of Allah come?" Muhammad was a mercy of Allah. Did they not persecute him and his disciples? Did they not lay thorns in his path? Did they not inflict physical injuries on him and try to slay him? Did they not threaten him and banish him from the sacred city that he loved, and plot and lead armies against him in the new city where he found refuge? Yet through it all he was forbearing and long suffering (*halim*), and humbly went about seeking the good of those who were his enemies. He had wide sympathies and compassion (*awwah*) and always tried to understand the difficulties and points of view of other people, so that he could help and guide them. Widows and orphans, slaves and the needy, women in sorrow, doubt, or trouble, any one who may be labelled the "underdog" in modern life, would find him a loving friend and a sympathetic Counsellor.

Again, some people think that a Prophet is crowned with success in all his undertakings, and all human things are ready at his command. But a Prophet's life and function are spiritual, and his successes are in regions beyond the ken of material minds. In worldly goods he may be poor. He may use or despise worldly instruments, according to the needs of his holy mission at any given time. Did not our Holy Prophet mend his own clothes and live in his own simple way when embassies from great princes were seeking to get a hearing from him? He relied on Allah in all things (*Munib*); in trouble he turned to Allah; in sorrow his faith in Him was unshaken; in triumph he celebrated Allah's praises as the author of all good. The lessons of his life teach us to seek not merely material remedies but things of far higher and more permanent value in the spiritual world. This point needs special emphasis in our time. Shallow people seek shallow causes and forget Allah. Religion becomes a matter of worldly routine and not the spiritual fire which will burn sin, injustice and wrong.

The Prophet's life touched both the individual as a precious personality for its own sake, and the community as an association of individuals banded together for the service of Allah and man. His magnetic personality harmonised all sorts of antagonistic elements among his contemporaries. But his influence remains as a living influence in history. It remains to the present day and can heal and help us in all the extraordinary developments of a changing world.[2]

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2. *Islamic Review*, July 1939. Vol. 27, No. 7. pp. 245-47.

MUHAMMAD A TOWERING PERSONALITY[3]

If we were celebrating the birthday of a personal friend we might have before our minds three different aspects. We might contemplate another milestone passed on the dreary way of "slow-footed Time"; we might dwell with loving care on the charm and worth of our friend's personality; and we might recall with affection and gratitude all that that personality meant to us in our lives. Muhammad was a towering personality in the world's history; and yet, as the sublimest is often the most accessible to the humblest, we feel as if we had in him a close associate and friend. On the anniversary of his birthday, therefore, we could with profit address ourselves to all the three aspects of the celebration of a friend's anniversary.

Thirteen hundred--aye, many more than thirteen hundred-- years had passed in the procession of history since that noble life came into being on earth. What changes, what developments--of triumph and disaster, of glory and shame--had come to pass since then! Divided Arabia, despised Arabia, was united into a Power that commanded respect for its manly vigour, intellectual catholicity, and moral steadfastness. Corrupt Byzantium was swept away; the pride of Persia and the mystery of Egypt gave place to a simple, open, straightforward way of life that added a fresh chapter to the evolution of humanity. Fragments of Greek and Roman civilization and of the civilization of the Mediterranean, the Nile, the Euphrates, the Ganges, and the Oxus, and even of the distant Yangtse, were welded together into a compact and living system of thought which triumphed because it worked on realities and was true to itself. The foundations of modern science, art, and industry were laid, because respect for tradition was qualified by the spirit of research. When these living forces ceased to work, the dead mass showed signs of toppling over. Jerusalem was not only in Palestine; Allah can raise up "seed unto Abraham" even among the Gentiles. But it was something to have planted the spirit of brotherhood among the nations, and that spirit was exemplified even to-day on the five continents.

Mr. Pickthall has given a vivid picture of the Prophet's personality. Through all the phases of his life he showed an example of living

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3. Presidential speech made by Mr. A. Yusuf Ali, (retired) I.C.S., at the celebration of the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at Hotel Cecil, 6th January 1917--ED.

faith, unflinching courage, and uniform gentleness and kindness. Whether we see him as the orphan boy who was respected by his relatives; or as the honest merchant who dealt with scrupulous faith both in his relation to his employer and in his relation to those with whom he did business; or as the mystic who communed with nature and the spirit of man; or as the devoted and unselfish householder, the husband of the Lady Khadijah; or as the persecuted Reformer cast out by his city of Makkah and welcomed by another city, which cherishes his tomb to this day; or as the fearless Preacher and Warner, who spoke out of the gifts of his inspiration, and spared neither himself nor his friends; or as the Prince who lived as the lowliest of those whom he led, the leader who based his claim to a hearing on the test of service; or as the organizer of victory, the founder of a State, the new Jerusalem of men's dreams; or as the old Sage, who to the last days of his ministry refused to be elevated above the dust of the crowd whom he taught as a Brother among brothers--in all these aspects we find his life full of meaning and profitable instruction.

But how do we translate all these precious gifts into our everyday lives? Unless we do so, they are without meaning as far as we are concerned. We should be unworthy of them if we do not use them to make other people`s lives brighter and happier. Do we act on the principles of brotherhood which we profess? Are we gentle to an erring brother? Or helpful to one in distress? Or brave in affliction? Or steadfast under temptation? Or trustworthy in the hour of danger? Or united in the unselfish pursuit of noble ends? We have to put these questions to ourselves, and let our hearts overflow with gratitude, because in spite of our unworthiness we had a Guide and Apostle who can show us the way and give us the message of Truth. In sober earnestness we must rejoice in the gifts of his personality, and be glad that we are heirs to his teaching.[4]

THE TYPE OF ELIJAH

When we use the word *"Prophet"* in English to describe the *Apostle of Allah*, we are sometimes apt to forget that it may convey to other minds a meaning slightly different from the meaning we have in our own minds. *The word "Prophet" is derived from a Greek source, and means originally "one who speaks beforehand," "one*

4. *Islmaic Review*. February - March 1917. Vol. 5, Nos. 2-3, pages 60-61.

who speaks forward." In this sense "prophecy" corresponds exactly with the Persian word *"peshin-goi,"* which is fortunately used in one sense only; and implies nothing more than foretelling future events. The Arabic word of which "Prophet" is a translation as applied to Muhammad is *Rasul, "the one who is sent," "the Apostle"* or *"Nabi," "the Evangelist," and "one who brings book from Allah."* In Christian theology the word "Apostle" is specialized for the Disciples who carried the message of Jesus after the close of His ministry on earth, and the word Evangelist is specialized for the four whose written Gospels have been preserved in the accepted canon of the Western Churches. In this term I include the Greek Church: the antithesis in my mind is that of some of the obscure Eastern Churches, which have preserved other Gospels not considered canonical in the West.

After all, it is unnecessary to dispute about words, so long as we understand clearly what we mean by them. The phrase *"the Prophet Muhammad" is accepted by well-established usage.* We would not quarrel with this usage, but we must remember that in other contexts the word has a different *connotation, and we must not let our minds be confused by such a connotation.*

In the Old Testament Moses stands as the type of the law, and Elijah as the type of the Prophets. In the New Testament, John the Baptist, the voice "crying in the wilderness," is referred to the type of Elijah.

In the Qur-an there are two references to Elijah. The Arabic form of the name is "Ilyas," which is much nearer the form used in both Greek and Hebrew than the English form "Elijah." In each case Elijah is referred to among a group of righteous men of Allah. In Qur-an, vi. 85, the reference is brief: *"And Zacariah and John and Jesus and Elijah all were righteous ones."* The grouping is significant; all these Prophets lived a life of retirement. They were in the world, but not of it. In an unheeding world they bore unremitting testimony to Allah, amid sorrow and persecution.

A fuller account of Elijah is found in the Surah "Sāffāt:" Qur-an, xxxvii. 123-132. The whole Surah is a closely-reasoned argument based on nature and history, to show how great and good men, men of undaunted courage, were raised up by Allah in all ages, how they bore witness to truth in different forms and circumstances, and how their burning zeal was never quenched by persecution or apparent failure. There was Noah and the story of the great Flood: everything seemed to be against him, but the deliverance came through righteousness and truth. There was Abraham, the great ancestor of the Semites; he rooted out the false gods and their worship; he was tried by fire, and

even the impending sacrifice of his son; but he loved Allah above all, and feared no man. There was the marvellous story of Moses and Aaron, their wanderings and their final deliverance. *There was Elijah, of whom more presently.* There was Lot, who was saved from destruction, while a wicked world was either callous, indifferent, or in doubt. And there was Jonas and the story of the whale, the Prophet who, true to the light from above, redeemed the world from darkness.

This brief analysis shows the setting for the story of Elijah. Let us now look at the story itself. I will translate it from the text.

"And verily Ilyās was of the number of Apostles.
Behold, he said to his people:
'Have ye no fear?
Ye call unto Baal, and forsake the best of creators;
Allah, your Lord, and the
Lord of your fathers, from the beginning.'
And they spake falsely against him:
verily they shall be called to account;
Except the servants of Allah,
whom He hath redeemed (*mukhlasin).*
We have preserved his memory to posterity.
Peace to Il-Yāsin.[5]
Thus do We reward the righteous;
For he was of the number of our servants and believers."

Here is a beautiful story, eloquent in its very simplicity. What are the *salient features of Elijah's life and career*? Did he withdraw from his people because they forsook Allah? No, his mission was to them, and he preached to them. Did he flatter them? Did he seek honour among them? Did he compromise with the false gods, and tell the people smooth tales in order to win influence, perhaps endowments, from King Ahab,[6] in order to enable the Prophet to put his spiritual work on a firm basis--of property and comfort? Ahab was a king in Israel; not a bad king from a worldly point of view. He had married a queen who protected the Syrian ritual, and he compromised with the worship of Baal, whose cult could put up at least 450 prophets against the solitary Elijah, the Prophet of Yahwe. What Ahab did for Baal he would surely have done for Yahwe--and a great deal more if

5. I do not discuss here the meaning of what looks like a plural form of Ilyas.
6. The dates of Ahab's rule were approximately from 875 to 853 B.C.

only Yahwe's representative had been as accommodating as the priests of Baal.

Ahab wanted no disturbance in Israel, but Yahwe's Prophet refused to sit still and sacrifice righteousness to policy. No glittering dreams of "splendid feasts of sacrifice" to Yahwe could blind his eyes to the spiritual death which was implied in their pursuit. He would have Yahwe and none other. Yahwe's service was righteousness, and he must stand before Him with clean hands, a pure heart, and the lamp of truth burning bright, neither quenched in falsehood nor obscured by cunning phrases. The priests of Baal might slur it over; they might think that a judicious silence here and there might further their cause and glorify Baal. But the Prophet of Yahwe must have the whole naked truth, even if it involved an exile from the seats of authority--even if it compelled him to plough his lonely furrow in a waste of sand. For his faith was undimmed.

But he would speak to the people, argue with them, remonstrate with them. He would warn them of the consequences of their policy. "Have ye no fear?" He would show Israel its heritage and appeal to their history. Allah was their Allah, the Allah of their fathers, who had shown His hand in nature and history. He was their Creator, not only powerful but good--the best of all possible Persons they could think of. Were they forsaking Him for false ideals which they had picked up from the Tyrians? Were they going to dress their own religion in the trappings of a fleeting fashion?

Perhaps here he touched them on the raw. "And they spake falsely against him." They could not rake up his past, which had been righteous. They could not accuse him of ambition, for he despised what they prized. The charge they got up against him was one that should go down with the people. They imputed false motives to him--motives of which Elijah was innocent, but which the vulgar crowd would recognize at once because such motives swayed them. The Old Testament (I Kings xvii-xix) tells us something of the kind of charge that was made, in the expectation that it would stick. "Is it thou," says Ahab, "thou troubler of Israel?" In Mendelssohn's Oratorio, which is a fine rendering into music of the Old Testament story, the effect of the charge is shown very dramatically. After Ahab's speech, "Art thou Elijah, he that troubleth Israel?' the chorus bursts forth from hundreds of voices, strengthened by the organ accompaniment and varied and accentuated in echoes of many forms and suggestions: "Thou art Elijah, he that troubleth Israel!" Every man of that crowd must have had a different grievance in his mind when the collective voice shouted the vague accusation,"he that troubleth Israel!"

Elijah vindicated himself with dignity and truth: "I never troubled Israel's peace: it is thou, Ahab, and all thy father's house." In the Biblical narrative it needed two great miracles, the miracle of the burnt-offering and the miracle of the rain, to justify Elijah. But even then the justification was short-lived. For the "troubling of Israel" continued, and the phrase stuck in the mind of the people and made the vague charge live as they saw Elijah uphold his solitary fight for righteousness. Elijah was apt to be discouraged, and prayed, "Now let me die, for my days are but vanity!" But the inner light of Allah sustained him; though he had to seek safety in the wilderness and in the mountains, he never forsook the message.

We see that the Quranic narrative says nothing of the miracles. A miracle may be a sign, but a miracle is powerless with a stiff-necked generation if even a righteous man fails who has heard "the still small voice within." Even in the version of Elijah's story in which stress is laid on miracles, the miracles eventually fail. So do the prophecies which merely foretell events. The famine, and then the drought, which Elijah foretold, did not shield him from persecution. His mission had meant the slaying of the false prophets of Baal, and the sentence passed on him was, "Elijah is worthy to die." This sentence of Jezebel's was no more just than the judicial murder of Naboth, who refused to sell his ancestral vineyard.[7] Elijah cried in his agony, "though stricken, they have not grieved." But the dark moments of Elijah's life were a mere passing phase. For the glory of Allah was to appear and shine on him and sanctify him, and he was to celebrate the praises of the Lord, as did one greater than he[8] fourteen hundred years after him. Elijah anointed new kings and Elisha his own successor. As long as he lived he was an outspoken witness, not to miracles and prophecies, creeds, doctrines, or priestly authority, but *to the religion of righteousness, justice, and love, to which the seal was set by our Prophet Muhammad. And this is the type of true Apostlehood.*[9]

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THE PERSONALITY OF MAN

Islam is a house of many mansions. In one aspect it is a religion of practical morals. In another it reaches out after speculative phi-

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7. Kings xxi, 1-18.
8. Quran. cx : 3.
9. Islamic Review. Dec. 1917, Vol, 5, No. 12, pp 515-20.

losophy. In a third it seeks the mystic in Man, above formulae, above rites and ceremonies, above disputations, above intellectual argument: for it seeks the inner light from inner experience. All these aspects are represented by many schools of thought. The literature on the subject is so enormous that the study of a life-time is not enough to master it. All that we shall do on the present occasion is to take a general view on first principles and see what glimpses we can get of the Personality of Man. This fills a large space in Islam under any aspect, because Islam lays stress on evidence that is clear, tangible, and accessible to the spirit of Man, rather than on authority or the exaltation of Powers about which in the nature of things we can know very little directly. Follow only certain knowledge, says the Quran. We are not to go after what we fondly imagine in our hearts, or receive from hearsay, or see vaguely without clear light; for our hearing, and our sight, and our hearts,--of all these, question will be made and their responsibility enforced (Q. XVII, 36).

Four kinds of evidence are appealed to: (1) Nature, (2) History, (3) Inner Experience, and (4) Revelation.

The appeal to Nature gives us some of the most poetical and sublime passages in the Quran. For example take that glorious passage which begins the 78th Sura:-

"About what are they disputing?
About the Great News,
The News about which they cannot agree!
But they shall indeed come to know!
Indeed they shall come to know!
Have We not created the earth as a great expanse,
And the mountains like pegs?
And have We not created you in pairs,
And made your sleep for rest,
And made the night as a covering,
And made the day as a means of sustenance?
And have We not built over you the seven firmaments,
And placed therein the light of splendour?
And have We not sent down the clouds with waters in abundance,
That we might produce therewith corn and vegetables,
And gardens of luxuriant growth?

As surely is the day of decision a thing appointed;
The day whereon will sound the trumpet,
And ye shall come forth in crowds;
And the heavens shall be opened as if there were doors,
And the mountains shall vanish as if they were a mirage."

The argument is about the very matter which has given rise to the greatest speculation and the greatest disputation in all ages. We are asked to contemplate the wonderful works of nature in all its aspects,- the face of the earth in its beautiful scenery, the creation of man and animals, with the mystery of the sexes; the wonderful succession of work and rest in our own physical life, compared with the succession of day and night in outer nature; the beauty of the starry heavens and the spendour of the sun; the clouds and the rain and the fields of waving corn and the gardens of plenty. If all these things are possible to Allah, why is it impossible that a day should come when the most substantial things we can think of will pass away like a mirage, and we shall obey the summons of our Maker, to appear before Him and give our account? Nature and Man are brought into close relationship, and Man's needs, physical and subjective, are shown to be fulfilled by something above Man and Nature, some Potent Force to which Man's destiny points. Numerous passages can be quoted to show how Man's destiny is connected with Nature and how Nature can supply him with guidance in the interpretation of other evidence if only man contemplates her aright. Every verse of the Quran is called an *Ayat* (a sign), and the forces and sights of Nature are also called Ayats or signs. In chapter XXX, these signs are recapitulated and set forth and we are asked by their contemplation to set our faces to the true way of life, the pattern after which Allah made human nature (Q. XXX, 30).

The evidence of history is also appealed to as showing the manifestation of Allah's working in our collective human experience. The stories and legends of nations of old and of heroes and prophets are told, and we are asked to draw our lessons. The working of Allah in history is just a line of evidence in the extension of time, parallel to the line of evidence in Nature in the extension of space. There may be guidance required in the interpretation and application of both, but as far as they go, they sum up human judgments beyond our individual experience.

The evidence of our Inner Experience or Inner Light is again a parallel line of evidence in our own individual human experience. In Q. XLI, 53 we are told:--

> "We shall show them Our signs through the uttermost ends of creation as well as through their own souls, until it shall become quite clear to them that it is the very truth."

This inner experience is insisted upon by the Sufi and Mystical Schools more than by the others, but in any case it is part of the light by which man can contemplate and understand his own personality.

And then there is the evidence of Revelation. According to Islam, Allah speaks to people through inspired Messengers and Prophets. He has sent Messengers to every nation and section of mankind. They speak clearly in their own tongues. Our very differences of languages and colours is a sign of Allah, like the creation of Heaven and Earth (Q. XXX, 22), and we are to use these differences in order to emulate each other in virtue and good deeds (Q. V, 48). I take this Revelation through words in a wide sense, applying to all who teach the right and the truth.

Revelation in words may seem to be the clearest and plainest of Revelations. But human beings will turn and twist language and words according to their own desires. And it is necessary to check them by what we see of Allah's handiwork in Nature and History. The checking process is itself an act of human judgment, and must depend upon our use of the Inner Light which Allah has placed within us. That again may become obscure because of our remissness or other accidents, and we have the judgments of others (on whom we can depend) to rely upon. Our collective judgments must ultimately be based on all these sources of Light. which Allah has opened out to us. The doctrine of Ijma', or collective judgment, though narrowed down by theologians, rests on the belief that Allah will guide aright all earnest seekers after truth. It is the hope of man's destiny that truth must ultimately prevail; for "falsehood must ever vanish". (Q. XVII, 81).

The progress of man is set out in several stages as follows:--(1) An extract (Sulalat) of fine clay, for man is from dust, and to dust he must return; (2) the seed of physical life; (3) a clot of blood; (4) a lump; (5) bones and skeleton; (6) the filling out of the bones with flesh and limbs; (7) a "new creation" (the breathing of the spirit); (8) physical death; (9) the resurrection after death. (Q. XVIII. 12-16).

If we understand by the "extract of fine clay" the basis of physical matter, we see in this progression the relation of the origin of physical man with the material world. Items two to six describe his physical growth. We need not say anything further about them, as they are questions of physiology expressed in current language. But we may note that the physical nature of man is not despised or made a subject of apology. Man, even when linked on with the higher spiritual

world, and as long as his physical nature links him also with the animal world, has the responsibility for both kinds of his nature. He must take a pride in both. He must recognise his kinship with the animal world and give it all the rights and fulfil all the duties which that kinship involves. There are numerous anecdotes about the Prophet's kindness to animals. The kinship involves an idea of kindness that is more than mere condescension to "dumb" "helpless" or "brute" animals. It involves the idea of a sort of brotherhood in a minor degree. It is not only not inconsistent with the Darwinian ideas of evolution, but leads up to them. It is not ashamed of them, but looks upon them as natural and conformable to the laws of man's own physical being. The torture, by man, of his body would therefore be entirely opposed to the fundamental basis of his morality. Asceticism as such has no value, although self-denial for definite purposes may have high ethical and spiritual significance. Monasticism as an institution is expressly disavowed as contrary to the spirit of the full and even development of society, though retirement and contemplation, study and self-education, may be steps in an individual's training for the higher life which we shall mention presently.

It is not even certain that Islam entirely excludes the possibility of ethical and spiritual development in animals, or of their relation in a special way with Allah, parallel, according to their attainments and development, in some degree to Man's spiritual relation to Allah. We are told (Q. VI, 38), that there is not an animal on the earth nor a bird that flies with its pair of wings but has its own nations and tribes like to our own. In another place (Q. XVI, 68-69) the words are even more remarkable:--

"And your Lord sent an inspiration to the Bee, saying:
'For hives take the mountains or the trees, or where men build;
Then eat of all the produce of the earth,
And follow, like a trained animal, the path of (duty shown by) thy Lord';
From within its body issues a liquid of many colours, with healing therein for mankind;
Behold therein a sign for a thinking people."

When we come to item seven; "a new Creation", we come to an entirely new kind of stage in-man's development. The animal now becomes man. It is not a mere accident. It is the in-breathing of the Spirit of Allah. It would seem therefore that Allah's creation is not a thing of the past only. It is a continuous activity. It is true that He created the Heavens and the Earth in six days (Q. VII, 54); but we are

not told that He rested after that. On the contrary we are told elsewhere that no rest or sleep overtakes Him. His creative activity is continuous. It would even seem that a distinction is drawn between two kinds of Allah's Creation, the one expressed by the Arabic word *Khalq* and the other by the Arabic word *Amr.* Perhaps we had better set out the verse in full (Q. VII, 54) to show its bearing on numerous points which have been differently interpreted:--

> "For verily your Lord is Allah Who created (*Khalq)* the Heavens and the Earth in six days;
> He established His Power on the Throne;
> He veils the day with the night, and they pursue each other without ceasing;
> And the sun and the moon and the stars are held obedient by His order *(Amr);*
> For are not both Creation (*Khalq)* and Order (*Amr)* His?
> Blessed is Allah the Lord of the Worlds."

It is a legitimate inference to draw that the six days' creation first mentioned in the past tense is the bringing into existence of worlds from the realm of non-existence, and the subsequent activity mentioned in the present tense (*Yughshi*) is the maintaining of the wonderful order and law which we find continuously manifested in every realm of Creation. If we could imagine an Architect building not a solid, motionless house, but a constantly going machine, or a thing of pulsating life, and maintaining it in its wonderfully complex working, we can conceive of the two kinds of activity in our imperfect way. I understand *Khalq* to refer to the bringing out of something from non-existence to existence, and *Amr* to refer to organisation or direction, the maintenance of all the wonderful laws of motion in the astronomical world, or the laws of life in the world of life, or spiritual growth in the still higher world which mankind is ever striving to attain. For man, this creation of his manhood, or the breathing of the Spirit which brings him nearer to Allah, is a new creation, distinct from the earlier stages through which he has passed, though not necessarily posterior in time.[9]

This leads us to the conception of the creation of Adam and his relation to his descendants. The story of Adam is nowhere told in the Quran *as a story.* It is referred to in three places in some detail, and elsewhere incidentally, by way of edification. There is no creation of Eve from his rib; there is no snake; there is no recrimination of Adam

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9. See the remarks of Sir Muhammad Iqbal at p. 143 of his "*Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*".

against Eve; when they fell they were not two, but many, and the Fall meant that the harmony among themselves was destroyed, and they left, with enmity against each other in their hearts. It is not even clear that Adam was the first man, though he and Eve are reputed to be our ancestors. In Q. II, 35, Adam is expressly mentioned, and the earlier part of the story is in the dual number, but later on, the story is in the plural number. This is less marked in Q. XX, 115-123. In Q. VII, 11, the story commences in this way:--

"We did create you (plural, not dual) and fashioned you (plural again). (Does the fashioning refer to the second creation?)

Then We said to the Angels, 'Bow down to Adam'.

And they bowed down, except Iblis."

Here it is obvious that the multiplication of mankind is assumed before the fall of Adam and Eve, and they become the representatives of humanity; for one, or two, or all are mentioned interchangeably. In Q. XV, 26-44. the same story is told, not of Adam, but of Man (*Insan*). Collating various passages together, we infer that Adam or Man, repented, and Allah showed him mercy and guidance, and made him his vicegerent (*Khālifa*) on earth. In Q. II, 30, Adam may be considered the Vicegerent, though some commentators refer the office to the whole of mankind, as in Q. VI, 166 where "you" (i.e. Mankind) in the plural, are made the Khalifas on earth, with gradations in rank and dignity.

It would seem, therefore, that there is a corporate Personality for Mankind. There is of courrse no doctrine of original sin. Man was created "in the best of moulds" (*fi ahsan i taqwim*). But when evil enters, he can be made, and has been made, the "lowest of the low" (*asfala safilin*, Q. XCV, 4-5). How does evil enter then? In the allegory of Adam, evil enters through Iblis, or Satan. Iblis was arrogant, and would not bow to Man at his Lord's command. Iblis broke the harmony of Allah's creation. Allah through His creative power could restore that harmony and is constantly restoring it. But Iblis got a reprieve for a time, during which he lays snares for man. But man is forewarned, and if his moral nature is to be perfected, he must have an opportunity of choice between good and evil. A wrong exercise of that choice puts him back. But Allah is always Forgiving and Merciful. The permission granted to Iblis is only for a limited time, which must again have reference to our limited life. For time is nothing to Allah, and practically nothing in eternity.

There can be no question of Adam's sin descending to the children or his loins, for he was himself forgiven. Where the descendants

"from the loins" are mentioned, they are descended from the "children of Adam" (Q. VII, 172), not from Adam himself, thus making him a remote, shadowy, allegorical figure. It would seem, however, that in the corporate personality of Man, an individual Man shares. There is corporate human experience, not only among associations of contemporary men, but through history and through kinship and descent. Heredity, besides its physical aspects, must give rise to moral and spiritual tendencies and predispositions on account of the intimate associations of body and mind. To that extent humanity has a collective record on its shoulders, which it must purge away where it requires purging, and advance and heighten where the development has to be carried further. A special responsibility lies on humanity on account of its office of Deputy to Allah. That responsibility involves man's highest honour and highest opportunity, as well as, in its failure, his lowest degradation. The corruption of the best makes it the worst.

Man has, as it were, undertaken a trust. Allah offered the trust to the heavens and the earth. But they refused to undertake it, fearing to be found wanting. But man undertook it, perhaps rashly and ignorantly (Q. XXXIII, 72). Allah will, however, help him out, and cure and improve man's activities and forgive his failings, if he will only follow Allah's law (Q. XXXIII, 71). The evil, if it is such, is subjective, in the mind of the evil-doer, in his attitude towards Allah's law, or Allah's will or Allah's plan and purpose. It started with Iblis's rebellion. Iblis did not directly question Allah's authority. He was one of the hierarchy of Angels[10] (Q. II, 34). When Allah raised man above the angels and asked them to bow down to him, Iblis, unlike the other angels, felt arrogant and jealous. In other words, translating human terms into the sublime world above humanity, Iblis questioned Allah's plan and purpose. When man took up his shoulders the great responsibility of judgment and discrimination, it involved an opportunity of choice when Iblis tempted him. The permission given to Iblis for a time to tempt him makes in our imperfect human view, Allah responsible for the temptation. Hence the Christian prayer, "Lead us not into temptation". But the temptation is only an incident in man's freedom of choice. Allah knowing man's weakness has promised to give him strength and guidance and help him on the upward path and forgive him when he fails, so long as he puts his will at the disposal of Allah. The tuning of his will to the universal Will, the submission of his purpose to the universal Purpose, is Islam. Allah shows him the way; it is for Man to choose (Q. LXXVI, 3).

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10. But see Q. XVIII, 50, where he is spoken of as a Jinn.

What about the individual man? What are his powers and responsibilities? What is his place in the scheme of things? As an individual he starts with a clean slate, though he shares in the inheritance of corporate man. He can improve that inheritance or dissipate it. And that is where his individual personality comes in. There is no warrant for the supposition that as an individual he had a previous existence, except in so far as all men are created from a single soul (Q. VI, 99). But the building up of his individuality is a personal responsibility which he cannot share and which he cannot throw off to others. If he acts well, it does good to his own soul. If he does evil, the evil is for his own soul. (Q. XVII, 7).

We may possibly "act extravagantly against ourselves" and waste our talents and energies (Q. XXXIX, 53). No one else can carry our burdens or intercede for us. (Q. XXV, 18). Is then our salvation to be by deeds? This is expressly disapproved. Our deeds at best must be wholly inadequate, although Allah never imposes burden on any one, greater than he can bear. If Allah were to punish for our iniquities, there would not be a single creature left (Q. XVI, 61). It cannot be by our deeds that we can win salvation. It can only be by Allah's all embracing mercy or grace. But we must not interpret this to mean salvation by a sort of arbitrary election. There must be faith on our part, an active faith. For faith is of no value unless it results in action. And action must be earnest; there would be a constant effort and striving, an unceasing fight against evil, and an unceasing striving after good. According to the homely Arab proverb, "Trust in Allah but tie your camel". Our trust in Allah is in our attitude towards Him. It is the opposite to arrogance or self-will. It involves the acceptance of His guidance, and confidence in His goodness. But that implies that we strive on our part and use all the means which are placed at our disposal.

All our striving then makes up our individual record. And that record is our personality. Some are forward, and some lag behind. Some in their haste and ignorance pray for evil when they would be praying for good (Q. XVII, 11). Some are patient and endure suffering with confidence in Allah's goodness, while others wrongly attribute what they call evil to Allah Himself. Others, when Allah is good to them attribute the good to their own devices, and stray farther from Allah. In adversity there are those who despair, for they have not realised the all embracing care of Allah. There are those who are so niggardly as to "tie up their hands to their necks" (Q. XVII, 29), and others so extravagant as to stretch it out for pride and show. Both err from the law of virtue, which consists in moderation in all things. And

the duties as between sexes and ages, and to parents and kindred, orphans and the poor, the helpless and the sorrowful, the unfortunate in physical. moral, or spiritual endowments--in fact, to all Allah's creatures--these, faithfully performed, constitute service to Allah, and neglected, mean rank ingratitude to Him. Everything we do or say or think, goes to pile up our record. That record "clings to our neck, like a bird of augury, for good or evil" (Q . XVII, 13), and there is no getting away from it. It is our personality. It grows, rises, or deteriorates, taking us upwards or downwards. It is like the "Karma" of Hindu theology, except in three things. In the first place we do not suffer or gain from an unknown past. Life would be unbearable if we were haunted by the terrors of an unacknowledged Past as well as of a Future. Secondly the balance is weighted in favour of goodness by Allah`s boundless mercy (Q. XXIV, 38). And thirdly, the consequences in the World Beyond cannot be measured in terms of this life, as the planes are entirely different. The momentum of our progress or deterioration also changes with our sense of nearness or distance from Allah.

What happens at death? It is certainly not the end of all things. It may end what Tennyson calls "the petty cobwebs we have spun", but it brings us nearer to realities. In Islamic literature this "our muddy vesture of decay" has even more significance than in Shakespeare. It is frankly meant to be shed, for Death is the one "Certainty" (Al-Yaqin, Q. XV, 99), within the horizon of this life. The vesture will, and was meant to go back to the mud from which it came. It may have made us insensible to the harmony of the spheres, but if we were attuned to the voice of Allah, it was meant to prepare us for the greater life to come. Allah was always nearer to us than our neck artery, carrying our very life-blood (Q. L, 16) but it is when our veil is removed, and our sight is sharpened (Q. L. 22), that we see as it were our own Personality as we never saw it before.

For death corrupts and destroys only a part of ourselves. It is through death that our bare record stands out in our own newly-awakened consciousness (Q. L, 4) to accuse or defend us. Then will be the satisfaction of those who followed their Lord`s injunction: "Repel evil by what is best" (Q. XXIII, 93): for their souls will be with Allah. They will find a safe refuge in their Lord, and the day of temptation and exposure to evil will be over. But there will be others who will see their wasted life in a new light, and want to go back to retrieve their lost opportunities. But they cannot go back. There is the barrier of the *Barzakh* between death and the Resurrection. which they cannot pass (Q. XXIII, 100). The *Barzakh* is a sort of neutral

state, a state of suspended activity, about which we have no data for further speculation. If there is any possibility of communicating with the spirits in that state, it may interest Spiritualists to know that Muslims disapprove of any attempts in that direction. But it is legitimate to pray to Allah for the souls of the dead.

The Resurrection is described in graphic allegory, when the spirits will rise to give an account of themselves. The terms used are such as recall the muster of an army but we are there on a plane of life altogether different from ours, and we can take the terms as only giving us something for our imagination to take hold. The question of time is altogether dwarfed, for we are on the brink of eternity. To the question how many years the resurrected souls lived on the earth, they reply: "A day or a part of a day, but ask those who have the account". "Indeed", says the recording angels, "it was but a short time, had you but known". Life here, as seen in perspective, then seems so little. It is a day of division or classification, the day on which each one will stand to his own record, and see it in perspective. And the man without faith, seeing that perspective, will say: "I wish I were dust". (Q. LXXVIII, 40).

The division will be, not into two classes, the good and the evil, but into three classes (Q. LVI, 7): the Companions of the Right Hand, the Companions of the Left Hand. and those who are brought specially near to Allah. Apparently those who are brought specially near to Allah have arrived at the highest state of development. But the Companions of the Right Hand also reach their heaven. Mystics think they have further stages of spiritual progress to perfection. Both the righteous companies are numerous (Q. LVI, 39-40). But that is not said of the Companions of the Left Hand, the earring ones, who perished in lives of unbounded wickedness (*Hinth al'Azim,* LVI, 46). It is said in many places of the dwellers of heaven that they have achieved the purpose of their life, and will dwell in heaven for ever. About hell, it is said that its inmates will dwell there for certain periods (*ahqaban,* LXXVIII, 23), and some commentators draw the conclusion that it is a purging period, and that even they will ultimately achieve the mercy of Allah when their eyes are opened in the higher world of reality. This is supported by two passages (VI, 129 and XI, 103-108). in which the words used are: "They shall abide therein except as Allah pleases". This eliminates the question of time altogether and suggests future worlds and possibilities of which our present minds and imaginations cannot conceive, and about which it does not in anyway help humanity to speculate. The second of the two passages is remarkable in other ways. It states that the Day of Division is

not delayed except for a period appointed (*li ajalin ma'dudin*): that the division will be between those who are distressed and those who are happy (*shaqi and sa'id*): and that for both the stay will be as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as Allah pleases. This may mean that heaven and hell are subjective states of mind; that the day of division is not necessarily one for the whole universe, but may be different for worlds measured on the subjective plane; and that the limit is during the existence of any given subjective world, or as Allah pleases in his combined attributes of justice and mercy.

At the Resurrection which one will come up as an individual (*fardan*, XIX, 95). Will the individual human Personality persist after that? We cannot say. We are there so remote from anything we can conceive of in this life that speculation becomes merely a matter of words. The Sufis indeed speak of annihilation in Allah (*fana fi'llah*), but they contemplate such a consummation even in this life. It must therefore be a figure of speech, and not to be taken in the sense of the Buddhist *Nirvana*.

So far we have kept to the text. Let us now pass from the close cloisters of meticulous scholarship to the windswept freedom of a spiritual landscape or seascape. Let us realise that the oft-repeated phrase "Lord of the Worlds" implies in the clearest terms a plurality of worlds and their unity through Allah. This plurality is both objective and subjective. Astronomers are finding more and more of the wonders of the countless worlds in space, of magnitudes whose immensity staggers our imagination. Physicists are finding more and more of the wonders of the countless atomic worlds, equally organised, whose minuteness can give us no idea of their pent-up energy, and which we can only conceive of through abstract mathematical formulae. And yet neither the one nor the other are more numerous or more wonderful--or more clearly conceivable--than the subjective worlds which our human personality is making. These subjective worlds are infinitely. more important worlds to us--and more real--than the objective worlds. So much is this the case that we are apt to dismiss the phenomenal worlds as illusions. Yet they may exist side by side and be quite different for different people. A rainbow has a basis of existence in particles of moisture in ponderable air acted on by rays of light. And yet different eyes see different rainbows and in a different places. Nothing can be more solid to the testimony of our senses than a mountain. And yet we see the shape and colour of a peak of the Himalayas quite differently from different points of view or in different lights or atmospheres. What matters to us is the subjective experience and how we react to it.

If so much we grant for ourselves, can we grant less for the Bee or the Ant, or the Beaver, which live in social communities, or the turtle-dove or the weaver-bird, which give us types of conjugal love and comfort, or the humorous penguin or the courageous and dignified lion, or the faithful dog or horse, or the sagacious and reasoning elephant? Each of these, and thousands of other types in the animal world, have their own worlds, into which man intrudes, and for which man has reactions and responsibilities. Each human personality has its own individual world, highly organised, in relation with these external worlds, as well as with human worlds, in various circles and grades. The individual has his family circle, the one out of which he grew (his elders and consanguines) and the one in which his life is expected to continue (his descendants), linked by the mysterious sex-relation, which has its spiritual and mental features, as well as physical and social. And the circles intersect and grow. The man and the woman may have their own affinity circles determined by some minor affinity or taste or occupation or art. And the social circles may enlarge or intersect, giving us communities, fraternities, art or literary schools, professions or trades, town or political organisations, spiritual associations or churches, nations, races, groups, and so on in infinite gradations. Can we not conceive of circles, concentric and eccentric, touching enclosed, or unrelated, narrowing or widening with the horizons which our visions can campass? Embracing them all we have a generalised personality of Mankind,a circle just growing into our consciousness in the political world, but long familiar to us in the moral and spiritual world. And in the world of spirits, why must we assume that the differentiation and enlargement ceases, or that besides our released spirits *(i.e.* released from the life we know) there are not other spirits living their lives on planes of spiritual existence unknown to us?

All these different planes of spiritual existence are worlds in themselves. It is difficult to reason from one to another or to visualise one before passing from another. For this reason it is a futile task to seek to define our future in the Beyond. At best, human language can here speak in symbols. To stretch the symbols in terms of the present is to show disrespect to the symbols as well as distrust in our growth and evolution, when we know from our proximate Past that such growth and evolution have actually taken place. Thus faith is a matter of analogy, a reaching out after a light which we know is there, though our eyes may not have got used to it sufficiently to give names to shapes and colours in a newly-opening world. That faith shows us that there is order and beauty and harmony in the worlds that we per-

ceive. Lacking that faith, we are immature, we are on a lower plane, we have farther to go before we reach the stage of those who are nearest to Allah. With that faith, we can see that the coordinating principle, that which evolves unity and permanence out of innumerable varying and fleeting experiences is the Will and Purpose of Allah. That Will is the standard and measure of all things. Good and evil, as we conceive them, are merely subjective to us. In the Supreme Will there is no conflict, no opposition; there is complete and necessary unity. When we say: "Thou exaltest whom Thou pleasest, and abasest whom Thou pleasest; in Thy hand is (all) goodness; and over all things" (Q. III. 25): we seem to quality one thing with another as we know it. In human life power does not always go with goodness, nor goodness with power. The Will that we know is often arbitrary, with no Purpose behind it, and in such a case we think it opposed to justice or righteousness. But when we realise that in Allah's Will and Purpose all that we can possibly know of good is comprised, and a great deal more, we gladly merge our lesser lights in the one and only true Light, our lesser plans and purposes in the one and only true Plan and Purpose. For that is the Law of the Universe.

We seem to surrender something. But in reality we surrender the negative. In negativing the negative we make a great and real gain. Our subjective evil vanishes, as well as our expectation of evil. The expectation of evil was Fear, and our subjective evil was our inner Distress. The legion of devils that haunt us are the legion of our Fears. The unquenchable torture of hell is the distress which consumes us. In surrendering these, our Personality gets freedom. It can mature and develop. Man can then read his past with understanding, and not with blind fear. The modern psychology of the unconscious tells us that if once the outcrop of the unconscious can be brought into the plane of the conscious and be properly explained, many fears can be cast out, and arrested development put on the normal road of development. That is precisely what man wants to do in the spiritual world. There are dark caverns in his being. To achieve or perfect his true Personality, he has to drag his darker desires, his darker will, into the light. As they were shadows they will vanish in the reality of light. His will then take a delight in Allah's Will. He is intensely, actively happy (if such a word can be used) in a Garden of Perpetual Delight. And yet it is no stagnation. For he has turned himself to the active, creative Will of Allah. That is the root-meaning of Islam as I understand it.[11]

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11. *Islamic Culture,* Vol. 5, No. 4, Oct 1931, pp. 544-58.

CHAPTER 3

THE NOBLE QUR-ĀN

- Translations of the Qur'ān
- Commentaries of The Qur-ān
- Yusuf Ali's Translation of The Qur-ān
- Mr. Yusuf Ali's Translation of The Qur-ān

Translations of The Qur-ān

Almost all languages spoken by Muslims have translations of the Qur-ān in them. Usually the Text is printed with the Translation. If the language is undeveloped, many of the Arabic words of the Qur-ān are taken over bodily into it for want of corresponding words in the language Even in cultivated languages like Persian or Turkish, the introduction of religious terms from Arabic gave a body of words which were common to the whole Islamic world, and thus cemented that unity of the Muslim Brotherhood which is typified by the Qibla. Where the notion itself is new to the speakers of polished languages, they are glad to borrow the Arabic word expressing that notion and all the associations connected with it. Such a word is *Qibla.* Where the language is undeveloped, the translation is nothing more than a rough explanation of the Arabic Text. The translation has neither grammatical finish nor a form which can stand independently by itself. That is what happened with the earlier Urdu translations. They were really rough explanations. The ambition of every learned Muslim is to read the Qur-an in Arabic. The ambition of every Muslim is to read the *sounds* of the Arabic Text. I wish that his or her ambition were also to *understand* the Qur-an, either in Arabic or in the mother tongue or some well-developed tongue which he or she understands. Hence the need for good and accurate translations.

The translations into non-European languages known to me are: Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Tamil (used by Moplas), Pashto (for Afghans), Bengali, Malay, some of the languages of the Eastern Archipelago, and some of the African languages. I believe there is also a Chinese (dialectical) translation.

The earliest Urdu translation was by Shah ʿAbdul Qādir of Delhi (d. 1826). He has already been mentioned among the Indian Commentators. Since then numerous Urdu translations have followed, some

of which have been left incomplete. Among the complete ones, much used at the present day, may be mentioned those of Shah Rafi'-ud-dīn of Delhi, Shāh Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi, and Maulvi Nazīr Ahmad (d. 1912). Personally I prefer the last. The projected Urdu translation by Hakīm Ahmad Shuja' has not yet been published.

Before the development of the modern European vernaculars, the cultivated language of Europe was Latin. A Latin translation was made for the Monastery of Clugny about 1143 (in the sixth century of the Hijra) but not published till 1543. The place of publication was Basle and the publisher Bibliander. This was translated into Italian, German, and Dutch. Schweigger's German translation was published at Nurenberg (Bavaria) in 1616. A French translation by Du Ryer was published at Paris in 1647, and a Russian one at St. Petersburg in 1776. Savary's French translation appeared in 1783, and Kasimirski's French translation (which has passed through several editions) first appeared in 1840, the French interest in Islam having been stimulated by French conquests in Algeria and North Africa. The Germans have followed up Schweigger with Boysen's, translation in 1773, Wahl's in 1828, and Ullmann's (first edition in 1840). I believe the Aḥmadīya Association of Lahore have in hand a fresh translation into German and Dutch.

Meanwhile Maracci had produced in 1689 a Latin version of the Qur-an with the Arabic Text and quotations from various Arabic Commentaries, carefully selected and garbled, so as to give the worst possible impression of Islam to Europe. Maracci was a learned man, and there is no pretence about the object he had in view, *viz.*, to discredit Islam by an elaborate show of quotations from Muslim authorities themselves. Maracci was himself a Confessor to Pope Innocent XI; his work is dedicated to the holy Roman Emperor Leopold I; and he introduces it by an introductory volume containing what he calls a "Refutation of the Qur-an."

The first English translation by A. Ross was but a translation of the first French translation of Du Ryer of 1647, and was published a few years after Du Ryer's. George Sale's translation (1734) was based on Maracci's Latin version, and even his notes and his Preliminary Discourse are based mainly on Maracci. Considering that Maracci's object was to discredit Islam in the eyes of Europe, it is remarkable that Sale's translation should be looked upon as a standard translation in the English-speaking world, and should pass through edition after edition, being even included in the series called the Chandos Classics and receiving the benediction of Sir E. Denison Ross. The Rev. J. M. Rodwell arranged the Sūras in a rough chronological

order. His translation was first published in 1861. Though he tries to render the idiom fairly, his notes show the mind of a Christian clergyman, who was more concerned to "show up" the Book than to appreciate or expound its beauties. Prof. E.H. Palmer's translation (first published in 1876) suffers from the idea that the Qur-ān ought to be translated into colloquial language. He failed to realise the beauty and grandeur of style in the original Arabic. To him that style was "rude and rugged"; we may more justifiably call his translation careless and slipshod.

The amount of mischief done by these versions of non-Muslim and anti-Muslim writers has led Muslim writers to venture into the field of English translation. The first Muslim to undertake an English translation was Dr. Muḥammad 'Abdul Hakim Khan, of Patiala, 1905. Mirza Hairat of Delhi also published a translation, (Delhi 1919): the Commentary which he intended to publish in a separate volume of Introduction was, as far as I know, never published. My dear friend, the late Nawwāb 'Imād-ul-Mulk Saiyid Husain Bilgrami of Hyderabad, Deccan, translated a portion, but he did not live to complete his work. The Aḥmadīya Sect has also been active in the field. Its Qādiyan Anjuman published a version of the first Sīpāra in 1915. Apparently no more was published. Its Lahore Anjuman has published Maulvi Muḥammad 'Alī's translation (first edition in 1917), which has passed through more than one edition. It is a scholarly work, and is equipped with adequate explanatory matter in the notes and the Preface, and a fairly full Index. But the English of the Text is decidedly weak, and is not likely to appeal to those who know no Arabic. There are two other Muslim translations of great merit. But they have been published without the Arabic Text. Ḥāfiz Ghulām Sarwar's translation (published in 1930 or 1929 deserves to be better known than it is. He has provided fairly full summaries of the Sūras, section by section but he has practically no notes to his Text. I think such notes are necessary for a full understanding of the Text. In many cases the Arabic words and phrases are so pregnant of meaning that a Translator would be in despair unless he were allowed to explain all that he understands by them. Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall's translation was published in 1930. He is an English Muslim, a literary man of standing, and an Arabic scholar. But he has added very few notes to elucidate the Text. His rendering is "almost literal": it can hardly be expected that it can give an adequate idea of a Book which (in his own words) can be described as "that inimitable symphony the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy." Perhaps the attempt to catch something of that symphony in another language is impossible. Greatly daring, I have made that attempt. We do not blame an artist

who tries to catch in his picture something of the glorious light of a spring landscape.

The English language being widely spread over the world, many people interested in Islam will get their ideas of the Qur-ān from English translations. It is good that qualified Muslims should make the attempt to present the picture which their own mental and spiritual vision presents to themselves. The Indian educational system has enthroned English as the common language of culture for a population of 350 millions. The most educated of its 80 millions of Muslims--unless they know Arabic--look to English as the most cultivated medium of expression. Their non-Muslim fellow countrymen judge--usually misjudge--their religion by the material which is available to them in English. We should improve and increase this material as much as we can and from as many points of view as we can. Some Muslim nations--like the Turks--have now determined to provide their religious literature (including the Holy Book) in their own national language. In order to keep them in touch with the thought and points of view of their brethren in faith, the English language would under present conditions be the most convenient medium. These are the considerations which have moved me to undertake the stupendous task of providing an English Interpretation of the Qur-ān.I pray for strength and light, so that I may be enabled to succeed in this service to Islam.

Useful works of Reference

The wide compass of the Qur-ān makes it necessary to consult works of reference on almost every conceivable subject, to enable us to elucidate the various points that arise. To deal adequately with such a Book, the widest reading is necessary as well as the most varied experience in life. But the interests of readers require that a handy Commentary should not roam too far afield. Bearing this in view the three essential kinds of books would be: (a) previous Commentaries: (b) previous Translations: (c) Dictionaries and General Works of Reference, easily accessible. I have set out (a) and (b) in the previous two Notes. I note a few under (c):-

1. Imām Abul-Qāsim Ḥusain Rāgib's *Mufradāt:* a concise Arabic dictionary of words and phrases in the Qur-ān. Already mentioned under Commentaries.
2. The well-known Arabic Dictionary, *Qāmūs.*
3. The well-known Arabic Dictionary, *Lisān-ul-'Arab.*
4. The concise Arabic-Persian Dictionary, *Ṣurāh.*

5. J. Penrice's *Dictionary & Glossary of the Koran.*

6. E. W. Lane: *English-Arabic Lexion.*

7. Imām Jalāl-ud-dīn Suyūṭi's *Itqān fi'ulūm-il-Quran:* a veritable encyclopaedia of Quranic sciences.

8. Noldeke und Schwally: *Geschichte des Qorans.* A German Essay on the Chronology of the Qur-ān. Its criticisms and conclusions are from a non-Muslim point of view and to us not always acceptable, though it is practically the last word of European scholarship on the subject.

9. *Encyclopaedia of Islam.* Nearly completed. Very unequal in its various parts.

10. *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* 14th edition. A great advance on previous editions, as regards the attention it devotes to Arabic learning.

11. Hughes's *Dictionary of Islam.* Out of date, but still useful.

12. Ibn Hisām: *Sīrat-ur-Rasūl.* A fairly detailed Life of the Apostle.

13. Maulvi Shibli Nu'māni (d. 1914 = 1334 H.: *Sīrat-un-Nabī* (an Urdu Life of the Apostle).

14. *Fath-ur-Rahmān* an Arabic Concordance to the Qur-ān, by Faidh-ullāh Bik Hasanī, printed in Cairo in 1346 H. Full and well arranged, and easy to use.[1]

COMMENTARIES ON THE QUR-ĀN

Quranic literature is so voluminous that no single man can compass a perusal of the whole. Besides the extant works there were innumerable works written for special groups of people or from special points of view or for special purposes,which have perished. And more works are being added every day. The activity in this line has never been greater than it is now.

There is no Book in the world in whose service so much talent, so much labour, so much time and money have been expended as has been the case with the Qur-ān. A mere glance at Imām Suyūṭi's (d. 911 H.) *Itqān* or Ḥāji Khalīfa's (d. 1059 H.) *Kashf-uẓ-ẓunun* will show the encyclopaedic volume of the Quranic sciences in their day.

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1. The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, New York, McGreger and Werner, 1946.

Since then the volume has continued to go on increasing, although it must be admitted that the quality of the later literature on the subject leaves much to be desired. With the retrogression of the Islamic nations in original work in science, art, and philosophy, and the concomitant limitation in their outlook and experience in various phases of intellectual and spiritual life, has come a certain limitation in the free spirit of research and enquiry. The new Renaissance of Islam which is just beginning will, it is hoped, sweep away cobwebs and let in the full light of reason and understanding.

The need for an explanation of the verses of the Qur-ān arose quite early. Even before the whole of the Qur-an was revealed, people used to ask the Apostle all sorts of questions as to the meaning of certain words in the verses revealed, or of their bearing on problems as they arose, or details of certain historical or spiritual matters on which they sought more light. The Apostle's answers were carefully stored in the memory of the Companions (*aṣ-ḥāb*) and were afterwards written down. In the next generation, the *Tābi'īn,* were those who had not personally conversed with the Apostle; like the Companions, but had conversed with the Companions and learned from them. Subsequent generations always went back to establish a chain of evidence through the *Tabi'in* and the Companions. Through them grew up the science of Ḥadīth or Traditions. As this literature grew,it became necessary to establish strict rules by which the evidence could be examined and tested, so as to separate that which was considered to be established from that which was doubtful or weak, and that which was to be rejected as unproved. In the evolution of the science of *Ḥadīth*, it became clear that even among the Companions certain persons had better memories than others, or better opportunities of becoming really acquainted with the Apostle's true meaning, or in other ways, a better title to be called true expositors, and the number of such persons came to be limited to ten only. Similarly the claims of the *Tābi'īn* came to be examined and graded, and so on. Thus arose a new science, in which the names and positions of persons in *Ḥadīth* literature were examined biographically and in other ways.

The *Ḥadīth* literature dealt with all sorts of matters, including Theology, Ethics, and Exegesis (explanation of the Qur-ān). Exegesis soon became an independent science by itself and was called *Tafsīr*, and the sphere of *Tafsīr* itself began to widen as the experience and knowledge of the Arabs and Arabic writers began to increase. Besides the examination of correct traditions from various kinds and grades of authorities, it began to examine the meaning of words philosophically, collecting a vast amount of learning as to root meanings, the usage of

the Quraish tribe of Arabs, to which the Apostle belonged, the usage and meaning of words in the purest original Arabic before it became mixed up with foreign idioms and usages by the use of the Arabic language by non-Arabs in Islam, and by the influence of the enormous geographical expansion of the Arab race in the first few centuries of Islam. The increasing knowledge of history and of Jewish and Christian legends enabled the Commentators to illustrate the Text of the Holy Book with reference to these. Sometimes the amount of Jewish stuff (some of it absurd), which found its way into the Commentaries, was out of all proportion to its importance and relevance, and gave rise to the legend, which has been exploited by polemical Christian and Jewish writers, that Islam was built up on an imperfect knowledge of Christianity and Judaism, or that it accepts as true the illustrative legends from the Talmud or the Midrash or various fantastic schools of Christianity. Then came philosophy and the mystic doctrine of the *Ṣūfī* schools. The development of the science of *kalām* (built on formal logic), and its further offshoot the *'Ilm-ul-'Aqāid* (The philosophical exposition of the grounds of our belief) introduced further elements on the intellectual side, while *Tāawīl* (esoteric exposition of the hidden or inner meaning) introduced elements on the spiritual side, based on a sort of transcendental intuition of the expositor. The Sūfī mystics at least adhered to the rules of their own Orders, which were very strict. But many of the non-Ṣūfī writers on *Tāawīl* indulged in an amount of license in interpretation which has rightly called forth a protest on the part of the more sober 'Ulamā.

For my part I agree with this protest. While freely reserving the right of individual judgment on the part of every earnest writer, I think the art of interpretation must stick as closely as possible to the text which it seeks to interpret. Every serious writer and thinker has a right to use all the knowledge and experience he possesses in the service of the Qur-ān. But he must not mix up his own theories and conclusions, however reasonable, with the interpretation of the Text itself, which is usually perfectly perspicuous, as it claims it to be. Our difficulties in interpretation often arise for various causes, of which I will mention just a few:

(1) Arabic words in the Text have acquired other meanings than those which were understood by the Apostle and his Companions. All living languages undergo such transformations. The early Commentators and philologists went into these matters with a very comprehensive grasp, and we must accept their conclusions. Where they are not unanimous, we must use our judgment and historic sense in adopting

the interpretation of that authority which appeals to us most. We must not devise new verbal meanings.

(2) Even since the early Commentators wrote, the Arabic language has further developed, and later Commentators often abandon the interpretations of earlier Commentators without sufficient reason. In exercising our selective judgment in such cases it would be a good rule to prefer the earlier to the later interpretation, though, where a later writer has reviewed the earlier interpretations and given good reasons for his own view, he has an advantage which we must freely concede to him.

(3) Classical Arabic has a vocabulary in which the meaning of each root-word is so comprehensive that it is difficult to interpret it in a modern analytical language word for word, or by the use of the same word in all places where the original word occurs in the Text. A striking example is furnished by the word *Ṣabr*, about which see my notes on ii.. 45 and ii. 153. Even though one particular shade of meaning may be predominant in any particular passage, the others are latent. So in a ray of light, when a prism analyses it, we may look at a portion of the field where a particular colour predominates, but other colours do not escape our glance. An Arabic word is often a full ray of light; when a translator looks at it through the prism of a modern analytical language, he misses a great deal of its meaning by confining his attention to one particular colour. European translators have often failed in this respect and sometimes even been landed in absurdities because these delicate rich tones are not studied in their languages or literatures, and they do not look for them or appreciate them in the best examples of Oriental style.[3] If they despise them or think them fantastic, they had best leave the interpretation of Oriental literatures alone. This is all the more so in religious or spiritual literature. No human language can possibly be adequate for the expression of the highest spiritual thought. Such thought must be expressed symbolically in terse and comprehensive words, out of which people will perceive just as much light and colour as their spiritual eyes are capable of perceiving. It is possible that their prism will only show them a dark blue while a whole glorious symphony of colours is hidden from their eyes. And so it comes about that through the prism of a clever English translation, poor 'Umar (Omar) Khayyām emerges as a sensualist and cynic who sees no higher purpose in life than drinking wine, dallying with women, and holding up his hands in despair at "this sorry scheme of things entire." And so the parables of stern morality in the Qur-ān, its mystic earnestness, and its pictures of future

beatitude are distorted into idle fables, incoherent effusions and a sensual paradise!

(4) An opposite error sometimes arises because in certain matters the rich vocabulary of the Qur-ān distinguishes between things and ideas of a certain kind by special words, for which there is only a general word in English. Instances are: *Raḥmān and Raḥīm* (Most Merciful); see I. 1. n.; *afā, ṣafaḥa, gafara* (to forgive): see ii 109 n.; and the various words for Creation; see ii. 117 n. The fact is that it gives us a very limited idea of Allah's Mercy, when we only use the English word "mercy": the Quranic idea implies not only pity and forgiveness but the Grace which protects us and keeps us from sin, and indeed guides us to the light of His "Countenance." So the "forgiveness" of Allah is a thing totally different in quality from the forgiveness which a man can give to his brother man: the equation implied in "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us" is a misleading fallacy. So, again, "Creation" is not just a simple process done by Allah at some remote time and finished with: the Quranic idea implies various processes and the continuous presence and activity of Allah in His Creation.

(5) Allah's purpose is eternal, and His plan is perfect, but man's intelligence is limited at its very best. In the same individual it grows and declines according to the strength of his powers and the width of his experience. If we take mankind collectively the variations are even greater from age to age and from people to people. There is thus no finality in human interpretation. And in the thing interpreted--Allah's Creation--there is constant flux and change. So that the impact of the one on the other must yield diverse results. The view of Kunchinjunga must vary infinitely according to the position of the observer, even if Kunchinjunga remained the same. But if Kunchinjunga itself varies, there is a double cause of variation in the view. So I believe in progressive interpretation, in the need for understanding and explaining spiritual matters from different angles. The difficulties that confront me may not be the same as those that confront you. The problems which our age has to meet may not be the same as the problems which puzzled earnest minds of the fourth or sixth or later centuries of the Hijra. Therefore it is no merit to hug the solutions offered in the fourth or sixth centuries when our souls cry out in hunger for solace in the fourteenth century of the Hijra.

The distinction drawn by Commentators between matters of report *(manqulāt)* and matters of judgment (*ma'qūlāt*) is a sound one, and I heartily accept it. But I would extend the scope of the *ma'qūlāt* far beyond questions of idiom and meaning. In the former the issues

are: what actually happened, or what was actually said, or how were certain things done? Here the closer we go back to contemporary authority, the better. In the latter, the issues are: what is the bearing of this truth on our lives, or what illustration helps us best to grasp this, or what is the wisdom we can extract from this? In such matters, the closer we come to our own circumstances and experiences, the better. It is not only our right but our duty to seek honestly our own solutions, and while we respect authority, we must not neglect or despise the gifts which Allah has accumulated for us through the ages.

The principles on which I have worked may be briefly stated. In matters of philology and language I accept the best authority among those who were competent to deal with these questions: the older the better. In matters of narration, contemporary authorities are best, subject to such corrections as have to be applied for their points of view. As to the particular occasions on which particular verses were revealed, the information is interesting and valuable from a historical point of view, and our older writers have collected ample material for it. But to lay too much stress on it to-day puts the picture out of all perspective. The Qur-ān was not revealed for a particular occasion only, but for all time. The particular occasion is now past. Our chief interest now is to see how it can guide us in our present lives. Its meaning is so manifold, and when tested, it is so true, that we should be wise to concentrate on the matters that immediately help us. So in nature plants seek out of the soil just that food which gives them nourishment. There is plenty of other food left in the soil, which other plants take, which can digest it. In matters of remote history or folk lore, we must take the results of the latest researches. In interpreting Jewish or Christian legends or beliefs we must go to Jewish or Christian sources, but by way of illustration only, not in the direction of incorporating such beliefs or systems. Though they were true in their original purity, we are not sure of the form which they subsequently took, and in any case the fuller light of the sun obscures the lesser light of the stars.

In the application of spiritual truths to our own times and our own lives, we must use every kind of knowledge, science, and experience which we possess, but we must not obtrude irrelevant matter into our discussions. Let us take simple examples. When we speak of the rising of sun in the east, we do not go on to reconcile the expression with the Copernican system of astronomy. What we *mean* is as true under the Copernican system as it was under the Ptolemaeic system. When we speak of the endless plains of India, we are not put on our defence because the earth is round. Nor will such poetic expressions

as the seven firmaments raise questions as to the nature of space in modern astronomy. Man's intellect is given to him to investigate the nature of the physical world around him. He forms different conceptions of it at different times. Spiritual truths are quiet independent of the question which of these conceptions are true. They deal with matters which are beyond the ken of physical science. In explaining or illustrating them we shall use such language as is current among the people to whom we speak.

Let me set out the names of the most important *Tafsīrs*, especially those to which I have from time to time referred. They are not, however, in any sense my authorities. They belong to widely different schools of thought, and some of them express extreme views with which I do not agree. I only adopt the general sense of accepted Commentaries.

(1) The monumental work of Abū Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Jarīr *Tabarī*, d. 310 H. A perfect mind of historical information, as the author was both a historian and a Traditionist. Copies are not easily accessible.

(2) The *Mufradāt*, a dictionary of difficult words and phrases in the Qur-ān, by Abul-Qāsim Ḥusain Rāgib, of Ispahān, d. 503 H. Also explains allusions.

(3) The *Kashāf*, by Abul-Qāsim Maḥmūd *Zamakhsharī*, of Khswārism, d. 538 H. Very full in the explanation of words and idioms; takes a decidedly rational and ethical view of doctrine. Numerous Commentaries have been written on this Commentary.

(4) *Tafsīr Kabīr*, by Fakhūr-ud-Din Muḥammad *Rāzī*, d. 606 H. Very comprehensive. Strong in interpretations from a Sufi or spiritual point of view.

(5) *Anwār-ut-Tanzīl*, by Qādhi Nasīr-ud-dīn Abū Ṣa'īd *Baidhāwī*, d. 685 H. Has drawn largely from the *Mufradāt*, the *Kashshāf*, and the *Tafsīr Kabīr*;but incorporates a good deal of original matter. A very popular Commentary,on which again numerous Commentaries have been written.

(6) The Tafsīr of Abul - Fidā Ismā'il *Ibn Kathīr*, d. 774 H. Voluminous, but has great authority among the 'Ulamā.

(7) *Itqān fī 'ulūm il-Qur-ān by Jalāl-ud-dīn Suyūṭī*, d. 911 H. A comprehensive review of the sciences of the Qur-an being an introduction to his *Maja'-ul-Bahrain.*

(8) *Tafsīr Jalālain.*--Written by the two Jalāl-ud-dīns, one of whom was the author of the *Itqān*, mentioned above, d. 911 H. A

concise and meritorious Commentary, on which again a number of Commentaries have been written.

(9) Our country has produced some notable scholars in the realm of *Tafsīr*. They wrote in Arabic and Persian, and the latter ones have written in Urdu.

The earliest I can trace is Shaikh ʿAlī Ibn Aḥmad Mahāimī (of Mahim near Bombay), d. 835 H = 1432 A.D., author of the *Tafsīr Raḥmānī*. Almost contemporary with him was ʿAllāma Shams-ud-dīn, of Daulatābād and Delhi, who lived during the brilliant reign of Ibrāhim Sharqī of Jaunpur (1400-1440 A.D.). He wrote in Persian. During the nineteenth century, the famous Muhaddith of Delhi, Shāh Walī-ullāh, and his two sons Shāh ʿAbdul ʿAzīz (d. 1824) and Shāh ʿAbdul Qādir (d. 1826) wrote both translations and Commentaries. Shāh ʿAbdul ʿAzīz wrote in Persian and Shah ʿAbdul Qādir in Urdu. The Urdu Commentary of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān of ʿAligarh (d. 1898) has not met the approval of the ʿUlamā. On the other hand the more recent Urdu Commentary of Maulvi ʿAbdul Haqq, the *Tafsir Haqqānī*, has passed through several editions, is quite modern in tone and manageable in bulk, and is widely circulated in India. I have derived much instruction from it and have used it constantly. The Commentary of Maulvi Abul Kalām Āzād has been planned on a spacious scale and has not yet been finished.

(10) The Modernist school in Egypt got a wise lead from the late Shaikh Muḥammad ʿAbduh (d. 1323 H. = 1905 A.D.), whose unfinished Commentary is being completed by Muḥammad Rashīd Ridhā, the talented editor of the *Manār* newspaper. The work of Shaikh Tantāwi, Jauharī, a pupil of ʿAbduh, finds the "jewels" of the Qur-ān and of the sciences mutually illuminative, and suggests many new lines of thought. ʿAllāma Farīd Wajdī is also spoken of as a good modern Commentator: I have not yet been able to get a copy of his work.

(11) It has been said that the Qur-ān is its own best Commentary. As we proceed with the study of the Book, we find how true this is. A careful comparison and collation of passages from the Qur-ān removes many difficulties. Use a good Concordance, such as the one I have named among the Works of Reference, and you will find that one passage throws light on another.[2]

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2 The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. New York, McGreger and Werner, 1946.

YUSUF ALI'S TRANSLATION OF THE QUR'AN[3]

This is perhaps the most considerable work on the Qur'ān that has appeared from India in recent years. It contains the Arabic text and a new English translation, arranged in parallel columns, a series of notes arranged as commentary on the lower half of the page, introductions to the individual Sūras, a kind of poetical summary preceding each of the sections into which the text is divided, excurses at the end of several of the Sūras, a general introduction, a sort of poetical introduction, an elaborate table of contents to each volume, and a brief subject Index at the end of the work.

The work first appeared in parts, the Preface to the first of which is dated April 1934: and when the whole thirty parts were completed, was issued in both a two-volume and a three-volume edition. The pagination runs continuously, the only difference in the editions being in the division of the Table of Contents . This two-volume edition before us is called the Third Edition, contains an extra Preface to the collected edition, dated 1938, and for it the earlier sections have been reprinted with corrections in a slightly revised form.

The translator is an Indian Muslim, apparently from the North, English educated, who has spent a great deal of his active life living in the West. His reading has been largely in English, and he writes English with much greater ease and distinction than those others of his fellow-countrymen who have preceded him in this work of translation. He is not a scholar, but has been apparently a man of more active life, whose reading has been along the lines of general culture rather than the exact research of those devoted to the pursuit of letters. This broad sympathy with the problems of life in the experience of men is the characteristic note of his work. In his Postscript, which he calls L'Envoi, he tells us that his manuscript was completed on his sixty-fifth birthday, and if we look on it as the mature reflections on the significance of the Qur'ān for the life of Islam, offered by a pious Muslim, who has been in the best sense a man of the world, who has felt in his own experience these problems of life, and has, out of a rich acquaintance with men and things, found some values which he can

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3. "The Holy Qur'an: Arabic Text with an English Translation and Commentary." By 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Ali. Two volume Edition, 1937 - 1938. Published by Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, Aibak Road, Lahore, India. 8vo. pp. xv, xx, xxv, 1949.

offer to his fellow-believers, we shall best understand what this work has to offer. In the best sense, it is a work of piety. The author is evidently a sincerely religious man, who has endeavoured to apply his religion to the problems of life as he has found them, and tells us where he has found help and inspiration for better and fuller living. The whole spirit of his work is admirable, and makes it a real document of religious worth. As it is a work laid before scholarship it will necessarily have to submit to critical examination, but the critic is the first to pay homage to the evident sincerity of the author.

The Arabic text was newly written for this work by Pīr 'Abdul Ḥamīd, in a clear and pleasing calligraphy, and is cut up to fit the lines of English translation which face it in the left-hand column. That the correspondence is not always perfect is perhaps explainable by the difficulties of the printer in setting it up. As was to have been expected, the text is the ordinary Kūfan text of the Ḥafṣ type, but the orthography has been to some extent modernized. *Idghāms* are marked, and the pausal signs used are the rather elaborate system that one commonly finds used in Indian lithographs, and which are apparently more acceptable there than the older and simpler Kūfan system. The Masoretic signs are also given in Indian style. *Ajzā', rūkū', wu qūf, mu'ānaqāt, manāzil, sajadāt and sakatāt* are marked in the margin, and the *ajza;* are also marked in the English text, while the introductory Arabic words of each *juz'* and *manzil* are written in larger letters. The Kūfan verse numbering is used, following the Egyptian standard text, and besides appearing in the text the verse numbers are given in English along with the number of the Sūra at the head of each page, thus making reference a very simple matter. These Masoretic details, the Preface tells us, have had the supervision of the Indian Savant Ẓafar 'Iqbāl, the same who has had charge of the preparation of the text being published by the Lahore Anjuman.

The translation is paragraphed according to the *rukū'*, (which are labelled "Sections") and subdivisions thereof, which latter are made according to the fancy of the translator himself, and marked with flowered capitals. It is assumed that the *rukū'* were meant to represent sense divisions in the text, and the translator uses his own judgment as to how they should be subdivided. This naturally decides to some extent how the verses are to be interpreted. We know, of course, that the *rukū'* are quite a late addition to the text, added to it long after the text had been in common usage read as a whole, with no consciousness of the varied origin in circumstance and time of the pieces that had gone into its composition. Dr. Bell's recent translation has been made after a scientific attempt to separate out the component elements

and understand them in their original situations, in so far as these can now be ascertained. A translation which regards the verses as connected in the grouping of the later *rukū'* arrangement, is thus condemned at the outset to a certain artificiality of interpretation. However, as an orthodox Muslim, the translator is probably bound to accept this position, which is sanctioned by Muslim orthodoxy, and probably looked on as of divine arrangement.

The translation is arranged in very short lines, so that its external appearance is very like that of verse. It is not, however, rhythmical, and the division into lines is not suggested by anything in the Arabic text, but is the translator's own idea, which has the effect of making a pleasing appearance on the page, but results in a strangely jerky prose which quite fails to do justice to the original. A simple example will suffice. Sūra XXXII : 5/4 reads-- "He arranges matters from the Heaven to the earth: then shall they go up to Him on a day whose length shall be a thousand years such as ye reckon,"-- but here it reads:

"He rules (all) affairs
From the heavens
To the earth: in the end
Will they (all) go up
To Him in a (single) Day,
The space whereof will be
(As) a thousand years
Of your reckoning."

It is true that the Arabic is often in a rugged, broken style--the prophetic style--where one can see the preacher, under the urgency of proclaiming a message for which his flow of language is inadequate, falling into a broken, spasmodic diction, which has a passionate eloquence and vividness all its own. But that is quite a different thing from this method of breaking up what are often smooth, well-knit, sonorous sentences, into broken lines of jerky prose, often overburdened with entirely unnecessary capitals. Why he does this the translator gives no hint, and one can only suspect that his giving it a form that looks like verse form, is to suggest the rhythmical character of the original text, which, of course, is often quite a false suggestion.

The translation and commentary must be taken together. Following the custom of the Ahmadiyya version, the commentary is confined to a series of notes on points in the text, which are numbered consecutively through the whole work. There is a certain amount of

cross-referencing among these notes, which to that limited extent links them up but like John Wesley's *Notes on the New Testament*, leaves them just notes on points which the translator feels are interesting or in need of comment, not a systematic exegesis of the text, and of course it suffers from all the limitations of such isolated treatment. For this reason many shrewd and interesting observations of the translator are left, as it were, in the air, when one feels that they might have proved fruitful if systematically carried through. Perhaps the greatest present need in Qur`anic exegesis is a historical treatment of the many points of theological interest which its teachings raise, and this could only be given by a systematic commentary, which dealth with passages as units in their historical settings, and considered them in connection with the teaching of other passages also in their historical setting. Only thus can we hope to trace the development of the Prophet's thought, and see the Qur'ān as the living document it must have been to those to whom it was first proclaimed.

Both translation and commentary are devotional and practical. that is, are homiletic rather than critical and scientific. The translator has not asked himself what these words would have meant to those to whom they were addressed, but what they can mean now to the believer who looks to the Qur`ān for help to live his religious life. His approach is thus all the way through didactic in this homiletic sense. He is interested in edifying his co-religionists, drawing moral lessons, suggesting topics for religious meditation, and strengthening their faith in the superior excellence of Islam. His interests are not in critical exegesis. A simple example will illustrate this. The story of Goliath, for example, is mentioned only once in the Qur'ān (II : 249/250--251/252), a passage which bristles with critical and exegetical difficulties. None of these are taken up, but the three notes on v. 251/252 read:

> "286. Note how the whole story is compressed into a few words as regards narration, but its spiritual lessons are dwelt upon from many points of view. The Old Testament is mainly interested in the narrative, which is full of detail, but says little about the universal truths of which every true story is a parable--the Qur'ān assumes the story, but tells the parable.
>
> "David was a raw youth, with no arms or armour. He was not known--even in the Israelite camp, and the giant Goliath mocked him. Even David's own elder brother chid him for deserting his sheep, for he was a poor shepherd lad to outward appearance, but his faith had made him more than a match for the Philistine hosts. When Saul offered his own armour and arms to

David, the young hero declined, as he had not tried them, while his shepherd's sling and staff were his well tried implements. He picked up five smooth pebbles on the spot from the steam, and used his sling to such effect that he knocked down Goliath. He then used Goliath's own sword to slay him. There was consternation in the Philistine army; they broke and fled, and were pursued and cut to pieces.

"Apart from the main lesson that if we would preserve our national existence and our faith it is our duty to fight with courage and firmness, there are other lessons in David's story; (1) numbers do not count, but faith, determination, and the blessing of God: (2) size and strength are of no avail against truth, courage and careful planning: (3) the hero tries his own weapons, and those that are available at him to the time and place, even though people may laugh at him (4) if Allah is with us, the enemy's weapon may become an instrument of his own destruction; (5) personality conquers all dangers, and puts heart into our wavering friends; (6) pure faith brings Allah's reward, which may take many forms; in David's case it was Power, Wisdom, and other gifts; see next note.

"287. David was not only a shepherd, a warrior, a king, a wise man, and a prophet, but was also endowed with the gifts of poetry and music. His Psalms (*zabūr*) are still extant.

"288. Allah's plan is universal. He loves and protects *all* His creatures and His bounties are for all worlds (i. 2n). To protect one He may have to check another, but we must never lose faith that his love is for all in boundless measure."

This is a characteristic sample of the commentary, both in its use of the Bible to fill out the Qur'ānic story, and its homiletic method of treatment, and well illustrates what the real value of the work is. The author's co-religionists will find in it an abundance of helpful suggestion as to how the Qur'ānic stories and pronouncements can be made to yield messages of hope, encouragement, comfort, instruction, guidance and solace in the difficult task of living a religious life in a world which for most folk is not an easy world. His counselling is wise and on a high ethical plane--much higher, some will often suspect, than that of the text on which he is commenting. A man of deep religious feeling himself, he understands the difficulties and problems of the religious life, and having discovered how the Qur'ān can be made to feed his own devotional life, and help him in his own efforts to live religiously, in a spiritual sense and not merely in the performance of

ritual acts, he has set forth, as a help to his fellow believers, what he himself has found, and has done it admirably.

To the non-Muslim student of Islam the work is equally interesting and important as a document of the modern Muslim religious life, indicating where the modern Muslim finds sources of spiritual help in his sacred book. Too often we find the old-style Muslim using the Qur'ān and its recitation as nothing more than a mechanical device to store up merit, reading or reciting its verses and chapters with an eye to the merits which the Traditions tell him will accrue to the pious Muslim who recites such and such a chapter, or the more distinguished merits which will follow the completing of a reading through of the volume within such and such a space of time. It is true that people do find satisfaction, even a spiritual satisfaction, in this mechanical repetition of a sacred text without any reference to its meaning or message. That is a phenomenon which meets us in many religions, a species of bibliolatry, where the sacred text as text has in itself virtue and confers blessing irrespective of whether the reader understands what he reads or not. To the educated worshipper, however, this type of Scripture reading cannot long be satisfactory. He must seek in the text what message it has for him, what nourishment for his soul, what guidance for his daily life. This is what the translator attempts to do in these volumes as he tells us in his Preface (1934):

> "It is the duty of every Muslim, man, woman, or child, to read the Qur'ān and understand it according to his own capacity. If any one of us attains to some knowledge or understanding of it by study, contemplation, and the test of life, both outward and inward, it is his duty, according to his capacity, to instruct others, and share with them the joy and peace which result from contact with the spiritual world. The Qur'ān-- indeed every religious book--has to be read, not only with the tongue and voice and eyes, but with the best light that our intellect can supply, and even more, with the truest and purest light which our heart and conscience can give us. It is in this spirit that I would have my readers approach the Qur'ān.... What we are concerned about now, in the fourteenth century of the Ḥijra, is, what guidance can we draw for ourselves from the message of Allah."

It is therefore of unusual interest to follow through in these volumes, how the translator, who has lived much in the West, and imbibed much of Western outlook and Western culture, uses the Qur'an as a book of practical religious value.

In this the reader is greatly helped by the little summaries before the Sūras and sections thereof. These are numbered C1, C2, C3 etc.,

on to C300, and run through the volumes (the C probably being meant stand for Canta). C1-C41 form the general introduction, and C295-C300 the conclusion, the others appearing in the introductions to the individual Sūras and at the heads of importance sections, and summarize what the author conceives the teaching of the coming passages to be. In the Preface he calls this the rhythmical commentary, but they are not rhythmical in the sense that they have any measured poetic rhythm. They are prose cut into short lines and arranged to look like verse. As a sample take the one open before us, viz., C52.

"Who can describe the nature of Allah?
The Living, the Eternal; His Throne
Extends over worlds and worlds
That no imagination can compass.
His truth is clear as daylight: how
Can compulsion advance Religion?
The keys of Life and Death, and the mysteries
Of everything around us, are in His hands.
Our duty then is to seek the path
Of goodness, kindness, upright
Conduct and Charity.--to grasp
At no advantage from a brother's need,
To stand by the word that is pledged,
To bear true witness, and remove all cause
Of misunderstandings in our dealings
As between man and man."

Naturally, the translation has suffered from this didactic, homiletic purpose. Meanings are read into words which they could never have had as uttered by the Prophet in seventh century Arabic, but where are fruitful for devotional purposes at the present day. Little additions are constantly made, for which there is nothing corresponding in the text, but which exalt the conception given in the text. This does not refer to the little additions necessary to bring out the meaning, which are always required when translating from one idiom to another, but to additions which are purposely homiletical. For example, *al-Ḥai al-Qayyūm* is translated "the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal," where "Eternal" is an addition not contained in nor justified by the text, but homiletically fruitful. It may be argued that the Allah of the Qur'an is eternal, but that is not in this text, and while "self-subsisting" is a good translation for *qayyūm,* this word of Aramaic origin, meaning that which stands of itself, has no necessary connotation of eternal, and such an addition is hardly justifiable here. The same is true of the constant tendency to translate perfectly simple

statements as though they were philosophical subtleties. For instance, in this same passage, II : 255/256 the text says: "He knows what is between their hands and what is behind them,": which is a perfectly simple statement that Allah knows man's present condition and his past, and is a prelude to another simple statement, that, on the contrary, no man knows aught of Allah save what He cares to reveal. Yet in this translation it reads: "He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) Before or After or Behind," which a note explains as meaning:

> "Allah's knowledge is absolute, and is not conditioned by Time or Space. To us, His creatures, these conditions always apply. His knowledge and our knowledge are therefore in different categories, and our knowledge only gets some reflection of Reality when it accords with His Will and Plan."

The Christian reader will at once be reminded of certain types of homiletic commentary which have dealt in this fashion with the Bible in days which we hope are now long past. In this present work, however, we need to keep in mind that this is what the translator intended to do. In his Preface he tells us:

> "What I wish to present to you is an English Interpretation....The English shall be, not a mere substitution of one word for another, but the best expression I can give to the fullest meaning which I can understand from the Arabic text."

For devotional and homiletic purposes this position is sanctioned by almost universal usage, but it is hardly helpful to those students who are anxious to understand what the original message of the Scripture really was. The dangers of such a method of interpretation are obvious, and every student of Christian exegesis is aware how easy it is, when we escape from the controls of exact philology and historical method, for the door to open to fantasy and purely subjective imaginings. Thus it is not reassuring to read here in the Preface:

> "I spoke of the general meaning of the verses. Every earnest and reverent student of the Qur'ān, as he proceeds with his study, will find, with an inward joy difficult to describe, how this general meaning also enlarges as his own capacity for understanding increases....How much greater is the joy and sense of wonder and miracle when the Qur'ān opens our spiritual eyes. The meaning which we thought we had grasped expands. New worlds are opened out. As we progress, still newer, and again newer worlds 'swim into our ken.' The miracle deepens and deepens, and almost completely absorbs us.....we are on the

threshold of realities, and little perfume from the garden of the Holy One has already gladdened our nostrils."

A statement which has a striking resemblance to the introductory sentences of the first lecture, I heard some years ago, in a series of lectures giving an utterly fantastic and impossible interpretation of the Book of Revelation.

In the interests of this homiletic purpose the translator has drawn largely on what he has learned of Western culture. Shakespeare and the English poets, modern writers and articles in the Encyclopaedia Brittanica, tags of Latin and quotations from the historians, are all used for illustration, and at times used very effectively. Most interesting of all, however, is the fact noted above of his use of the English Bible. To his Muslim audience this use of the Bible will be very effective, for references to and quotations from it are used on the one hand to support the Qur`ānic teaching, and on the other to demonstrate how superior the teaching of the Qur'ān is to that of the Bible. Students of the Bible, however, are sure to complain that he has not escaped a certain disingenuousness in his use of it. To take one example out of a great many. In his note on the Throne verse (II : 255/256) commenting on the words "Slumber taketh Him not nor sleep," he says--"Contrast this with the expression used in Psalm lxxviii: 65 'then the Lord wakened as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.'" The point of the citation is to suggest how much superior the Qur'ānic teaching on Allah is to that of the Psalter. And yet the translator knows quite well that in Psalm cxxi : 3 and 4 there is this very teaching that Allah neither slumbers or sleeps, and curiously enough the Hebrew in this Psalm uses precisely the same expressions for slumber and sleep as does the Qur'ān, which at least suggests that Muḥammad was here quoting from the Psalter or some Jewish source dependent on the Psalter. Still, it is a great merit in this work that where the Qur'ān is dealing with Biblical subjects, the notes refer the reader to the Biblical stories, instead of indulging in the fantastic speculations we find so often in the older commentaries. One wonders what reception this practice will have in certain Muslim circles. In Egypt in particular, there has been in recent years a growing movement to reject all the *Isra'īliyyat* that are in the older works, and to the ardent supporters of that movement it must be somewhat staggering to find so much Biblical material used in these volumes. We are heartily with the translator in this element in his method, even though we find ground for complaint in his application of it, and it will be interesting to watch how far he can carry his own community in this matter.

A further matter from which the translation and notes have suffered lies in the limitations of the translator's philological equipment. This is evident in every section of the work. One or two simple examples must suffice. In the *Fātiḥa* the word *rabb* (Lord) is translated "cherisher and sustainer," and the note tells us that the Arabic root means--to bring to maturity. Now it is a well known linguistic phenomenon that words of quite different origin may take the same form in a language. For instance, in English, *sound* meaning "healthy" is from the Anglo-Saxon *sund,* but meaning "noise" it is from the Norman-French *son,* and meaning "to take the depth of water" is from *sonder* from the Low Latin *subundare.* Similarly the Arabic *rabb* meaning "Lord" is from the Aramaic root meaning "great, venerable, splendid," and used frequently in inscriptions from North Arabia as meaning lord or chief, is thus referred to Allah as Lord and chief of all; while the verb *rabba* meaning "to increase," from which come *rubb*, the thick juice of the matured fruit, is from a primitive Semitic root, probably meaning "to be thick," with which are connected also the Ethiopic *rababa* "to expand," and the Rabbinic *rebab* meaning grease. Of much the same nature is his hazardous use of etymology. Because the English word *patrimony* is derived from the Latin *pater monium* and means inheritance coming down to one from the father, it does not follow that because *matrimony* comes similarly from *mater monium* it must mean inheritance coming down from the mother. No more does the fact that the verb *fakiha* means "to be merry, lively" provide any basis for the *fākiha,* the fruits of the gardens of Paradise, being interpreted a standing "for that specially choice enjoyment, which goes with a fastidious and well cultivated taste, ...that highest kind of joy which depends upon the inner faculty rather than any outward circumstance."

This translation is a much more sincere effort than that of the Ahmadiyya version with commentary published at Lahore. Like that Ahmadiyya version, however, it is strongly apologetic. Muḥammad lived and worked in seventh-century Arabia. The standards he observed were those of his milieu, and this is faithfully reflected both in the Qur'ān and in the earliest Arabic biographies of the Prophet. In that milieu and by those standards there was no need to apologize for the Prophet's matrimonial affairs, or his treatment of his enemies, or his political opportunism, or the crudity of many things in his message. There is no need to apologize for them now. The greatness of the Prophet is best seen when we view him as he was in his milieu. These modern translators, however, are all the time conscious of the higher morality of Christianity, and lay themselves out to gloss over in translation, or explain away in the notes, everything in the Qur'ān that

does not measure up to the ideals of Christian morality. The Prophet did not recognize these standards, nor make any pretence of living by them, so that it is really doing him a disservice to expound his message in the light of the standards of another religion, and picture him as the exponent of the ethics of another Teacher. Though the present translation is an improvement on the Ahmadiyya version in this respect, its apologetic note is nevertheless very marked. Over and over again one can watch the translation being glossed in a Christian sense, and only too often when what we want in a note is information that will put a verse in its setting, what we get is an apologetic explaining away what may seem offensive to those brought up to observe the Christian standard of morality and the teaching of the Christian ethic. This is neither helpful, nor fair to the Qur'ān itself, and when as in the notes on Sūra XXXIII, the necessities of *apologia* involve the author in deliberate distortion of the plain facts written down in the *Sīra,* it becomes a shame. But this is an unpleasant subject, so let us move to another point.

The practice of providing a brief introduction to each Sūra has much to commend it. Where the material in the Sūra is dealing with historical situations, such as Badr, Uḥud, Ḥudaibiyya, Ḥunain, Khaibar, etc., the situation is generally not immediately clear from the text. Those addressed in the first instance would doubtless understand all the references, because they were concerned in the event, but to the modern reader the force of the passage is often not at all clear without some preliminary understanding of the historical situation, and this it is difficult to give in the notes. It is thus a great advantage to the student to have an introduction to each Sūra in which the different groups of verses are assigned to their historical situation, and that situation briefly described. Even where there is dispute as to what the event referred to is, it is helpful to have the different possibilities before one at the outset. The same is true of passages of controversial nature, where it is often not clear at first from the text who the adversaries are or what the matter being dealt with is, and the passages are much more intelligible when one is advised beforehand what the controversy is about.

A certain amount of such orientation is given in the introductions to the Sūras in this work, but unfortunately very much less than we should like to see, for the author's interest here also is homiletic, and for the most part he is interested less in the situations out of which the message grew, than in finding themes in the Suras which will suggest values for devotional use. This, of course, is legitimate, though one wonders here as one wonders in the case of similar exegesis of the

Christian Scriptures, whether the best devotional use after all would not come from the strict application of the rules of scholarly exegesis, whereby each message would be considered first of all in its application to the situation which drew it forth, and studied in relation to what it must have meant then. Over and over again our author tells us that "the chronology of this Sūra has no significance," where one feels that one must demur and insist that it has the utmost significance. Each introduction of this kind the author concludes with a little summary of what he conceives the teaching of the Sūra as a whole to be. The apologetic element we mentioned above is equally obvious whenever any historical situation is dealth with in these Introductions.

The Excurses, or as the translator calls them, Appendices, which follow certain Sūras, are the least satisfactory part of the whole work. They are fourteen in number and deal with 1) the Abbreviated Letters; 2 the Taurah; 3) the Injīl; 4) Egyptian Chronology and Israel; 5) Egyptian Religion and its Steps towards Islam; 6) Allegorical Interpretation of the Story of Joseph; 7) Who was Dhū'l-Qarnain? 8) Mystic Interpretation of the Verse of Light; 9) Thamūd Inscriptions at al-Hijr; 10) First Contact of Islam with World Movement; 11) Comparative Chronology of the Early Years of Islam; 12) the Muslim Heaven; 13) Ancient Forms of Pagan Worship; 14) Oaths and Adjurations in the Qur'ān. They are almost all apologetic in purpose, being designed to cut away the ground from under various non-Muslim objections to the Qur'ān, and have this interest that they clearly state what the author conceives to be Islam's line of argument in these cases; but they are his nearest approach to definite ventures into the area of exact scholarship, and as such they are singularly unfortunate.

The Preface and General Introduction are quite short. The translator tells us how he came to undertake the task, and how he proceeded with it. This is an interesting personal statement. In his remarks on his method of translating he tells us--"In translating the Text I have aired no views of my own, but followed the received Commentators. Where they differ among themselves, I have had to choose what appeared to me to be the most reasonable opinion from all points of view." Anyone who has worked with the older commentaries of at-Ṭabarī, ar-Rāzī, al-Baiḍāwī, etc., knows well that is necessary to choose not only between them, but also between the widely different interpretations one and the same commentator will record for a single passage. Unless, however, by "received commentators" he means some widely removed from the list he gives on p. xii, it is hardly true to say that he has followed them consistently. One of the interesting things about his translation is that he has aired his own views. Had he

merely given a rehash of the old views of the commentators, the volumes would not have been worth the labour of reading. The thing that has repaid the reviewer for the time and labour of reading the work has been the continual discovery of fresh suggestions as to how a Muslim interpreter understands the text before him. What we are grateful for in the work is his independence in translating according to his own views as to how a verse ought to be taken. We may disagree with his ideas on various points, think that he is entirely mistaken in his understanding of some passages, and quarrel with his method, but the one thing we rejoice in his work is that he has frankly and sincerely endeavoured to set forth how a modern Muslim, with such a background as his, feels the Qur'ān ought to be interpreted.

And why should he not air his own views? Aṭ-Ṭabarī, even though he diligently records the opinions attributed to the ancients, yet not seldom gives his own judgment. Az-Zamakhshari aired his own Mu'tazilite opinions, aired them so freely indeed, that al-Baiḍāwī had to tone them down to orthodox standards. There is not, and never has been, any official interpretation of the Qur'ān in Islam. The Shi'a savants have interpreted it in the light of their peculiar theology, and the Sūfis have freely commented on it in a Sūfi sense. Muḥammad 'Abdu, a generation ago, launched out into a new modernistic line of interpretation, which, however wrong in method it may appear to Western scholars, has met with enthusiastic reception in the Near East. The famous Fakhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī interpreted in the light of the theological conceptions of his day, so why should not a modern Muslim interpret it today according to the conceptions of his culture? One may quarrel with M. Yūsuf 'Alī's methods, but surely he has no need to disclaim airing his own views on the interpretation of the Scripture of his faith. One of the things we should like to see is a commentary on the Qur'ān written according to the standards of modern scholarship, reverent in its approach, but critical in its method, embodying the results that in recent years have been gained by critical investigation into the environment in which Islam was born, and making full use of the resources of our modern sciences of philology, historical method and comparative religion. It would be a sad thing if such a commentary, and such a modern translation as that of Dr. Bell, are to be condemned at the outset because they contain views that are not to be found in the older orthodox commentaries.

It was perhaps inevitable that a Western reviewer should find many points where he is at variance with the author of this work, for the Muslim author approaches his task with a great number of presuppositions which the reviewer does not share. The one, used to the

application of modern critical methods to the study of the Bible, is inclined to be impatient at the neglect of these methods in a study of the Qur'ān, whereas to the other the application of some of those canons of criticism must savor almost of sacrilege. This, however, does not prevent appreciation of the labour of love that has gone to the making of this book, or the genuine feeling for religion which pervades all its interpretation, and which give it real value as a document of religious experiences.

The printing and general appearance of the work are excellent. It must have been an exacting task for the publisher to produce such a work, and the care expended on its production cannot be too highly praised. The setting up has been well and carefully done and the resultant page is a pleasure to read. The complete, analytical subject Index we were promised in the Preface, it has not been found practical to include in these volumes, but the Postscript holds out the hope that they may be published as a separate volume at some not too distant future.[4]

MR. YUSUF ALI'S TRANSLATION OF THE QUR'AN[5]

Mr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali has a wonderful command of English as he has shown in many essays and public lectures both in India and in England. It goes without saying that his translation of the Qur'ān is in better English than any previous English translation by an Indian. On the other hand it could not be mistaken, as many of his articles and lectures could be, for the writing of an Englishman. This is partly owing, doubtless, to the difficulty of the task (for the Qur'ān requires a special kind of English) but it is also largely owing to the fact that he has chosen to print his translation not as prose, but broken into lines which look like metre but are neither metrical nor reasoned, and in no way reproduce or connote the strongly marked Qurānic rhythm so impressive in the Arabic, which cannot be transported into any other language. It is a rash undertaking for anyone, however skilful, to endeavour to impose new literary forms upon a language not his own.

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4. This is a review by Arthur Jeffery, Columbia University, New York City, who was Associate Editor of the Moslem World. It appeared in the same journal in 1940, Vol. 30, Pages 54-66.
5. *The Holy Qur'an.* English Translation and Commentary (with Arabic Text) by A. Yusuf Ali, Lahore, Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, Parts I, II and III.

Mr. Yusuf Ali has extended this quasi-metrical treatment to his own introduction and to the ecstatic comments which he here and there interpolates somewhat after the manner of the chorus in Greek tragedies. The effect is to obtrude the literary personality of the translator, which in our opinion ought to the excluded altogether from the actual text of such a work.

In his preface Mr.Yusuf Ali tells us that he does not aim at literal translation but at conveying the meaning of the sacred text in his own words. The obvious advantage of such freedom, from the point of view of readers, would have been to enable him to suggest the whole scope of meaning in words and passages of which only one facet can be given by a literal rendering. The best way of doing this is in the form of the old commentaries. Here we find that the translation as a whole is fairly literal and that the freedom arrogated in the preface has been used to evade some difficulties of the Arabic and ignore some words and idioms with the result that in very many passages fine shades of meaning have been missed. Printed face to face with the Arabic text of the Qur'ān Mr.Yusuf Ali's version thus appears less as a free than as a careless inexact translation. Published apart from the Arabic it might have passed muster--especially if printed as straightforward prose.

Mr. Yusuf Ali is not content with words and phrases which have been made current by other translators, though his substitutions strike us always as less happy–e.g., "Most Gracious, Most Merciful" is no improvement on "the Beneficent, the Merciful" and the Arabic words thus rendered are not in the superlative; and "those who reject the Faith" is no improvement on"the unbelievers"; there is no need here to render one word by a paraphrase. The translator applies the word "Apostle" to our Prophet throughout--in our opinion quite a serious error for a Muslim writer. It is true, of course, that the Greek word *apostolos* means "messenger" and so would be the Greek equivalent of the Arabic word رسول . But the English word "apostle" is appropriate to twelve messengers of Jesus though often figuratively applied to missionaries and reformers. It is not appropriate to a Messenger of Allah in the Islamic sense, a major Prophet, since it is never applied to Jesus Christ. The first translators, who were filled with Christian missionary zeal, employed this word in order to place our Prophet on a lower level in the reader's mind than Jesus Christ. Mr.Yusuf Ali does not limit his use of the word 'Apostle' to رسول , he uses it also as a translation of نبي which is absolutely wrong. He also translates نبين as "messengers." We could multiply such strictures but forbear to do so.No distinction whatsoever is here made between words of which the equivalent is present in the Qur'ān and words interpolated by the

translator; but that defect, we suppose, is palliated by the claim of free translation, though here it is confronted with the testimony of the Arabic text. There are many obvious oversights which should be corrected (e.g., 'moon' for 'moons,' I, 189; and 'except He,' I, 255).

It is as a highly individual commentary rather than as a translation that this work appeals to us. The footnotes, though personal more often than strictly Islamic in their outlook, are valuable or the faith which they reveal and for the frequent apt comparisons with Christianity. (In footnote 182, by the way, Mr. Yusuf Ali is wrong in thinking that the meaning of the English word "retaliation" differs at all from that of the Arabic word قصاص . We hope the work will be of service in connection with the large and apparently growing class of Indian Muslims who know English better than they know the teaching of their own Qur'ān, but not so well as Mr. Yusuf Ali, whose views on the Qur'ān they will respect accordingly.

The method of publishing in thirty short instalments, each at one rupee, will enable people of small means to buy this otherwise expensive book.'[1]

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1. Islamic Culture, July 1935, vol.9, pages 519 -- 521. This is a Review by Allama Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall who was the Editor of the said Journal--Editor.

CHAPTER 4

INDIAN HISTORY

- Social and Economic conditions during Middle Ages of Indian History
- Social and economic life in Mediaeval India
- Al-Biruni's India Life

Two Parables from The Qur-ān

The Qur'ān is a book of wisdom as well as of guidance. It not only teaches us right conduct, but explains, for those who are able to understand, that such conduct is based on the true principles of our own nature as made by Allah.

As spiritual life is on a different plane from our animal or material life, the former can only be indicated roughly by the comparisons implied in a parable.

The Qur-ānic Parables sum up, in a few graphic words, some spiritual experience which has to be felt to be fully appreciated. Conciseness, beauty, and comprehensiveness combine with literary grace to enforce the lesson.

There is the Parable of the self-deluded hypocrite.[1] A man self-sufficient in his own wisdom, wants to show that wisdom to his fellow-men. What he wants is light. But he kindles a fire. The blaze is more impressive in the eyes of the multitude, and he gets applause. The flames are fitful, but they light for a time the whole of the circle around him. In a few moments the light is out, and the darkness is worse than ever before. He and his companions grope about, but they lose their way. They cannot see. But in their consternation they are also dumb and dare not speak to each other. Even if they did speak, they are all so wrapt in selfishness that they would not hear each other in moments of darkness or difficulty. Perhaps their recriminations drown each other. They failed to see that the true source of light is Allah, and they will never find the Path in that way.

Another Parable, worked out in words of great power, enforces a similar lesson[2] . A rain-laden cloud appears in the sky. Such a cloud is a blessing to normal men, as it brings fertilising showers which

1. The Holy Qur-ān, 2 : 17 - 18.
2. The Holy Qur-ān, 2 : 19 - 20.

produce abundant crops. But to the warped mind, which rejects Faith, there is only terror. "In it are zones of darkness and thunder and lightning." Those who do not see Allah's working in His world are oppressed with mortal fear. "They press their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunder-clap." But they forget that Allah is ever round all things, and He is also round the rejecters of Faith. They may try to exclude Allah's call from their hearts, but it is there. If they open their eyes, "the lightning all but snatches away their sight." You would think they might profit by the light. "Every time the light helps them, they walk therein." But as they reject the source of the light, it does not profit them. "When the darkness grows on them, they stand still." The one lesson they have to learn is that it is not their powers or their merits that will enable them to get spiritual fulfilment. "If Allah willed, He could take away their faculty of hearing and seeing, for Allah hath power over all things." Nor is the physical light all that is necessary to show them the way. It must penetrate their mind and intelligence. It must illuminate their being. They must offer their wills in complete submission to Allah's will. Islam demands nothing less than this. But if once this submission is made, Allah's grace works slowly, silently, and effectually. Out of the storm it will produce peace, contentment, and a spiritual harvest beyond the dreams of mortal man[3].

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SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS DURING THE MIDDLE AGES OF INDIAN HISTORY

Being the English version of the first two lectures of a series delivered in Urdu before the Hindustani Academy of Allahabad in March, 1928.

I am sensible of the honour done to me by The Hindustani Academy in asking me to inaugurate their course of lectures by speaking about the Middle Ages of Indian History. The birth of this Academy is itself a sign of the times. I have for many years been associated in these Provinces with the study and elucidation of the Urdu language and literature. When I was in Hyderabad, I had the privilege also of co-operating in the Urdu movement there, and the early efforts to set the Osmania University to work. They had and have a Translation Bureau, which aims at enriching our language by the translation and preparation of standard works suitable for university studies in Urdu.

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3. *Islamic Review.* January 1935, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 6 - 7.

I wrote a note for them on Urdu orthography which was mean to systematise the writing, spelling and printing of Urdu. I was also interested, and am still interested, in the introduction of type-printing in Urdu. In common with most scholars of Urdu I am not satisfied with the existing Urdu type or the type-printed work which we see issued by the Government and other presses. The attempt to copy in movable type all the variations of Urdu letters as seen in manuscript calligraphy must be pronounced a failure. The essence of MS. calligraphy consists in varying the shapes and sizes of curves in different combinations and according to the position of given letters at the beginning, the middle, or the end of words. The essence of good printing is to have letters of uniform size and shape, to have the lines printed with mathematical precision, and to make rapid reading by the eye an everyday necessity as well as an artistic pleasure. If, by duplicating or triplicating the shapes of single letters, you make the fount unwieldy, you add to the difficulties and the expense of the compositors' work. In modern commercial printing, cost is not a negligible quantity. With the initial prejudice against type printing you can never make type-printing a success unless it is cheaper and better than lithographic printing. It is not correct to say that type-printing cannot be artistic or beautiful. Its artistic quality or beauty will depend upon other considerations applying to it than those which apply to manuscript calligraphy or its product, the lithograph book. First let us produce reasonably good and cheap type-printing, and we shall gradually be able to evolve more and more artistic printing standards as time goes on. The great superiority of type-printing consists in its accuracy and clearness. No modern language can make progress, or ever hold its own, which depends upon lithography and is not able to use the latest resources of the printing-press.

You have rightly called your Academy the Hindustani Academy, and thus accentuated the desire which all reasonable men feel to unify our language in these provinces and elsewhere as much as possible. I note that you have at the same time taken existing facts for granted, and are encouraging both forms of our common Hindustani language, namely those in Urdu and Hindi scripts. I cordially associate myself with the movement towards an approximation of the different forms of our language to a common and uniform standard. I think if we succeed in doing that in these Provinces, the effect will extend beyond the boundaries of the United Provinces[4]. Hindustani of a sort is a *lingua franca* throughout India. If we can make it a medium for literary and business expression for the whole of India, it will go a long way to-

4. Agra and Oudh. (Ed. "Islamic Culture.")

wards a unification of our people in thought, speech and institutions, and thus help materially in the evolution of that national life which all true sons of India have at heart.

The location of the Academy in the capital of the United Provinces gives it a central position of great advantage. Although the chief centres of Urdu literature are considered to be Delhi, Lucknow and Hyderabad (Deccan), there are reasons which give the placid atmosphere of Allahabad a certain advantage. Delhi is now the political capital of India, and as such is a storm-centre for political movements. Lucknow is certainly a beautiful city, and may in respect of the history of Urdu literature claim a higher place than Allahabad. As a former President of the Lucknow Urdu Association, I shall not be misunderstood to imply that I minimise the claims of Lucknow in any way. But I feel that the association of the Academy with the Government of the United Provinces makes its location in Allahabad a convenience. The association of the Academy with the Government will also make for its stability, and give it that stimulus which official countenance alone can give under present-day Indian conditions. I trust, however, that the five universities of these Provinces, and perhaps other universities as well as non-official bodies interested in the study of our language, will co-operate in the aims and objects of the Academy.

You have asked me to speak of the Middle Ages of Indian History. How shall we define these Middle Ages? In European History the Middle Ages, while not precisely defined, are roughly taken to extend from the extinction of the Western Roman Empire (476 A.D.) to the fall of Constantinople (1453 A.D). This period of about a thousand years certainly marks a stage in the evolution of Europe, and indeed of human history as a whole. It is the period which is a bridge from the old classical ages of Europe to its modern history. It marks the passing of the political leadership from the races and cities which held sway under the classical influence of Greece and Rome. It is characterised by a regrouping of the European races, and the spread and transformation of Germanic, Gothic, and Scandinavian institutions under the subtle influence of the earlier classical cultures which had exhausted their force and vitality. It got a certain amount of unity by the organization of the Roman Catholic Church and the Papacy and its universal dominion over the minds of Europe. It evolved the distinctive laws, usages, and codes of honour of feudalism, which ultimately decayed, and were extinguished in the formation of strong, specialised, national monarchies in the different countries of Europe. Add to these chraracteristics the fact that the history of those ages is known to us in a sort of twilight, as contrasted with the abundant light

we get both in ancient and in modern history on the thoughts, habits, social institutions, and lives of men. Can we find any similar characteristics in Indian history, by which we can mark off a tolerably long period as our Middle Ages? I do not look upon the conventional division of history in the text-books into pre-Buddhist, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and British periods as either scientifically correct or practically useful. We do not know how long the real Buddhist period lasted, and there is no reason to suppose that Brahmanism was extinct during the Buddhist period or that the word "Hindu" helps us in making an accurate differentiation between any well-marked periods. It is similarly difficult to define the Muslim and British Periods. It is reasonable to make three broad divisions of our history into Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern. There is a good deal of dateless information about India, before history in the ordinary sense of the term begins. We might well put this into a period and call it Pre-History. But the difficulty begins when we attempt a chronological definition of these periods. Perhaps pre-history might include the period before the life of Buddha Gauthama, and we might begin Ancient History from the preaching of Buddhism. How far shall we carry Ancient History in India? The Cambridge History of India takes Ancient India down to about the Christian era. Mr. K. de B. Codrington suggests that Ancient India comes down to the time of the Guptas, from which the Mediaeval Period begins. Mr.C.V.Vaidya, in his three-volume History of Mediaeval India, with a fourth volume still to come, begins our Middle Ages at 600 and carries them on to 1200 A.D. Mr.Ishwari Prasad, of your own University school of History, begins his Mediaeval Indian in 647 A.D., the date of Harsha's death, and carries it on to the Mughal conquest. We shall see that there is much to recommend this definition.

If we could find some prominent features in Indian history to bridge the gulf between Ancient and Modern India, at all comparable with the features which we find in European History, we should be the better able to mark out a definite period and call it our Middle Ages. If we look to the inroads of barbarian races into India, we shall find that there is practically no period of Indian history until quite modern times when India was free from such invasions. We do not know what invasions there were before the Aryan invasions of India, but we have now definite evidence to connect the Indus basin with the civilisations of Mesopotamia. The Aryan invasions themselves covered a long period and implied the inroads of many tribes, which have left their marks on the linguistic development of India. After the Indo-Aryans had settled in the country and became practically absorbed in it, came the Persian and Greek invasions, followed by Turanian and mixed

tribes from Central Asia. These continued for some centuries after the Christian era. The settled and well-developed civilisation of the Gupta Period in its days of vigour (320-455 A.D.) was a sort of island in a sea of invasions that took place before and after. The period of Harsha (606-647 A.D.) may from a cultural point of view be looked upon as a sort of last flash of Gupta civilisation. After Harsha there were many invasions, the details of which are somewhat obscure to us. We know, however, that the four centuries after Harsha continued to introduce a large admixture of foreign blood. The scale on which this was done was now greater, and the Huna-Gujar-Jat predominance, the matrix of the Rajput clans, brought about a complete regrouping of the population. In truth these four centuries may be called the Rajput period. If we close the Rajput period with the death of Prithi Raj of Delhi (1193 A.D.), we have, I think, a definite epoch of twilight, to which we might reasonably assign the beginning of the Middle Ages.

But the Rajput regrouping did not result in a settled reassortment of the Indian population. The Muslim invasions, bringing in their wake various ethnical elements and a strong, well-defined set of institutions, laws, and social system, continued the radical churning process of Indian society. What is more, instead of being absorbed in Hinduism, it produced remarkable and permanent reactions. From about 1000 to about 1310 A.D. the Muslim power and Muslim culture came in waves of greater or less intensity, until, in the beginning of the 14th century, the whole of India, including the Deccan, may be said to have come under Muslim influence, and the greater part of it under direct Muslim rule. But there was still no social settlement, no room for a cultural and abiding evolution of society. The decline of the Delhi Sultanate from about 1310 to about 1526 meant the rise of a number of local kingdoms, still mostly Muslim, with no settled boundaries, and hardly able to work out a definite political system. With the coming of the Mughals, in 1526, the atmosphere underwent a transformation. There was now some stability, some order, some permanence, if not in political power, at least in the trend of social and political institutions.

To my mind, therefore, it is better to date the Indian Middle Ages from the age of Harsha (say, about the middle of the seventh century) to the establishment of the Mughal Empire (say, about the middle of the sixteenth century). This long period of nine centuries can further be subdivided into three distinct sub-periods, namely, (1) the regrouping and reconstruction of Hindu society (647-1000 A.D.); (2) the further regrouping of Indian society by the gradual permeation, stage by stage, of Muslim influence (about 1000-1310 A.D.); and (3) the

break-up of the Delhi Sultanate into numerous fragments without any Indian unity, leading up to the Mughal conquest (1310-1526). As we have to compress all this into three lectures following this introductory lecture, our best plan is to study each period by the documents which illustrated its commencement. One collateral advantage of this definition of our mediaeval period will be that it will correspond roughly to the period of the European Middle Ages and help us greatly in the study of comparative history. If this view is accepted, the modern period will include both the Mughal and the British periods, between which there was no sudden or abrupt break, but an easy transition. The Mughals themselves had dealings with European Powers after they were affected by modern movements. Indian economic life under the Mughals began to take more and more a modern shape, with the gradual growth of foreign maritime commorce through the expansion of European activities in the Eastern seas.

The Seventh Century

Assuming our Middle Ages to begin in the middle of the 7th century and end about the middle of the 16th century, we might conveniently take three distinct points leading up to and ending that period, for the study of social and economic conditions. The first point I shall take will be the age of Harsha. Here we have abundant materials for study. We can reconstruct almost a complete picture of social life, although the data for economic facts are scanty. Social and economic conditions are however so inextricably mixed together that we can draw no hard and fast line between them. We shall review briefly the facts as they appear from a careful study of the documents of the period.

Authorities: (a) Drama--These documents may be divided into four groups. The first consists of the dramatic literature of the period, and finds a fit expression in the three dramas attributed to King Harsha himself. These are the *Priyadarshika,* the *Ratnavali*, and the *Nagananda.* The weight of opinion is in favour of a single authorship of these plays. Even if they were not actually and entirely written by King Harsha, it is almost certain that they were produced in his time and under his patronage. For our purposes, all that we are concerned with is their approximate date, and as there is not the slightest doubt about it, we may accept the picture given in them as reflecting the true facts of the social life of the seventh century. It is true that the horizon of these plays is limited. They were produced merely for a court audience, and their plots do not go beyond depicting certain phases of palace intrigues of an amorous character. Even with these limitations.

they are of the highest value in realising the actual life of the age in which they were written.

(b) *Bana's Panegyric and Romance.*--The second group of documents comprise two romances by Bana, who lived at the court of Harsha and has left marvellously vivid descriptions of contemporary life and manners. One is the *Harsha-Charita,* a romantic panegyric of the early part of Harsha's life and career, with a highly poetic account of the rise of his family; the second is the *Kadambari,* a remarkable example of Sanskrit prose, which has always been popular in India. It tells with charming meanderings the story of a wonderful parrot, in an atmosphere of elaborate realism, combined with stories of love and adventure (stories within stories) and supernatural transformations. The pictures which Bana draws of life in various phases are worked up in highly-coloured mosaics. His style of miniature descriptive pictures resembles that of Compton Mackenzie's novels in modern English literature. But Bana is to Mackenzie what an elaborate piece of Oriental filigree work is to the bolder strokes of the European goldsmith's art. We have to make large allowances for Bana's ornate and florid style, but, making all possible allowances, we yet get a graphic description and can realise the age in a way which is not open to us for much later centuries. Both these romances can be read in very good English translations, comprised in the Oriental Translation Fund Series. The *Kadambari* has been translated by Miss C. M. Ridding, and the *Harsh-Charitra* by Messrs. E. B. Cowell and F. W. Thomas. If the Hindustani Academy wishes to translate Sanskirt works into Urdu, these two books may be confidently recommended to their attention. The question whether they are translatable into Urdu must be solved by those who undertake the rash adventure.

(c) *Chinese Pilgrim.*-- Our third set of authorities for the period is the account of the Chinese pilgrim Yuang Chwang (also written "Hiuen Tsiang") and his Life, written in Chinese. Both have been translated into English. The latest and best English translation of his Travels is that of Thomas Watters (Oriental Translation Fund of London) and the only English translation of his Life is by Mr. S. Beal, which was published a century ago, and is not very accurate. I have given a rapid sketch of the Pilgrim's account of India in my little English book "Three Travellers to India," which is being used by the Punjab University as a Reader in the Matriculation classes.

(d) *Inscriptions and Art.* -- The fourth group of authorities are coins, inscriptions, and contemporary works of art in sculpture and painting. Of the coins of Harsha we have hardly any; and we are not

surprised, for Yuan Chwang[5] notes the prevalence of barter in valuable goods from the seaports; and for inland trade, besides gold and silver coins, he notes the use of cowries and small pearls. Of inscriptions we have three, and two of them are copper-plate grants. They tell us a little of the dues usually collected in the villages. The sculptures and paintings of the period may be studied in Ajanta in the north of the Nizam's dominions, and in Bagh in the south of the Gwalior State, some fifty miles west of Dhar. Selections of both of these have been published by the Indian Society of London, and a few more may be studied in Mr. Codrington's *Ancient India. King, Minister, and Household.*

King Harsha himself was the hero of Bana's panegyric, and we hear very little to his disadvantage, except in his imperious treatment of friends and allies[6]. His strong and vigorous character, his toleration of different forms of faith, his love and devotion for his sister, his interest in literature, song, music and art are all attested by the Chinese pilgrim. While we may therefore look upon Harsha as an exceptional character, as indeed he was, the typical king as depicted in Harsha's plays was soft and dissolute. His kingdom was kept together by the wisdom of a faithful Brahman minister, who, however, was not above the wiles of Kautilya's political philosophy. The King usually had many wives, who performed *sati* at his death[7]. In addition he kept a numerous harem, guarded by hunchbacks, drafts, and old men[8]. Women guarded palace doors, and carried *chauris,* and the King often learned on the arms of one of his female attendants. The senior queen was generally very jealous of young and pretty women in the Zenana, but where one of them was proved of noble birth, the queen had to agree to receive her as a co-wife.

Women and their accomplishments.-- The higher women observed a certain amount of seclusion. The queen's veil is mentioned[9], as also the fact that the king had the hall cleared of people before he invited the queen to come and witness a magician's show[10]. An elderly lady of rank, a companion of the queen, is mentioned as a blue-stocking,who wrote and arranged little plays or scenes for the amusement of royalty[11]. Noble damsels were taught singing, dancing, and instrumental music.

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5. *Y. C. I.* 178.
6. *T. T.* 24.
7. Pri. p. 17.
8. *Pri.* p. 75. Eunuchs must have been known, for they are mentioned in Manu and the Mahabharata.
9. *Rat. Act 3.* Nag. Act. 3.
10. *Ratn. Act. 4*
11. *Pri. p. 47.*

Brahman jester.-- The king's love intrigues were usually promoted by the Vidushak or jester. Though a Brahman, he is usually made a very contemptible character He is greedy and covetous, and the butt of laughter even for slaves. In one play[12] a slave drags the Brahman Vidushak roughly, breaks his sacred thread, and addresses him opprobriously as "you tawny monkey!" Even the Brahman Bana speaks of "shrieking, quarrelsome Brahmans:[13]" they climbed to the tops of trees to see the king pass, and were roughly treated by the rods of chamberlains standing on the ground.

Royal hall, and King's habits--The royal hall was hung with white silk tapestries. The floor was cooled with sandal water, to which was added fragrant musk. Aloe perfumes were freely used. There was an alcove with a white bed and a jewelled footstool. The king, after exercise and his mid-day bath, reclined there, while a maiden gently rubbed his feet "with a palm soft as the leaves of fresh lotuses." Here he received other kings, ministers, and friends, of sufficient rank to be received at that hour of comparative privacy[14]. Some of the palace rooms were adorned with wall paintings, and were called *chitrashalas*[15]. An accomplished king usually knew the magic arts, and was expert in the antidotes for poisons[16]. But his relations to his subjects did not necessarily inspire national sentiments. Even at the beginning of an invasion by an enemy, the zamindars bowed temporarily to him, instead of resisting him. If the king had Budhistic inclinations, he became careless of his Kshatriya duties of defending his subjects by force of arms; he only saw the cruelty of destroying life for the sake of a kingdom[17].

Let us take Bana's word-picture of the capital city of Ujjain. It was a flourishing and happy city, commanding from its central position all the wealth of southern and western India. It was surrounded by a deep moat and defended by fenced walls, white with plaster. At various points we may suppose that there were elevated towers showing against the blue sky. The bazars were rich with merchandise. Pearls, corals and emeralds were objects of everyday traffic. The picture halls of the city had lively scenes painted on their walls. The subjects of these pictures we can well imagine from the remains which we still have in the caves of Ajanta and Bagh. The stories of gods, demons, Nagas (snake-gods) and other mythological beings were de-

12. *Nag.* 44.
13. *H. C.* 209.
14. *Kad.* 15.
15. *Pri. p.* 55.
16 *Pri.* Act. 4.
17. *Nag.* Act 3.

picted in tempera or in frescoes, but not many incidents of daily life. The prevailing worship under Harsha was that of the god Shiva, whom we find prominent in the dramas and the romances. At the crossways were temples flying white banners. Honours were also paid to Kama, the god of love, whose banners bore the emblem of the fish. In the plays we find the celebration of special public festivals in spring and autumn. In these festivals there must have been a good deal of saturnalia or horseplay, comparable to that in the modern festival of Holi. The sound of bells was heard ringing merrily, and special announcments such as the coming and going of the king were made with the sound of the conch-shell. The recitation and chant of sacred books was heard frequently. There were green gardens watered by means of buckets constantly at work. The wells were adorned with brick seats, and probably had staircases leading to subterranean chambers as in modern *baulis*. There were dark and shady groves in the suburbs around. The river Sipra, a feeder of the Chambal, flowed past the town, and numerous lakes covered with lotus flowers were dotted about in the landscape[18].

The citizens of Ujjain were a merry, light-hearted people as befitted the inhabitants of such a wealthy city. They delighted in their public works, which included wells, bridges, temples and pleasure-grounds. There were wayside sheds for watering the cattle. There were hostels for religious students and halls of assembly for the people. The best treasures of the ocean were attracted to the city for them. In Bana's quaint words, though bold, they were courteous; though pleasant of speech, they were truthful; though handsome, they were chaste; though they welcomed strangers, they asked not for presents; though votaries of love and wealth, they were strictly just. They took a delight in the arts. Their conversation was full of humour, and they dressed elegantly and spotlessly. They were skilled in foreign languages and loved the recitation of stories and of the sacred Epics and Puranas. They were also inveterate gamblers[19]. Parrots and talking starlings (*mainas*) were favourite cagebirds. Elephants, saddled and unsaddled, were to be seen everywhere, as well as horses. This word description of Bana is also borne out by the cave pictures.

The country could not have been very thickly inhabited. There is nothing to show that roads were well kept up. A good deal of the area must have been under forests haunted by elephants and "hundreds of lions[20]." Among the forests were found hermitages and penance

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18. *Kad.* 211.
19. *Kad.* 211-12
20. *Kad.* 16.

groves, at which kings often alighted in the course of their hunting expeditions. The hermitages were not devoid of female interest. Many of the kings' intrigues in the dramas centre round some high-born maiden nurtured by the hermit as a daughter amongst many companions of her own sex. A curious barbarian settlement is described by Bana. It was a Chandala camp, " a very market-place of evil deeds." Boys were to be found engaged in the chase, unleashing their hounds, teaching their falcons, mending their snares, carrying weapons, and fishing. Their dwellings were hidden by thick growths of bamboos. The enclosures were made with skulls. The dustheaps of the roads were filled with bones. The yards of the huts were miry with blood, fat, and meat chopped up. Their garments were of coarse silk and their couches of dried skins. Their houshold attendants were dogs, and they rode on cows. This horrible word-picture is crowned by Bana in the terse sentence: "The place was the image of all hells[21]." Perhaps these were the prototypes of some of the criminal tribes' encampments to be found in India even at the present day. Only those savages were not then kept under as they are now, and they seem to have been more propserous. Perhaps they represented races, large portions of which have since been absorbed.

There is a very detailed description of the dress and appearance of a Shaiva ascetic in the *Harsha-Charita* which we might examine with profit. He was surrounded by a throng of devotees. He bathed early, presented the eight-fold offering of flowers, and attended to the sacrificial fire. The ground was smeared with fresh cowdung. The ascetic was seated on a tiger-skin, whose outline was marked by a ridge of ashes. He was wrapped in a black woollen cloak. His hair was knotted at the top, and showed the round shells of his rosary hanging from its braids. He was about five and fifty years of age, and had a few white hairs in his head. His skull showed signs of baldness. His ears were covered with hair. His forehead was broad and covered with a mark of smeared ashes. Occasionally he frowned. His long eyes were yellowish with corners of red. The tip of his nose was curved, like the end of Garuda`s beak. His teeth were in the process of going, but those that remained were still white, "like the crest of that Shiva who was ever treasured in his heart." His lip hung a little downwards. A pair of crystal ear-rings dangled from his pendulous ears. On one fore-arm he wore an iron bracelet and a charm-thread compounded of various herbs. His right hand worked at a rosary. His beard, dangling upon his breast; and somewhat tawny at the ends "was like a broom sweeping away all the dust of passions contained therein." His loin-

21. *Kad.* 204.

cloth was of pure white linen. The soles of his feet were tender and red, and always covered with a pair of pure white, water-washed slippers. At his side was a bamboo staff with a barb of iron inserted in the end. He spoke but rarely, slowly smiling. There was a look of beneficence and wisdom in his austere face. His kindly features betokened sincerity, purity, patience, constancy and inner pleasure or happiness. "Such was the holy Bhairavacharya, a very Shiva incarnate[22]."

There are many such word-pictures. We shall content ourselves with glancing at two more, namely his description of the birth ceremony in the King's household and his description of a remote village in the Vindhyas.

When a son was born to the King, the joyful news was communicated to the city, which rejoiced exuberantly at this happy event. Even inanimate objects felt the thrill of delight! Unblown horns rang out spontaneously loud and sweet. Unbeaten tabors and timbrels sounded aloud as if they rejoiced unbidden. The horses tossed their manes and neighed with joy. The elephants uplifted their trunks and joined in the merry chorus. Bonfires blazed . The white-clad Brahmans approached, reciting the Vedas to bless the newborn life. The elders of the family hastened to the Palace. Prisoners were released in honour of the event and ran about in disorderly crowds with their long matted beards. The order of the royal household was changed to disorder in this rush of joy. The crowd defined the macebearers. Even the women's quarters were invaded. Master and servants were reduced to a level; young and old confounded; learned and unlearned on one footing; drunk and sober not to be distinguished; noble maidens and women of the streets lost their balance; the whole population of the capital danced in a wild orgy. Wives of the neighburning kings could be observed in thousands approaching the Palace, with presents borne by servants behind them. The drink booths ran like showerbaths, and frolic and mirth of the coarsest kind were indulged in without restraint. The whole crowd ran mad as at a Bacchic festival, because a son was born to the King.[23]

The forest village in the Vindhyas was surrounded by woodland districts. Here might be seen huge banyan trees encircled with cowpens formed of dry branches. Tiger-traps were set in revenge for the slaughter of young calves. Here and there among the forests were parcels of rice land, threshing floors and cultivation. It was very thin cultivation, mainly with spade culture. Among the cultivated fields there

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22. *H. C.* 263-4.
23. *H. C.* 110-12.

were *machans* raised high, from which men could watch and frighten away wild beasts. Cool arbours made out of wayside trees, with water jars placed on wooden stands gave shelter from the heat of the sun. Here and there were blacksmiths, burning heaps of wood to produce charcoal . The villagers came to gather fuel, with strong axes on their shoulders and bundles of food slung round their necks. Sometimes teams of strong oxen marched in front of them. Hunters and fowlers roamed about with snares and cages, to ply their trade. All sorts of wild produce, such as honey, peacocks' tail-feathers, wax, etc., was gathered and taken to the village. The women carried on their heads baskets of forest fruits. There were sugarcane enclosures, carefully tended and properly fenced, and the ubiquitous, bounding black bucks. The dwellings of the villagers were thinly scattered amid bamboos and thorny bushes. Young calves were tied to stakes fixed in the ground. The sound of cockcrow indicated the position of the scattered houses. The walls were made of bamboo leaves, stalks and weeds, with a dash of colour here and there. Living pets such as wild cats, tame snakes, mongooses (*nevla*) and the like showed how closely these villagers lived at one with forest life[24].

Before we pass from these highly flavoured descriptions from the literary artist's pen to the more soberly told economic facts revealed in the Chinese pilgrim's account, we may note a few points revealed by the sculpture and paintings of the period. In Ajanta Cave I (6th to 7th century)[25] there is some beautiful carving on the corbels of the capitals, which are so high that the figures are missed by the ordinary visitor. The female figures are almost Greek in their character. There are also Persian head-dresses and faces elsewhere in the Cave paintings. Were they worked on Persian or Greek models? The fine drawing[26] of the figure of Buddha or Bodhisatva of Indra, with a flower like a pink in his hand, shows the refinement to which the pictorial art was carried in that age. The picture of the Prince at his bath[27], with his long black curls, sitting on a four-legged stool, while his men are pouring jars of water over him, admirably illustrates Bana's word-descriptions. At Bagh the two groups of female musicians[28] show great powers of pictorial composition, a beautiful drawing of hands and faces, and altogether a remarkable standard of the graphic art. It may be noticed that the complexions of the faces vary from the lighest to the darkest hue, with all sorts of gradations between, and the fea-

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24. *H. C.* 225-29.
25. *Codr.* p. 1. 35.
26. *Herr.* pl. 11.
27. *Herr.* pl. 12.
28. *Bagh.* pl. D and E.

tures and head-dresses vary in the same way. The amount of clothing on the figures also varies from the almost complete nude to completely clothed figures like those of the centres of the musical groups. Evidently the racial mixture in the Indian population had not yet stabilised itself, and this we should also conclude from other evidence coming to us in a literary or traditional form.

As for economic facts, that may be briefly noted, in addition to those already referred to. The copper-plate grant of Madhuban (District Azamgarh) mentions[29] five kinds of dues which the holder of land in a village had to render. They were: (1) the *Tula-Maya,* (2) a share in the produce, (3) money payment, (4) services in kind, and (5) other dues. What was the *Tula-Maya?* It may have been something akin to weighment dues (*tulai) still levied in old-fashioned* village marts. Whether the share of the produce, the money payment, and the services in kind were concurrent dues, or alternative dues on different kinds of land, we are not in a position to say. The probability is that one or other of these was leviable from any given holding, but that all these were known in the village or villages taken as a whole. The comprehensive term "other dues" may have included cesses of the various kinds that are still levied in villages.

Compared with China, Yuang Chwang found India lightly taxed, and the Government mild, and yet he would not change his country for India. Families were not registered in India, and individuals were not subject to forced labour. He evidently did not consider service tenures or part-service tenures as implying forced labour. The royal domain was divided into four parts: one for the expenses of government and State worship; one for the endowment of great public servants; one to reward high intellectual eminence; and one for gifts to the various sects. The rent taken from the king's tenants was one sixth of the produce. Land grants were freely made, and assignments to public servants were common in lieu of salaries[30].

There was *octroi*, and there were light duties on trade at the ferries. Much rice and wheat were produced in the fields, besides ginger, mustard, melons and pumpkins. The common food was milk, *ghi,* sugar, cakes and parched grain, with mustard oil. Fish, mutton and venison were also eaten as dainties. The different castes had distinctive drinks special to them; the Vaishyas drank a strong distilled spirit. They ate with their hands, and not like the Chinese; with spoons and chop-sticks. In cases of illness, copper spoons were used[31].

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29. Ett. 149.
30. *Y. C.* I. 176-7.
31. *Y. C. I.* 176-8.

In illness the food of the patient was cut off for seven days. If the fast did not cure him, medicine was administrered. Probably then, as now, those who were well-off ate too much, and those on the margin of subsistence had too little to eat. The disposal of the dead was in one of three ways: by fire, or by floating the body into a stream, or by being cast away to feed wild animals. The Brahmanists wailed aloud for their dead, but not so the Buddhists[32]. The proportion of those who professed the two religions varied from place to place; often they were half and half.

The punishments for crime were severe, but crime was not common. The criminal was outcasted and imprisoned for life. For offences against social morality, or disloyalty to the State or to the offender's father, a limb was cut off--*e.g.*, the nose, an ear, a hand, or a foot--or the offender was banished. Some offences could be compounded for by a fine. There were ordeals by water, by fire, by weighing, or by poison[33]. Besides the four classical castes, there were innumerable mixed castes[34].

These details are not very precise, but they record the Chinese Pilgrim's impressions, and we are grateful for them. He also formed a very kindly estimate of the Indian character. The evidence of the Indian literature of the period on these points is both fuller and more precise, as coming from within.[35]

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE IN MEDIAEVAL INDIA

The Tenth and Eleventh Centuries

Authorities.--In considering our second period of Mediaeval India, which began about the tenth and eleventh centuries, we shall miss the graphic word-pictures of a romancist like Bana. On the other hand we have the serious account of Indian thought by the Muslim philosopher and mathematician, Al-Biruni, who wrote about 1030 A.D., and who has incidentally mentioned many facts and customs which throw light on Indian social life. In addition we have many notices of India

32. *Y. C. I.* 174-5.
33. *Y. C. I.* 171-2.
34. *Y. C. I.* 168.
35. *Islamic Culture.* Vol. 2, No. 3. 1928, pages 360-375.

in the Muslim geographers and historians, but they are fragmentary, as the Muslims had limited access beyond Sindh, the Panjab, and the sea-coast. They are, however, valuable in elucidating and supplementing information from other sources. In dramatic literature we have Raja-Shekhara's Kapur-Manjari, whose date may be placed roughly about 900 A.D. There are other works of Raja-Shekhara which also help us, if not exactly in the same degree. Kapur Majari is a play entirely in Prakrit, and its text may be studied in the admirable edition of Sten Konow, with the English translation by C. H. Lanman, published by the Harvard University. It may interest you to know that a Hindi translation was published in Benares by the famous Hindi scholar Harish Chandra in Sambat 1939 (A.D. 1883). As regards inscriptions a large number have been collected, edited, and interpreted. They may be studied in the partly volumes of the *Epigraphia Indica* or of the *Indian Antiquary*, or in the journals of the Asiatic Society of Bengal or the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society as well as the parent Society, and other learned societies dealing with the East. The Katha Sarit Sagara, of Soma Deva, dates from about 1070. This collection of stories incorporates some very old matter, both from folklore and literature. But from the way the stories are told, we may gather hints about the social life of the period. The art of the period may best be studied in the Caves of Elephanta or Ellora or in the Chandel architecture of which fine specimens exist in Khajuraho. Some of the sculptures in the Temple of Jagannath at Puri, which was built about 1150, refer actually to a later age, but reflect some tendencies that arose in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Languages: Prakrits and Vernaculars.--Pandit Harish Chandra speaks of Kapur-Manjari as having been written in pure Prakrit. His words are "*Yah natak shuddha Prakrit bhasha men Raja-Shekhara kabi ka banaya hua hai.*" Modern European research has shown that both Sanskrit and Prakrit were dead languages to Raja-Shekhara. He mixes up the Sauraseni and Maharashtri Prakrits in his plays. In his age (10th century) the real vernaculars of India were already asserting themselves, and he occasionally uses vernacular words, including Marathi[36]. He was himself a Brahman from Maharashtra, but he went to the court of Kanauj, and was a preceptor to the king there. The new spoken vernaculars were still in the process of formation, and were not probably yet so sharply divided from each other as they became later on. With the study of Sanskrit and the Prakrits, the learned men could move about all over India and make themselves intelligible not only among the learned through the languages of the books, but also

36. *R. S.* 236.

amongst the people at large through the Apabhransas, which must have borne the same relation to the learned languages as Italian or French in Mediaeval Europe bore to classical or theological or legal Latin. Even the Dravidian languages of the south had Sanskritised their vocabularies, and southern Pandits were ready to claim descent for their tongues from the classical language of India.

Relations between North and South India.--The relations between northern and southern India were already close in the time of Harsha, but they became even more intimate in our period. In the Harsha-Charita the learned ascetics, especially those who performed magical rites, came from the south. Contemporary with Harsha was the Pallava king of the South, Mahendra Vikrama Varman, who ruled in Kanchi (modern Conjeeveram) early in the seventh century A.D. He wrote a farce, in which Sanskrit and the two northern Prakrits (the Sauraseni and the Magadhi) are found. The forms of religion which appear in the play are Buddhism, and Shaivaism, both shown in rather a derisive light. This may have been due to the character of the farce, in which everything is made fun of, including ascetics of all orders. Though the scene of the play is in Kanchi, the atmosphere is very little different from that of any play of the North. In the time of Shankara (late 8th century or early 9th century) the great religious upheaval in the thought of India was really led from the south. Shankara's travels, north and south, east and west, did much to unify Indian religious thought, to strengthen the campaign against Buddhism, and to reconcile the jarring strife of sectarianism in a broad religious philosophy. By the time we come to Raja Shekhara (about 900), we find that the political conflicts between the north and the south had really tended to bring the north and south closer together in a linguistic, literary, and social sense. In his Kavya-Mimansa, Chapter 17, he goes out of his way to give geographical details of a precise nature, covering the whole of India. The Arya-varta is still the country between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas. But the four regions, east, west, north and south are more fully particularised, and the Middle Country is considered too well-known to need description. "East" in this connection means east of Benares.[37]

Mixture of Races and new Social Groupings.--Raja-Shekhara was a Brahman but his wife was a Rajput Princess of the Chauhan family. Other instances of the higher castes still inter-marrying could be quoted. Perhaps the rule was that the Brahman man could marry a Rajput woman, but not *vice versa.* The Kshatriyas frequently took

37. *Vai.* III 8-9.

9 Vaishya women as subordinate wives.[38] In religion Raja-Shekhara was a Shaiva; but he honoured the Jains. He delights in references to southern scenes and southern manners and customs. In referring to the Dravida women he notes their "black cheeks, pure smile, and teeth rubbed white with the rind of the betel." He was also attracted by the "ringlets of the maidens of Karnata and the pleasure-seeking propensities of Lata" (the tract of country north of the Lower Narbada).[39] The Gandharva form of marriage, which means merely a physical union between a man and woman, without any rites or ceremonies, was common during this age, and the mixture of races and castes may be inferred from the *Katha Sarit Sagara*[40]. It was permissible to take meals together, not only as between members of the three higher castes, but also as between them and certain classes of Shudras,[41] although there was certainly a large of class untouchables, who were beyond the pale for any form of social life. The movement which resulted in the absorption of foreign and aboriginal races into the new Hinduism was concurrent with the great religious movements of the 7th to the 10th centuries, of which the records of external events are so scanty. It resulted in the new social groupings which brought the Rajputs to the front, created a large number of new castes, subdivided castes (like the Brahman) into a number of territorial subdivisions which were to all intents and purposes mutually exclusive, and gave rise to new conventions about occupations, the taking of meals, and inter-marriage. We may adopt the generalisation of Sir Richard Temple[42] that while the caste system was extended to the non-Aryan masses, the latter, by their reflex action, completely transformed the temper of the old Aryan thought and the texture of its outward vestments.

Shades of Complexion considered territorially.--A curious remark of Raja-Shekhara in his *Kavya-Mimansa* may be quoted, as showing the racial generalisations indicated by the shades of complexion in the 10th century. "The complexions of the people" he says, "are dark in the eastern country, black in the southern, whitish in the western and white in the northern. In poetical descriptions there is not much difference between the dark and the black complexions and the fair and the white. But the speciality is that in the eastern country the complexion of Rajput women and others may be fair or white: so also in the southern." From this we may deduce two conclusions: first that

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38. *Vai.* II. 219.
39. *R. S.* 180-1, 213.
40. *K. S. S.* I.xviii.
41. *Vai.* II. 251-2
42. *Lalla* 64-68.

the fair-complexioned races were spreading all over India,and secondly, that there was a great deal of mixture and absorption, concealed under fictions which brought the facts into conformity with the older and classical theories of castes and Varnas. In the literature of stories we have accounts of wild robber tribes, such as Bhillas (Bhils?), Savaras, Kiratas, Pulindas, etc. The Bhillas were said to be low-born and rude; but it was allowed that they might sometimes be noble and distinguished. They sacrificed to the terrible goddess Durga, but in spite of this they were sometimes open to kind impulses and a sense of gratitude.[43]Evidently the worship of Durga had not yet become fashionable or widespread, and some apology was yet needed for her votaries.

Love of Magic and the Miraculous.--The love of magic and the supernatural and the marvellous has at all times been strong in the popular mind, but in this period of darkness, it seems to have overspread the realm of literature. A magician is the pivot of action in the play of *Kapur-Manjari.* The heroine's merit is chiefly shown by the blossoming of the Asoka tree at her touch. The battles are fought with magic weapons instead of depending upon the volour of men. The love intrigues are carried on, not by the play of character upon character, but by means of secret tunnels and miraculous interventions, and the use of the ubiquitous magician's name. It is instructive to note how the noble story of Rama and Sita is handled in Raja-Sheikhara's Bala-Ramayana. This is a portentous play of ten Acts, of which the hero is practically Ravana. He was a suitor for the hand of Sita, and his defeat lets loose the whole series of incidents, of which the spring is not so much human motives, good or evil, but majic tricks, and the personations of men and women. Dolls with speaking parrots in their mouths are presented as Sita and her sister, and apparently such a rude device actually succeeds in deceiving people into thinking that they were Sita and her sister.[44]

Ornaments and Cosmetics.--Life seems to have been on a very artificial plane. The description of the ornaments and cosmetics of the court ladies leaves no room for doubt that luxury had sapped the foundations of refinement. The body was anointed yellow with paste of saffron essence to keep it cool. The cheeks were similarly rubbed with saffron paste. It is not specified with what substance the sectarian marks were placed on the forehead. Two blue silk garments were wrapped round Kapur Manjari. Her girdle was jewelled with rubies. She had bracelets on her forearms. With regard to this a very homely

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43. *K. S. S.* VII. p. ix.
44. *Keith* 232-9

modern Hindi proverb was already current in the 10th century: "*Hath kangan ko arsi kya?*" --as much as to say, "for putting on a bracelet on your arm, what need is there of a mirror?" The mirrors referred to were probably of metal,--steel, or silver or bronze, with a highly polished surface, and a handle,--such as you see among the treasured relics of ancient India in the Taxila museum. There was a necklace of big pearls round the neck, and a pair of ear-rings studded with gems in the ears. A pretty touch of fresh nature was given by wreaths of flowers to hide the black curly locks. The fragrant golden blooms of the champak flower were used for the decoration of the hair and ears. It was a sign of beauty to have long almond eyes, reaching, says the play, "from ear to ear." The eyes were adorned with collyrium, which when it was washed off left the eyes red. Wax was put on the lips in the winter to prevent them chapping, and saffron seems to have been chewed against colds. In the summer the large fronds of the talipot palm were used as hand-fans to make the breeze, and shower baths were indulged in[45]. Scents, perfumes, and incense were fashionable, and the incense of aloes is specifically mentioned by the dramatist.[46]

Jhula Festival.-- The Jhula festival was a great occasion for amorous dalliance. The girls indulged in the swings "in maiden meditation, fancy free". The alternate motion up and down, with the sound of jewels and the sweep of the garments, is well described in the Play.

"With the tinkling jewelled anklets,
With the flashing, jingling necklace,
With the show of girdles garrulous,
From their ringing, ringing bells,
With the sound of lovely jingles,
From the rows of rolling bangles,--
Pray, whose heart is not bewildered
While the moon-faced maiden swings.[47]"

These festivals were numerous and afforded numerous occasions for public and private gaiety. They also enabled dramatists to produce plays for their royal patrons. But alas! as in all ages, runs the pathetic plaint of the playwright of Mediaeval India: "Learned men were ever poor."[48]

Brahmans in popular Tales.--The Brahmans as a class still monopolised all learning as well as the higher posts of administration.

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45. *R. S.* Acts I and II.
46. *R.S.* Act III, p. 268.
47. *R. S.* 255. Lanman's spirited English version reproduces the jingle well.
48. *R. S.* 288.

They were expected to have brilliant intellects and all the virtues of character and religion. In practice, however, they did not necessarily enjoy a very high reputation. The story of the miserly and covetous Brahman of Ujjain, the Chaplain to the king himself, is told with a great deal of gusto by Soma Deva, himself a Brahman. The riches of this Chaplain and his selfishness became a bye-word. Two rogues determined to relieve him of all his wealth and at the same time make a laughing-stock of him. One of them took on the disguise of a Rajput from the Deccan and lodged outside the city. His confederate pretended to be a devout ascetic, and performed penances by the river-side. The pretended Rajput went into the city and sang aloud the praises and merits of the other as if in casual talk. He flattered the Chaplain, and through him, entered the king's service. They both pretended to be very devout men and quite unworldly. He won the confidence of the Chaplain, who in the hope of presents gave him lodging in his house. He brought a box full of false jewellery of which, however, he pretended not to know the value, as he was an unworldly man. This, in itself, aroused the cupidity of the Brahman. The guest pretended to be ill, and asked for the services of a holy man, on whom he could bestow his riches. The pretended ascetic was brought in. He said he despised riches, but agreed to marry the Chaplain's daughter, and give the riches to the Chaplain, who no doubt understood their value better than he did. He only stipulated for a small amount of money in return, at the Chaplain's own valuation of the jewels. As the Chaplain thought the jewels were priceless, he gave a large sum of money, thinking in his own niggardly mind that he was giving only a nominal sum for a fabulous treasure. After the marriage was completed the poor Chaplain discovered the fraud, and no one was more delighted at the trick than the king himself, who knew all the foibles of his Chaplain.[49]

The Rajputs.--The origin of the Rajputs is a subject on which there is much controversy. I do not propose to enter into the disputed points on the present occasion. What is certain is that the ruling castes had been re-organised and re-grouped in the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries.[50] Their social structure had now become that of clans rather than of castes Their marriage customs required them to marry out of their clans. They were gradullay developing a new code of honour and new traditions, which we shall consider in their full maturity in the next period.

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49. *K. S. S.* II. 176-184.
50 *O. H. I.* 172-4.

The outcastes and untouchables.--The large numbers of untouchables, even below the Shudras, and altogether outside the classical scheme of caste, are referred to by Al-Biruni. They were divided into eight classes, who freely intermarried with each other, except the fuller, the shoemaker, and the weaver, with whom none of the other classes would have anything to do. Besides these three, the other five were the juggler, the basket and shieldmaker, the sailor, the fisherman, and the hunter of wild animals and birds. These eight classes had to live outside the villages or towns, but were allowed to live near them. As they were distinguished by their professions they might be called guild. Even lower than these outcaste guilds were the Hadis, the Domas, the Chandalas, and the Badhataus. They did the dirty work of the village and were looked upon as degraded outcastes. Even amongst these the Hadis were a little above the others. The Doms sang and played on the lute. In them we recognise the modern criminal tribe of Doms. The classes below them, presumably the Chandalas, were professional executioners. As to the Badhataus they not only ate the flesh of dead animals but even of dogs and wild beasts.[51]

Endowments to Brahmans and Temples--A great, social and economic feature of the time was the large number of endowments granted to individual Brahmans and to temples and religious foundations. The famous sun temple at Multan was the cause of the prosperity of the city. When the Arabs first took the city early in the 8th century they spared the idol in the temple, as the city's prosperity depended upon it. The temple at Thaneshwar was also richly endowed. The temple at Somnath on the southern coast of the peninsula of Kathiawar owed its prosperity to maritime traffic. According to Kazwini[52] it was endowed with the revenue of ten thousand villages besides the rich offerings that were brought to it by the pilgrims. A thousand Brahmans were employed in attending to the worship and the needs of the temple, and five hundred damsels sang and danced at the door. All these were maintained from the endowments of the temple.

Writing and Books.--The writing material in northern and central India was a kind of birch bark. They oiled and polished it to make it hard and smooth and then wrote on it. The various leaves were fastened between two tablets and wrapped up in a piece of cloth. In southern India the common writing material was palm leaves. These leaves had a hole bored in the middle of one of the sides, through which a cord was passed which held the leaves together in the form of

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51. *Alb.* I. 101-2.
52. *El.* I. 98.

a book.[53] Both these kinds of manuscripts have been preserved in great numbers and are quite familiar to manuscript hunters all over India. Al-Biruni, however, is careful to note that a great deal of knowledge, especially religious knowledge, was handed down by oral tradition. The Vedas were not ordinarily allowed to be committed to writing, and it was only a short time before him that a Kashmiri had first produced a written version of them.[54]

Manners and Customs.--A number of miscellaneous manners and customs are noted by Al-Biruni which struck him as curious. One was that they did not cut the hair of the head or any part of the body and that they divided the moustaches into plaits. They allowed the nails to grow long. They ate singly and not in company, on ground that was smeared over with cowdung. On account of the chewing of betel leaves with betel nuts and lime (and catechu, though Al-Biruni does not mention this) their teeth appeared red. When a child was born people showed particular attention to the father rather than to the mother. Their chess was somewhat like the modern game of Pachisi, as it was played by four persons and with a pair of dice. Al-Biruni gives a figure of the chess-board and the rules of the play, from which, however, it would appear that it was a different game from the modern Pachisi. In judging about the prevalence of these customs we must remember that Al-Biruni's observations were confined to the Panjab and Sindh. Probably the dress in those regions was entirely different from the dress in eastern and southern India, and tended to approach the fashions of the colder regions beyond the north-western passes.[55]

Two Inscriptions.--The numerous inscriptions of the period enable us to get a glimpse into some of the social and economic factors of the time. I will draw your atttention to two inscriptions from southern India. One is contained in the Anbil copper-plates of the Chola dynasty of Tanjore, and the other is a Kanarese inscription from the Dharwar district of the Bombay Presidency.

Land Grants to Brahmans.--The Anbil plates of Sundara Chola date from the latter part of the 10th century and were found in the neighbourhood of Tanjore. There were eleven plates in all, held together by a ring which carried a well-executed seal. The seal bore the figures of a tiger, two fishes (carps), a bow, two lampstands, two chauris and an umbrella, with a Sanskrit verse round the margin. These figures were worked out in half relief. The first part of the rec-

53. *Alb.* I. 171.
54. *Alb.* I. 125-6.
55. *Alb.* I. 179-185.

ord was written in the Sanskrit language, and contained the words of the Chola king's grant to his learned Brahman minister. The second part was in Tamil and contained an acknowledgment of the grant by the officials and people of the village. The land granted amounted to about 45 acres, which were supposed to be sufficient for the maintenance of a Brahman of the position of the king's minister. The king merely specified roughly the grant of a holding. It was for the villagers actually to demacrate the land, of which the dues were henceforward to be paid not to the king but to the grantee. The method of demarcation was that a she-elephant was let loose from a certain point and allowed to mark out a rough circuit of land. Presumably there was some method by which her return to the point from which she was let loose was ensured. The demarcation boundary was marked with earth-mounds and living cactus plants.[56]

Forests in the Chola Kingdom.--It is recorded of the grantee that his mother had made a pious endowment for providing sumptuous meals served in a silver vessel to a learned Brahman every day till the world's end, and also a big lamp to Hari (Vishnu) at Srirangam. Some idea may be obtained of the face of the country included in the Chola kingdom, from the allusion to the "dense forests of the seashore, crowded with the palm (presumably the talipot palm), the sāl, the ebony, the areca (supāri) palm, and plantain trees and groves of betel leaves."[57]

Rights attached to land, and dues payable by tenant.-- The subject matter of the grant is described in detail and gives us a good idea of the economic life of the villages. We may consider this under four heads: (1) the land and everything on it, (2) the water and everything connected with it, (3) the dues and taxes which were to be received by the donee, and (4) the liberties which were granted to him. Along with the land he was to enjoy the fruit trees and other trees, gardens, clefts of rock in which bees had their hives, wells, halls, and wastes in which calves grazed, along with the village site, ant-hills, plat-forms built round trees, with buildings and temples, and waste and marshy land. His water rights extended to rivers, ponds, alluvial deposits, tanks and fish ponds. As regard the dues to which he was entitled, the list includes fines and forfeitures by process of the local court, betel leave, the tax on a certain number of cloths woven in each loom, presents levied from the tenants on occasions of marriage in their family, the lease of markets, and the fines on the eviction of old tenants, besides special articles fit for the king's consumption, which would now

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56. *E. I.* XV. 44-70.
57. *E. I.* XV. 69.

go to the grantee in place of the king. The liberties which were granted to the Brahman included permission to erect halls and upper storeys. with burnt bricks or tiles: to dig big and small wells; to cut channels and irrigate the land; and to cultivate certain sweet-smelling roots and plants [58] From this we may gather that the normal buildings in the village were of mud, and the king's permission had to be specially obtained for the erection of *pucca* buildings. It would also seem that crops of a special character could not be grown except by the special permission of the king.

Temple Service.--The Kanarese inscription which we are going to discuss came from the Kulenur village in Dharwar district and is dated Saka 950, corresponding to 1028 A.D. The inscription is on a stone of which the top is decorated with sculptures. In the centre is a shrine containing a *Linga* and surmounted by a cupola with a finial (*kalasha*). On each side of the cupola is a *chauri*. To the proper right of the shrine is a squatting votary facing full front. Above are two fishes in a circle and over them the moon. To the proper left of the shrine is a cow with a sucking calf and above her is a plough and over it the sun. These little details of sculpture are of interest as throwing light on the conditions of village life. The actual grant is for the benefit of a temple, and consists of certain paddy fields and twelve houses. Part of the income is for the maintenance of the god in the temple part is for the monastery for religious instruction: part is for the flute players (presumably those who performed in the temple); and part, including the houses, is for the drummers who also served the temple. It is interesting to note that the ascetics were strictly enjoined to keep the vow of chastity.[59]

Relations of Muslims to Hindus.--Before closing our discussion of this part of the subject we may note that the Muslims were thinly spread over the coasts of southern India long before they penetrated the Gangetic valley as conquerors. The great Rashtrakuta kingdom of the south was well known to the Arabs, who spoke of its king as Balahra (Vallabh Rai). Mas'udi (who died about 956 A.D.) writes: 'Of all the kings of Sindh and Hind there is no one who pays greater respect to the Musalmans than the Balahra. In his kingdom Islam is honoured and protected'.[60] Evidently the clash of arms in the north put the Musalmans on a different footing in relation to the Hindus from the pursuit of commerce and navigation in the south.

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58. *E. I.* XV. 71-72.
59. *E. I.* XV.329 - 334.
60. *El.* 1. 24.

The Fourteenth Century

Social Characteristics.--Our third period begins with the 14th century. Muslim influence had by then spread itself all over India. The Delhi Sultanate had been consolidated, and spread out its arms far and wide. But the state of communications then existing did not allow of a central authority making its rule effective over such long distances exceeding a thousand miles in all directions. Nor had the Muslim people, who came to India in a wave of religious enthusiasm, sufficiently unifed their social life to act as one unit in loyal obedience to a central government. The many races, Turkish, Afghan, Persian, Arab, Mongol, and Muslimised Indians of various tribes, had not yet reached a stage of homogeneous culture, in which they could support a large and strong empire with one will. And their relations with the Hindus were not yet on a footing of cordial understanding. As far as administration and conquest were concerned, the Rajputs had gained complete ascendancy among the Hindus before the Muslim conquest. After that conquest the Rajputs continued to develop their institutions and their code of chivalry, and may be considered still to represent the manly portion of the Hindu population. The Hindu thinkers of India had receded into the background, but they felt the influence of the ruling power. Muslim saints and Sufis were scattered all over the land, and their influence was felt indirectly on Hindu thought, and also directly in the social and political life of the country. The indirect influences are reflected in the development of the Bhakti doctrines in the schools of the new Vaishnavism as well as the new Shaivaism, and in the protest movements which intensified the exclusiveness of caste and its unsocial features and multiplied its numbers enormously. The direct influence was seen in the wholesale absorption of large numbers into the fold of Islam and in the rise of the various Panths and schools of religious thought which began in this period and continued their work for a century or two later. Kabir and Guru Nanak may be cited as amongst the foremost examples in a large galaxy of religious and social reformers, who prepared the way for modern India.

Authorities.--For such a formative period, whose activities extended to so many deprtments of Indian life, the number of authorities is large. We are embarrassed in our task of selection. The critical study of the period too has not penetrated as deep as might be desired, partly and paradoxically owing to this very abundance of easily accessible material. We have not sufficiently taken toll of literature and folk lore nor sufficiently explored the influence of religious movements on the social and economic life of the country. Many dark points are susceptible of being illuminated from this source. In this

lecture we can consider only a few authorities, in order to give us a graphic picture of the later ages of mediaeval India. The Bardic literature may be studied in the *Prithi Raj Rasau* of Chand Baradi and in the cycle of legends sung in the monsoons by itinerant bards all over the United Provinces, known by the name of *Alha-khand.* Much light will also be thrown on the Bardic literature by Tod's Rajasthan, of which an excellent edition was recently published by Mr. W. Crooke, whom many of us remember well in these Provinces as a member of the last generation of Civilians. The religious movement which brought the new Shaivaism into touch with the Naqshabandia school of Sufi mystics is admirably exemplified in the work of Lalla the Prophetess (Lal Ded) of Kashmir who lived in the 14th century, when Islam was receiving almost universal acceptance in her country. Besides the scholarly edition of Sir George Grierson (Lalla Vakyani), there is the excellent verse translation of Sir Richard Temple, to which a most valuable dissertation has been affixed, placing the religious atmosphere of the 14th century in India in a fresh light. Amongst the travellers we may note Ibn Batuta, of whose travels an excellent edition with a French translation has been published by the Societe Asiatique of Paris under the editorship of C. Defremery and Dr. B. C. Sanguinetti, in 4 volumes. This prince of Oriental travellers came to India about a generation after that prince of western travellers, Marco Polo, whose work can be studied in the excellent edition of Col. Yule. The Egyptian traveller Shihab-ud-Din Abul Abbas Ahmad also visited the Tughluq court at Delhi about the same time and has left us excellent account of the city and the people, the court and the social life of the time. Then there are the Muslim Historians of India, including Farishta. Barni, `Afif, and the little autobiography of Firoz Shah Tughluq, the *Tarikh-i-Firoz-Shahi.* The works of Amir Khusrau of Delhi also give us vivid pictures of many sides of life which we do not get in the professed historians. These works may now be studied in the excellent edition issued from Aligarh under the patronage of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. I specially commend to your attention the two romances of *Dewal Rani Khizar Khan* and *Qiran-us-Sa'dain.* Of coins and inscriptions the number is large. In this branch of study we shall find much assistance from the volumes of the Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica and the works of Mr. E. Thomas.

Rajput Manners: Princess of Kanauj.-- Both Chand Bardai's poem and the Alha-khand, as we have them, though they refer to the twelfth century, contain a good deal of matter of later growth. The Alha- khand, as handed down by oral tradition, probably reflects on the whole a picture of Rajput manners and life in the 13th and 14th centuries. The tale of how king Prithi won his bride is so characteris-

tic that with your permission I shall try to tell it very briefly, in order to whet your appetite for the spirited Bardic version which so graphically depicts the manners of the Rajput courts. In Kanauj reigned the Rathor King Jai Chand. (Modern research shows that Jai Chand was really a Gaharwar, but the Gaharwars were connected with the Rathors, and for certain generalogical reasons the Bardic tradition always spoke of the Kanauj king as Rathor). Jai Chand had a beautiful daughter Sanjogin, who was of marriageable age. The king decided to hold a Swayamvar Darbar. in order that the princess might chose her husband. This kind of Darbar was not common, but the king who held it was understood to claim some sort of supremacy amongst the Rajputs by this kind of rite for his daughter. All the noted Rajput kings and princes were invited from far and near. Among them was the celebrated Cauhan King Prithi Raj of Delhi. He on his side thought it presumption on the part of Jai Chand to hold such a Darbar. He did not come as a suitor, but he determined to win Jai Chand's daughter as a bride by capture.

The Waywardness of Love.--The Darbar was held. The kings and princes came and sat in their respective chairs. The chair of the Chauhan was empty, and Jai Chand in order to pay off the insult to his pride had an image of Prithi Raj set up standing at the door, as much as to say that Prithi Raj was only fit to be his door-keeper. But he had not counted on the young Princess's own feelings. She came to the Darbar with the garland which she was to throw round the neck of the husband of her choice. She passed by all the Princes assembled, and placed it round the neck of the image of the door-keeper. There was great consternation and anger in the Darbar. "Jai Chand's wrath did blaze: his daughter he shut in the prison tower; and the Rajas rode their way."

Love's Harbinger in disguise.--Meanwhile a woman was sent from Prithi Raj's court to prepare the way for the abduction of the Kanauj Princess. She came disguised as a man, but was discovered by the fact that in the hole in her nostril "the button of gold was left in place, which none but women wear." She was not dismayed by the discovery. She said she was a slave of the king of Delhi, and had fled from his court. She asked for refuge from the Kanauj king, as she knew he would never refuse shelter to injured fugitives. In the circumstances Jai Chand felt that her feelings would be against Prithi Raj, and he set her to guard his daughter in prison and to "heal her of her fantasy."

Prithi himself on the scene.--In Delhi Prithi Raj held a consultation with his bard Chand, who advised him to start forthwith for Ka-

nauj. The bard was of course well known by face in all the Rajput courts, but Prithi disguised himself as the bard's servant, and started with a few trusty followers. Arrived in the Kanauj Court, Prithi nearly betrayed himself by trying to twirl his moustache with his braceleted hand,--a characteristic gesture of a Rajput warrior offering defiance. Chand prevented this in time. The king of Kanauj welcomed the bard, as was his heraldic due, and asked him what manner of man was the king of Delhi. The bard replied truthfully: "Like my servant here is the Delhi king; a brave Chauhan is he; he hath no fear what fate may bring, and death he laughs to see." They were dismissed with due ceremony to their lodging in the garden.

Messages exchanged.--Here was a fishpond. So generous, says the bard, was the Delhi king that he flung away the royal pearls of his necklace to feed the fishes. Sanjogin saw this from the windows, and sent the supposed run-away slave with her own pearls heaped high in a platter of gold. This established communication and understanding between the lovers.

The Challenge of the Rajput.--Next morning Jai Chand dismissed the bard with many presents,--chains of coral and pearls and precious stones; "Shawls and kerchiefs and broidered weeds; turban and crest and ring; elephants thirty and two hundred steeds--as fitted a mighty King." Prithi Raj, in his supposed character as a servant, mixed a *Bira of Pan.* Nominally it was a return of civility for the king of Kanauj's courtesy. But it had a further symbolic meaning. He rolled five *Pan* leaves and thus offered a challenge of fight, as from one Rajput to another, and to make his meaning clear, he pressed Jai Chand's hand so hard that the blood sprang from his nails. The secret was now out. War was declared. The drum of battle began to summon the Rathor warriors. The order went forth: The men of Delhi must die, and not one should escape.

The Lovers Meet.--Sanjogin got together her jewels, and decked herself in royal array. She found her way to Prithi Raj. She waved a golden censer round his head to ward off ill omen. She fanned his face with a fan of flowers, to offer her womanly fealty. And the gentler *Bira of pan* she gave as a pledge of her love. But she warned him: "Mighty is the host on Jai Chand's side, and thou hast not many to fight on thy side." "Fear not, sweet flower," replied Prithi, "though few be my men, this good sword of mine shall hew a way and show thee the tower of Delhi." The Princess was now ready to fly with him in her litter. But Prithi pitched his tent six miles north of Kanauj, and sent in haste to summon his bravest men to fight the Rathor of Kanauj and escort the bride. A hundred and sixteen gallant men forthwith

obeyed their king's call. As soon as they arrived, Prithi bade one of his men incite a quarrel with the Rathors and fight for the Princess's litter.

The Fight for the Bride.--Both sides welcomed the fray. Their minstrels sounded martial music. Swords flashed out. In the close deadly combat they knew not friend from foe. The slaughter continued all day.

"They did not hold their hands that day
Till stars above them shone."

Jai Chand ordered the Princess's litter to be brought in the midst as the stake of battle, to draw Prithi himself and slay him. "Set down the litter, and go back to Kanauj," shouted the Chauhan warriors. "Ah!" said the Rathors, "let us see the Rajput that can take it to Delhi." Two good swords did each warrior take, and both sides fought with furious glee. The litter itself was stained with red like the henna on the bride's feet. Lances and bows were also used, and the Chauhan prevailed, and the litter marched another five *kos* towards Delhi

The Bride brought to Delhi.--But the men of Kanauj were not daunted, and pursued the fight night and day. The litter swayed, now towards Delhi, now towards Kanauj. But on the whole, it went on towards Delhi. Another fierce fight took place on the crossing of the Ganges at Soron. Champions on both sides fought single combats with shield and lance.. But the Chauhans still won, and the ranks to Kanauj were thinned. The final battle at the gates of Delhi itself disposed of the last of the Rathor warriors, and Prithi and his bard themselves bore in the litter in triumph. Said the bard to Jai Chand: "If thy warriors are all slain, so are Prithi's. So now go in peace." And thus closes the story of "how Rajput brides were won."[61]

Shaikh Burhan in Rajputana.--We are so accustomed to Hindu-Muslim feuds in these degenerate days that it is refreshing to turn to the days when a Muslim saint was almost worshipped by a whole Rajput confederation and was the eponymous hero of a whole tract of ten thousand square miles in Rajputana. We know of the "Mirza Raja" of Jaipur (1625-67), but we are now speaking of a Rajput "Shaikhji", the son of Mokalji, the chief of the Rajputs in what afterwards came to be known as Shaikhawati between Alwar and Bikanir. Mokal lived towards the end of the 14th century. A pious Muslim missionary named Shaikh Burhan so impressed the imagination of the Rajputs that they believed in his power to work miracles. Mokal prayed to him for a son, and when the son was born, he was named Shaikhji. The

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61. *Alha*, 89-96.

saint's shrine is still held in honour, and flies the saint's blue pennon over the yellow flag of the Shaikhawats. In honour of the saint the Shaikhawat Rajputs do not even hunt the wild boar.[62]

A Delhi Inscription.--Among the inscriptions which throw light on the period of the Delhi Sultanate, I shall call your attention to only one, the Palam inscription, which is in the Museum of Archaeology in Delhi Fort. It belonged to a well in a village only twelve miles from modern Delhi. It is in Sanskrit, with the last part in a local vernacular spoken in Hariana. It requires close critical study. It is dated 1337 of the Vikrama year, corresponding to 1280-1 A.D., when Ghiyas-ud-din Balban was on the throne of Delhi. The name of Delhi appears in the Sanskrit portion as Dhilli, and in the vernacular portion as Dhili. This has some bearing on the original form of the name of Delhi. But the real interest of the inscription is in the attitude it reveals of the learned Pandit Yogishwara and his people towards the Muslim rulers of the land. They are described as Shaka Princes, and their rule is traced from Shihab-ud-din Ghori through Qutb-ud-din (Aibak), Shams-ud-din. (Altamish), and Razia Begam to the reigning sovereign. Razia Begam is simply mentioned by her title Jalal-ud-din. As Balban had been Wazir in the reign preceding his own, both reigns are praised lavishly. The ruler is described as;-- "he throughout whose whole contented realm, under his great and good government, from Gaur (in Bengal) to Ghazna (in Afghanistan), from the Dravida country and Rameshvar, everywhere, the earth bears the beauty of the sylvan spring-tide through the shooting gleams of the many jewels fallen from the contact of the diadems of princes coming and going in his service." The strength and the movement of the armies is described as extending from sea to sea, from the mouth of the Ganges to the mouth of the Indus ensuring the peace and security enjoyed by all. The cavalry is specially referred to. "Since this king supports the world," says the panegyrist, "Shesha (the snake who supports the world) has laid down the burden of the earth.....and Vishnu himself" has given up the thought of guarding the world and gone to sleep on the ocean of milk. Under this king, lord of many hundreds of great towns, continues the inscription, prospers the heart-ravishing city of Dhilli. Like the earth, she is a receptacle of many jewels; like heaven she is full of joy; like the lower world (Patal) she contains giants (Daityas) of great strength; and like Maya she is full of fascination. Some personal details are given of the Thakur who built the well, with its abundant drinking water, to allay the thirst of weary travellers. He had three wives,

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62. *Tod.* III. 1378-82.

seven sons and four daughters, and he had built several extensive rest-houses, apparently on the main road[63]

Ibn Batuta's Account.--The picture of India drawn by the Moorish traveller Ibn Batuta, who was in India from 1333-1346, is both detailed and picturesque. As I have given a full account of it elsewhere,[64] I shall not repeat it here, but merely mention a few points of interest before passing on to the picture drawn for us by the poet Amir Khusrau. The flourishing horse trade formed an economic tie between the Kipchak country (near the Sea of Azov) and India. In the Kipchak country a good horse cost only about four rupees, while the selling price in India might be anything from Rs. 100 to Rs. 2,000[65]. The caravans, each consisiting of herds of six thousand horses, came through the Gomal Pass, and found their chief frontier mart in the city of Multan. The postal organisation was good, and there was an efficient and quick service of news as between the outlying places and the capital[66]. In Sindh a regular flotilla of boats was maintained on the Indus[67]. The Sultan (Muhammad Shah Tughluq) kept great state in his city of Delhi. He lavished gifts freely[68], and his mother maintained a great number of charities and endowed alms-houses for the poor. The fiscal policy of the Sultan was to abolish trade imposts as far as possible and encourage trade[69]. There was a great deal of maritime trade through the ports at the mouth of the Indus, on the coast of Kathiawar, and further south from the Malabar ports. Cambay was a beautiful and flourishing city, and Abyssinians were specially noted for their maritime enterprise[70], as they were in later Mughal times. Chinese junks called at Malabar ports[71]. Bengal was a land of cheapness and plenty, though its political condition was very disturbed. Plague was levying its toll in the country[72]. In time of famine there was a good organisation of famine relief. Registers were prepared by officials, and towns were parcelled out into regular relief areas. The state granaries supplied a ration of about a seer of grain per day to every person to be relieved, old or young, slave or free.[73]

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63. *E. I. M.* 1913-14. pp. 35-45.
64. *T. T.* 32-62.
65. *Bat.* II. 371-4.
66. *Bat.* III. 95-6.
67. *Bat.* III. 109.
68. *Bat.* III. 246
69. *Bat.* III. 288.
70. *Bat.* IV. 55-65
71. *Bat* IV. 91.
72. *Bat.* 334.
73. *Bat.* III. 290.

Delhi of Amir Khusrau.--The social life described by Amir Khusrau (1253-1325) in court and literary circles among the ruling classes has some attractive features, but it also shows symptoms of disruption and decay. Among the attractive features may be noted the free-handed hospitality, the love of elegance and the arts, and the respect in which learning was held. The other side of the picture is shown by the internal jealousies, the severe punishments, the uncertainty in the succession of the Sultans, and the luxury, hard drinking, dissiption, and the decadence of morals. The Mongol incursions from the north-west did much to unsettle both social and political life. Khusrau had been their prisoner and describes them in no complimentary terms. Their bodies were hard as steel and clothed in wool (*paulad-tan wa pamba-posh).* Their small blue eyes, flat noses, wide nostrils, square faces, scanty beards, and long moustaches were mere outward signs of their fierce wolf natures[74] . The city of Delhi which he describes extended from the river on the east to the hills on the west, and from the old Lal-Kot in the south (near the Qutb) to the site of Firozabad, which was built subsequently. The three chief features of the city were the Jami Mosque, the Moazzin's tower, and the great Royal Reservoir for supplying pure water to the town. The Mosque had nine domes and a number of pillars in the cloistered portion, besides the large open courtyard. The Tower described was probably the Qutb Minar, and not the Alai Minar, which was never completed. Amir Khusrau's Moazzin's Tower was built of red stone in the lower storeys. It had a marble storey on the top, with a dome and a pinnacle of gold. The top was injured by lightning subsequently (in the reign of Firoz Tughluq who, however, had it repaired). The Royal Reservoir was about two miles or more to the north of the Qutb. It used the hilly ground as its sides, with a bund in the lower portion to hold up the pure rain water. In the centre was a chabutra with a pleasure pavilion, which was the resort of Delhi citizens, who also encamped on the hillside when they wanted to get away from the city for a holiday[75]. Amir Khusrau himself was the son of a Turkish father and a Rajput (Rawal) mother, and was born in Patiala. He lost his father early, and his mother's influence made him a good Indian, who was proud of his country. Though he wrote in Persian, he was at home in Hindi and Turkish. He uses many Hindi words in his Persian writings.

Marco Polo in South India.--Life in Southern India seems to have been, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, very different from that in the North. The people wore hardly any clothes, but much

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74. Q.S..Intro, 34-8, Text 91-6.
75. Q-S-Text. 28-37.

jewellery,-- gold, silver, pearls, and gems[76]. The long sea-coast, east and west, was frequented by the shipping of many nations, mainly Chinese and Muslims from Arabia and Persia. The tract round Tanjore contained flourishing ports, and a Pagoda near Negapatam. showing a Chinese style of architecture, bears witness to Chinese influences[77]. The horse trade in Southern India was by sea, and mostly with the ports of Arabia and the Persian Gulf. As many as 2,000 horses were annually imported by sea into one of the southern kingdoms[78]. We saw how flourishing the horse trade was by land in Northern India. The Kipchak horses were mostly heavy horses. The Arab and Gulf horses were lighter and faster. In the island of Ceylon the soliders were nearly all Muslims from abroad,-- "Saracens" as Marco Polo calls them. The Jogis, or order of religious ascetics. were very much in evidence. They were very abstemious, but what they ate was good,-- chiefly rice and milk. Twice every month they drank a strong drink. which was supposed to prolong their lives. Marco Polo thought it was compounded of sulphur and mercury[79], but it may have been merely preparations of Bhang. They went about stark naked, daubed with ashes of cow-dung. They claimed to be very long-lived, and we know from Ibn Batuta that they were believed to perform marvellous miracles[80]. They ate from leaves and not from bowls or plates. Marco Polo assigns them a cruel and perfidious character, in contrast with the merchants of the west coast, whom he considered most truthful[81].

Attempted abolition of social inequalities.--A period which included three such masterful monarchs as Ala-ud-din Khalji (1295-1316), Muhammad Shah Tughluq (1325-1351) and Firoz Shah Tughluq (1351-1388) was fruitful in economic experiments. Ala-ud-din attempted a kind of socialistic measure. He tried to abolish pride and wealth by confiscating grants and reducing the rich to the level of the poor: he tried to cheapen the cost of foodgrains by fixing prices: and he even tried to regulate or socialise the transport services. He provided drastic punishments for breach of his decrees. Though Zia-ud-din Barni is enthusiastic over these decrees, it is doubtful whether they did not cause more misery than they were intended to allay, and they certainly came to an end with his death. He abolished not pov-

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76. *Polo* II. 275.
77. *Polo* II. 272.
78. *Polo* II. 284.
79. *Polo* II. 300.
80. *Bat.* IV. 33 seq.
81. *Polo.* II. 302, 299.

erty, but production and wealth. His decree for the total prohibition of drink was never very effective.[82]

Currency Reforms.--We saw how Muhammad Shah tried to encourage trade by abolishing various imposts and transit duties. His attention to coinage and currency deserves a word of praise. His coins are distinguished by careful attention to their design and the artistic skill of their construction. His circular gold dinars of 199 grains have the edges carefully defined by lines, to prevent filing. His silver Tankah (of 64 Jitals) with subordinate denominations was brought up to the standard of 175 grains of pure silver, which is not far from our modern rupee with its gross weight of 180 grains. He had heard of contemporary attempts at token currency in China and Persia. He attempted to attain similar results by employing alloys of various standards, but he gave up the system as soon as he found that there was a depreciation in the market. The prevailing ratio of gold to silver in those days was probably 8 to 1 or 7 to 1, as compared with the modern 22 or 23 to 1. There was a glut of gold in the Treasury on account of the vast treasures received from the Deccan[83].

State's attempt to deal with Unemployment.--Firoz Tughluq was responsible for a scheme of unemployment for his subjects, of which we should like to have further particulars. All unemployed workmen in the City were to be brought before him, and were given employment according to their capacity. Men of the pen were employed as government clerks, and men who showed intelligence in business were placed under the Khan-i-Jahan, presumably the officer in charge of the departments of supply and manufacture. These had to do with the stables, the kitchens, the dog kennels, the candle department, and the water cooling department, of which the aggregate budget amounted to an equivalent of three lakhs and twenty thousand rupees. The purchasing power of the rupee was then many times greater than it is now. In addition there were the wardrobe department and the carpet department. If any one wished to serve any particular nobleman, he was placed in employment under him.[84]

Charitable Relief and Public Works.--There was also a Charity Department (Diwan-i-Khairat). The Hospital (*Shafa-khana* or *Sihhat-khana*) not only supplied medical relief for the sick and afflicted of all classes, but also maintained them at the expense of the Treasury[85]. But Firoz Shah's greatest title to fame rests on his Public Works. He

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82. *El.* III. 192-7.
83. *Thom.* 217-261.
84. *El.* III. 355-7.
85. *El.* III. 361.

not only built great Works himself, but what is rarer in India, he looked upon it as a pious duty to repair the Works of his predecessors. He built cities, forts, palaces, irrigation *bunds,* mosques, tombs, colleges, inns, gardens, canals and bridges in great numbers.[86] He constructed the double system of canals, by which he brought water from the Satlaj and the Jamna for his new city of Hisar Firoza (now Hisar, headquarters of the district of that name in the Panjab). The canals greatly increased cultivation, and gave a great impetus to fruit growing. They can still be traced, and have partly been utilised for the British canals. Firoz Shah, after much debate among the learned, originated the system of water-rates for irrigation[87].

Conclusion.--We have now reviewed some features of social and economic life in Madieaval India. Limitations of time and space have only permitted of our casting an occasional glance here and there. But I hope I have succeeded in some degree in rousing your interest in the subject. and in convincing you that there is more abundant material for the study of our mediaeval social life than is usually imagined. We have to study it in a humble and catholic spirit, without any pre-occupations of race, community or religion. By doing so, and by placing the results, however modest, at the disposal of our Hindustani reading public, we shall further the work of nation building, in which the past must be used as a firm foundation for the future.[88]

AL-BIRUNI'S "INDIA"

[The author's inention is to write a short study of Al-Biruni's "India." Illness has unfortunately prevented him from completing this study. and he now only offers a short instalment].

A remarkable scientific spirit seems to have animated the leaders of though in Islam in the fourth and fifth centuries of the Hijra. They were pervaded with a universal intellectual and moral curiosity. The world they saw around them they recognised to be Allah's handiwork, and their best minds felt something akin to the spirit of worship in making themselves acquainted with it as showing the mind of their Creator. The boldness of their research was only tempered by their

86. *EI* III. 354, 345-6, 384. *Far. I. 465.*
87. El. III. 298-301.
88. *Islamic Cutlure*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1930, pages 199-222. This article appeared in *Islamic Culture* when Allama Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall was its editor.

reverence. The subject of their investigations was not only the physical world around them (astronomy, physics, geography, history) but the wonderful mind of man which can reason about abstract truths (pure mathematics, metaphysics, logic) and man's social instincts which can build up laws and human institutions.

Their strong passion for the investigation of truth can only be paralleled by a similar passion that possessed the minds of intellectual Europe during the period of the Renaissance. Like the men of the Renaissance, these men of Islam were very versatile in their subjects and acquirements. Science had not yet been too highly specialised. The engineer was also a doctor, a chemist, a physicist, perhaps a painter and a mechanician as well, as in the case of Leonardo da Vinci. Al-Biruni had a studious mind from his earliest boyhood, and among the subjects of his study were astronomy, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, social life, geography and history. Not only did he study these, but he became one of the greatest authorities of his time in these subjects. Study in his case did not merely mean that he acquainted himself with what had been written on these matters. His chief passion was for breaking new ground. He was constantly pushing his researches in new directions, and devising new methods for testing and verifying his researches. He had also a gentle, friendly spirit, that won favour wherever he went. This enabled him to tap fresh channels of information which could not be utilised by other men. On the other hand he was also a man of strict principles. He acted with the purest good faith to himself and to his readers, and therefore he was able to record much information which he noted as doubtful or based on insufficient data, but which afterwards became valuable links in the chain of subsequent investigations.

The continuous expansion of Muslim dominion in those days was some compensation for the revolutions and political changes which overtook or destroyed many of the dynasties that followed in the wake of the Abbasid Khalifate. In Asia that dominion was extending into India. It was not new to India, for, thanks to the energy of Muhammad bin Qasim, early in the eighth century, Sindh had already been a Muslim province three centuries before the rulers of Ghazna subjugated the Panjab and established Muslim political influence all over India. Muslim arms were not however concerned with political conquest only. All-Muslim leaders thought and worked for the Faith and the principles of social and corporate life which the Faith implies. This involved intellectual and social movements of the first magnitude. In order to develop these movements, the highest forms of cultural movements then known to the world were utilised, assimilated,

and made to yield their quota to the growth of Islamic culture. Greek and Roman civilisation, through the Greek language, became early the special study of the Muslims. The results of the speculations of Greek philosophers and of the Schools of Alexandria were canvassed, discussed, added to, and carried further in numerous schools of Muslim thought. Persia yielded no such mine of intellectual wealth, but the administrative organisation of the Sasanian Empire was used as the foundation on which the splendid fabric of the Empire governed from Baghdad was built up. The influences of China and India were more remote, but not less eagerly examined and laid under contribution. The Islamic kingdoms of Central Asia were specially sensitive to Far Eastern influences, and used as a matter of course such features in Turkish culture as commended themselves to them. For they were in the heart of Turkish territory, and nowhere else was there such a happy blending of the three strands; Arabian, Iranian, and Turanian, of which Islamic culture is supposed to be composed. Perhaps the most important cultural centre in Central Asia was the city of Khwarizm, whose very site is missing from modern maps. Its position was near the modern town of Khiva. It nurtured many learned men of world-wide fame in Islam, among whom may be mentiond Al-Biruni and (for a time) his contemporary and correspondent Bu Ali Sina (Avicenna). When Khwarizm and its local dynasty succumbed to the arms of Mahmud of Ghazna, the energy of its men of science was released from its local milieu and diverted to the new and wonderful field which was being opened out the direction of India by the arms of that great conqueror.

This is how Abu Raihan Al-Biruni comes on the scene of India. Very little is known of his private life. It is not even certain where he was born. The theory that there was a town called Birun in Sindh and that he was born in Sindh is not supported by any details as to the whereabouts of a town of such a name. It is more probable that he was born in Khwarizm, of Persian parents, who would thus be strangers to the place, and might fitly be called by the Persian nickname of *Biruni* (outsiders). However that may be, we know that Abu Raihan soon occupied a very prominent place in the life of that famous city. The date of his birth was about 972-3 A.C. The Mamuni dynasty then held sway at Khwarizm, and Al-Biruni faithfully and loyally upheld the local cause in the ruler's court. There was, however, a party opposed to him and favourable to the cause of Mahmud of Ghazna, who eventually won in the conflict. The glories of Khwarizm were thus extinguished in 1017, and most of its leading men moved up to Ghazna the new capital, which was also attracting Persian poets like Firdausi and Utbi. It is to the credit of Mahmud that he treated hon-

ourable opponenets himself honourably. Biruni was afforded the means to pursue his investigations into the thought and mind of India, the new country which was now attracting the attention of Muslim warriors and statesmen. Here Al-Biruni seems to have laboured for many years, studying the Sanskrit language and also probably the local vernaculars, trying to understand the science, philosophy and institutions of the Hindus, and on the other hand expounding his own ideas on the subject. He wrote two or three minor books on Hindu philosophy, but the full results of his researches were incorporated in his book on India, which still remains the most authoritative first-hand source of information of Hindu culture about the time of the Ghaznavids. The book seems to have been written somewhere about 1030, but after the death of Mahmud, and before the question of his succession was decided in favour of his son, Mas'ud. In these circumstances he could obviously not write an express dedication either to the deceased monarch or to one of the contending claimants to the throne. His reference to Mahmud as the "pattern of a Sultan[89] implies, that the book was practically dedicated to his memory, although it was not usual amongst the authors of his race and time to make dedications to any except living personages[90]. His last great book, the "Qanun-i-Mas'udi" is, as the name implies, dedicated to Mahmud's successor, Mas'ud. It contains astronomical tables of great value, judging by the celebrity of the book in the East. It has not yet been translated into any European languge. Al-Biruni died about the year 1048 A.C. The "Chronology of Ancient Nations" is another great and comprehensive work from his pen which claims our admiration.

We now come to examine his book on India in detail. Before we examine its contents, we cannot help admiring its strictly scientific style, its perfectly logical and methodical arrangement, its deep and patient investigation into many unfamiliar and abstruse doctrines, its candid criticism in the light of the science, philosophy, and institutions of other nations, and the wealth of illustrations which it gives from Greek literature, with which Al-Biruni seems to have been accurately acquainted through Arabic translations. Among Plato's dialogues he quotes from the *Phaedo,* the *Timaeus,* and the *Laws.* He was also familiar with Aristotle and the physician, Galen. With later Greek historians and geographers he seems to have been even more familiar than falls to the lot of an advanced classicist of modern Europe. The list of Sanskrit authors whom he quotes is a very long one, but we

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89. *India* tr; Sachau. II 2.
90. Sachau's laboured argument that Mahmud treated him badly is hardly worth consideration. The title of "Amir" which Al-Biruni gives to Mahmud is the natural and usual title.

may mention amongst them Brahmagupta, Balabhadra, and Varahamihira. He quotes often from the Bhamavad-Gita, but the Bhagavad-Gita which he used was not the same recension as is extant now. We have other evidence to show that the Bhagavad Gita in its modern form is a comparatively late production. Among the Puranas we may mention the Vishnu Purana and the Vayu Purana, and among the books on philosophy, Kapila's *Sankhya* and a book of Pathanjali. The latter, however, was very different from the grammarian Pathanjali that we know, but here again we may be dealing with a different recension or edition.

What interest had Al-Biruni in India, and why did he write this book? He answers the question in his Preface. He starts with the idea of the beauty of truth and especially historic truth, and how false traditions may vitiate history. The Quran enjoins us to bear witness to truth and justice even if it is against ourselves or our parents or our kindred,[91] and Al-Biruni classes a liar with a denier of justice; for he will "side with oppression and false witness, breach of confidence, fraudulent appropriation of the wealth of others, theft, and all the vices which serve to ruin the world and mankind." Especially is misrepresentation to be deprecated in the matter of religious doctrines. Most of the books on the Hindus, then extant were full of second-hand and unverified matter, and Al-Biruni's Master (teacher) specially encouraged him to write down what he knew personally, "as a help to those who want to discuss religious questions with them (the Hindus), and as a repertory of information to those who want to associate with them." He wanted to make his book not a polemical tract, but a simple historic record of facts. And he has succeeded admirably. It is good to know that there were many pious Muslims in his day who wanted to associate with the Hindus, discuss religion with them, and become standard-bearers of Islam in a higher and more permanent sense than were the rough warriors who were bent on conquest.

It is sometimes said that the Muslims wanted Hindu learning, because they had nothing themselves comparable with it. Nothing could be further from the truth. In the early days of Muslim science, the Muslims sought knowledge wherever they could find it, "even if it was in China." They soon, however, began to appreciate the differences in the cultural value of the contributions made by different nations to the sum of human knowledge. As a result they became enthusiastic students of the Greek philosophers and scientists. They took Greek knowledge; they commented on it; they criticised it; they added to it and corrected it by further experiments; and they greatly extended

91. Quran. IV. 135.

its boundaries in all directions. At that stage Hindu learning was still of interest to them, but they had now more to contribute than to receive If this was so in purely intellectual pursuits, it was even more so in social and religious matters. Al-Biruni found here mere stagnation, prejudice, or unreasoning hatred. He says: "On the whole there is very little disputing about theological topics among themselves (the Hindus): at the most they fight with words, but they will never stake their soul or body or property on religious controversy. On the contrary all their fanaticism is directed against those who do not belong to them,--against all foreigners--They call them *Mlechchha, i.e.* impure[92]."

Al-Biruni, though sympathetic and just, found their deeply rooted national characteristics too much for him. At the risk of being accused of using satire, he records his judgment of them as being "haughty, foolishly vain, self-conceited, and stolid.[93] When he first went among them he stood to their astronomers in the relation of a pupil to his master, being a stranger among them, and not acquainted with their peculiar national and traditional methods of science. After getting over the preliminary difficulties he felt that their methods were only traditional, while his knowledge was based on original observation and deduction. He began to expound in their language the elements on which the science rested and how certain logical consequences followed. They flocked together round him, wondering and most eager to learn, but only asking from what *Hindu* master he had learnt those things. They were not willing to give him credit for any knowledge beyond theirs, and on his side he felt how limited they were, and how he would scorn to be put on a level with them[94]. He thought of the Greek philosophers, men like Socrates who had pursued truth for its own sake, fought popular superstition, and died for the philosophic faith that was in them. Men of that stamp he could not find in India, able and willing to bring the Sciences up to progressive heights.[95]

[96]In taking a comprehensive survey of Indian thought the author used every possible source of information. Such literature as existed in Arabic he was already familiar with. As we have seen, he had no high opinion of it, but he did not ignore it for that reason. He consulted it, commented on it, and corrected its errors. Of Indian books he was a diligent collector. The classical and written language was Sanskrit , which he calls *the* Indian (*Hindi*) language. The name San-

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92 *A. I. S.* = (Al-Biruni's India, Tr. Sachan), I. 19.
93. *A. I. S.* 1. 22.
94. A. I. S. 1. 23.
95. *A. I. S.* 1. 25.
96. Islamic Culure. Vol. 1, January 1927, pages 31-35.

skrit he does not use, but when he wishes to distinguish the classical language from the spoken dialect, he uses the term *Fasih*[97] (elegant). The classical language was the only language of books. But its interpretation and pronunciation varied, and the pronunciation of Sanskrit words was very much affected by the dialects spoken in different localities. This is reflected in the forms of Indian names and Sanskrit technical terms, as transcribed by Al-Biruni. Sometimes they are Prakrit forms, and sometimes forms varying with the influence of local vernaculars. These local vernaculars, as far as we can judge, were probably those of Sindh[98], the Punjab, Kashmir, the Kabul valley (then largely Indian in culture), and perhaps Kanauj and Benares.

Al-Biruni then freely used Sanskrit books and took the assistance of Pandits from all parts of the country in their translation and interpretation[99]. His acute mind, however, used its own judgment, even on points of interpretation. The very errors he makes in the transliteration of words or names[100] show that he trusted his own knowledge in many cases rather than take knowledge second-hand. Where his knowledge was consciously imperfect, he stated what was known to him, with a candid confession that his knowledge was not quite satisfactory. For example, in describing geographical facts, he says: "We could not make up our minds to suppress that which we know on account of that which we do not know. We ask the reader's pardon where there is anything wrong[101]." He also used the traditions commonly received among the people[102] where he thought they illustrated something he found in books. Unverified facts he noted, but he was careful to state that they were unverified[103]. In some places he noted absurd legends and fables[104], and we wish he had noted more of them, as they illustrate the psychology of India in his day. He had also a number of learned Pandits as his friends, some of whom read works with him or translated[105] for him. He also freely conversed with learned men from all parts of the country, including a man from Somnath[106] in distant Kathiawar. He must of course have had free intercourse with Mahmud's generals, soldiers, and camp followers, from whom he must

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97. A. I. Ar. (=Al-Biruni's *India*, Arabic Text, edited by Sachau, Lond. 1887), p. 9. 65, etc.
98. The list of numerals at A. I. Ar. p. 295, clearly betrays its Sindhi origin.
99. A. I. S. I. 24.
100. See A. I. S., II. 390-391, Nos. 8 and 30. A. I. Ar., XVI--XIX.
101. A. I. S. I. 200.
102. A. I. S., II. 11.
103. *Id.*
104. Cf for example the legends about idols in Chap. XII A. I. S.
105. A. I. S., I. 229 and II. 117.
106. A. I. S., I. 161.

have gleaned much information of a hearsay character, and who may have contributed to his knowledge of the itineraries which he sets out[107]. His own translations of Euclid's Elements and Ptolemy's Almagest from Arabic into Sanskrit, and of Sankhya, Patanjali, and other philosophical and astronomical books from Sanskrit into Arabic[108] were a part of his studies, which increased and clarified his knowledge.

The task which Al-Biruni set before himself was to describe accurately all categories of Indian thought and all branches of Indian science or knowledge. He has faithfully set down those ideas which he considered worthy of acceptance and those which he considered incorrect, wrong, or absurd. The first department of thought that he had to consider was religious knowledge. Next he comes to a sort of borderland between religion, cosmogony, literature, and legendary history. After that he takes up Indian theories on points which he could himself test (at least in part) by observation and experiment. This part was mainly connected with the geographical features of the country and the astronomical and mathematical sciences. As Al-Biruni's most important branches of study related to mathematics and astronomy, this part was perhaps in his view the most important in the book. But to us the progress of science and investigation has made it obsolete. Greater interest attaches, from the modern point of view, to his account of what he actually observed and to the legends with which he illustrated the mentality of the India of his day. From this point of view his description of Indian manners and customs, festivals, rites and ceremonies, and the practical features of the country's legal system as opposed to the legal theories enshrined in its books, is of the very highest interest. His last chapter deals with astrology, and is mainly based on a book of Varahamihira[109]. He contrasts the Indian methods of practical astrology with those in use among the Muslim astrologers of his day. It does not appear whether he himself believed in astrology, but he expresses the greatest contempt for another learned superstition of the Middle Ages, namely the popular "science" of alchemy. The impostures connected with Rasayana[110] and charms and incantations[111] are described in scathing terms, and they seem to have been even more common in India than elsewhere.

In treating of religion, Al-Biruni distinguishes between that of the educated classes and that of the vulgar mass. As regards the philo-

107. A. I. S., Chap. XVIII.
108. A. I. R., XX.
109. The Laghujatakam.
110. A. I. S, I. 188--193.
111. A. I. S., I. 193-4.

sophical conceptions of Allah he sets out the views of Patanjali (as he knew him) in terms that would almost coincide with the conceptions of Muslim theology. "The Hindus" he says, "believe with regard to Allah that He is one, eternal, without beginning and end, acting by freewill, almighty, all-wise, living, giving life, ruling, preserving; One Who in His sovereignty is unique, beyond all likeness and unlikeness; and that He does not resemble anything nor does anything resemble Him[112]." He is hidden to the senses, which cannot perceive Him. But the soul of man can perccive Him, and the thought of man can understand His qualities. The contemplation of these qualities in the human mind and soul constitutes meditation. This meditation is identical with exclusive worship, and by practising it uninterruptedly man obtains beatitude[113]. A passage is quoted from the Bhagavad-Gita to show that spiritual knowledge is the striving to become as much as possible similar to Allah. And this is approved of as being consonant with the definitions of Muslim philosophy.[114]

This noble philosophical conception of Allah is identified with *Tauhid.* Not only is the Unity of Allah absolute, but everything besides Allah which may appear as a Unity is really a plurality of things. Unity is the absolute perfection of existence. The existence of Allah is the only real existence. Everything that exists, exists only through Him. It is not impossible to think that existing beings are not, and that He ıs, but ıt is impossible to think that He is not and that they are[115]. This also closely corresponds to the doctrine of *Wajib-ul-Wujub* in Muslim theology. Contrasted with this were the popular notions which described Allah as having a thousand eyes, or as being twelve fingers long and ten fingers broad[116], or other hideous fictions which make up the sum-total of popular superstition.

If Allah is the Creator and the only real Existence, what is the nature of His creatures and their relation to Him? On this subject some of the ideas of early Greek physical philosophers are referred to as well as the speculations of Plato, the Jews, and the Muslim Sufis. It is interesting to find a glimpse of the Manichaean doctrine recorded in Al-Biruni from one of the Manichaean works now lost[117] in the following terms:-- "When the low dark realm rose from the abyss of

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112. A. I. S., I. 27--Cf. Qur. CXII--4.
113. A. I. S., I. 29.
114. A. I. S., I. 29.
115. A. I. S., I. 31.
116. A. I. S., I. 32.
117. *Kanz-ul-ihya* A. I. S. I. 39. The fantastic dualism of Manichaeism excited the curiosity of Muslim authors, who are our chief sources of information on this phase of human thought now.

chaos, and was seen by the high resplendent realm as consisting of pairs of male and female beings, the latter gave similar outward forms to its own children, who started to fight that other world, so that it placed in the height one kind of being opposite the same kind of the other world." Al-Biruni is careful to point out that educated people in India abhorred anthropomorphisms of this kind, but the vulgar crowd and various individual sects used them most extensively. They even connected with Allah the notions of a wife, son, or daughter, or the process of rendering pregnant and other physical processes, which to a spiritual mind appear to be silly and revolting.

The Brahmans, who were the true repositories of Indian thought, described all things as divine. Vishnu having created the earth in order to be the habitation of living beings, presented them with recollection and knowledge, as well as their opposite qualities. The five elements according to Hindu[118] philosophy were: Ether, (*akash*), Air, Fire, Water and Earth,--in the descending order of fineness or the ascending order of grossness. There are also five senses of action corresponding to our five physical senses. The compound of the elements and the senses is an animal, which acts merely through its senses[119]. The soul is ignorant of its own essential nature and of its material substratum, but it longs to apprehend what it does not know, and believes that it cannot exist except by matter. It therefore starts off to be united with matter, knowing that it cannot obtain its wish except by such union. All souls are of an identical nature, but their individual characters are formed by union with different bodies. There are three forces that contend for mastery in them, namely, desire, envy, and wrath. These disturb the harmonious qualities of the soul[120].

On the other hand matter on its side is seeking for perfection, and therefore desiring union with a soul. It naturally seeks for the highest kind of soul which it can get. Vainglory and ambition are as the very pith and marrow of matter The soul which it attracts becomes a sort of pupil to matter, and is carried round through a number of existences into all sorts of vegetable and animal beings. Neither soul nor matter is sufficient by itself for action, and their union is necessary in the interests of both. This is illustrated by the following parable: A caravan is attacked in the desert by robbers, and its able-bodied members escape in all directions. But a blind man and a lame man are unable to escape, and remain in helplessness and despair. They meet and

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118. The word "Hindu" is nowhere used by Al-Biruni, but it is a convenient term, and subject to this caution we shall use it in our acount.
119. A. I. S., I. 40--43.
120. A. I. S., I. 45--46.

recognise each other. The lame man says to the blind: "I cannot run, but I can show you the way. You can run, but you cannot see the way. Put me on your shoulder, and under my guidance we can both escape together."

The blind man agrees, and they thus get out of the desert and the danger. Having attained their object, they separate[121].

The Sankhya doctrine derives all action from matter. The soul has nothing to do with action, but on account of its union with matter, it suffers the consequences of action. The illustrative parable is that of a man who happens to get into the company of people whom he does not know. They turn out to be robbers, returning from a village which they have sacked and destroyed. The avenging party come and capture the robbers, including the innocent man who was amongst them. He therefore suffers the consequences of their deeds without having taken any part in their action. This accounts for the soul being mixed up with things with which it has no conern, and suggests the origin of evil in this world. Another allegory illustrates how the soul can use matter for its own upward progress. The soul is in matter like the rider on a carriage, and is attended by its own sentries, who drive the carriage according to the rider's wishes. But the soul for its part is guided by the intelligence with which it is inspired by Allah. It is by this intelligence that the reality of things is apprehended. It shows the way to the knowledge of Allah and to such actions as commend themselves to mankind[122].

As the Kalima is the distinguishing feature of Islam, the Trinity of Christianity, and the Sabbath of Judaism, so, says Al-Biruni, is the doctrine of Metempsychosis, the distinguishing feature of the religion of India. The soul, as long as it has not risen to the highest absolute intelligence, does not comprehend the totality of objects at once, independently of time. Therefore it must explore all particular beings and examine all the posibilities of existence. As their number is enormous, the soul wants an enormous space of time in order to finish the contemplation of such a multiplicity of objects. It gains experience from each object. The soul is imperishable, but it wanders through perishable bodies,and gains or suffers by their good or bad actions. The migration begins from low stages and rises to higher and better ones. It lasts until the object aimed at has been completely attained both for the soul and for matter. The lower aim is the disappearance of the shape of matter except any such new formation as may appear desirable. The higher aim is the cessation of desire in the soul to learn what

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121. A. I. S., I. 47.
122. A. I. S., I. 48–49.

it did not know before. When the soul realises its own nobility and the meanness of matter, it separates from matter and has no further desire to reunite with matter. The soul then becomes one with the final Intelligence.[123]

It follows from this doctrine that the theory of rewards and punishments rests on a wholly different basis from that on which doctrines postulating a single earthly existence rest. The Hindu conception of the world divides it into three primary divisions. The upper regions (Swarga-loka) correspond in a rough sense to a heaven, in which man receives the reward of good deeds for a certain length of time. The middle region (Manushya-loka) is that in which he actually lives here and earns the reward of punishment of the immediate future. The lower region (Narka-loka) corresponds to a hell, in which he receives the punishments which he earns in the middle regions but which are limited to a definite period of time. Besides these three regions of the world of men, there is another one for those who do not deserve to rise to heaven or to sink as low as hell. This is the irrational world of plants and animals through which the soul wanders in Metampsychosis, until it returns to the state of a human being. There are a large number of hells, one for each kind of sin. The lists of sin are detailed, and form curious reading from an ethical point of view. For example the maker of arrows and spear-points goes to the same kind of hell as the man who fails to honour his parents and grand-parents or who neglects his duty towards the angels (spiritual beings). A public performer or a singer in the markets is consigned to the same hell as the incendiary or the man who betrays his companions. According to some schools of thought, the irrational world of plants and animals is itself a hell[124]

While man receives in a heaven or a hell the reward or punishment of his life in this middle world, his soul is without a body, but it is not without passions and desires. It is still seeking for reunion with matter[125]. The ultimate aim of existence is to seek final salvation (Moksha) from the fetters of matter. This however can only be obtained by absolute knowledge without any conditions or limitations. He who wants Allah wants the good for the whole creation without a single exception for any reason whatever. When a man attains to this degree, his spiritual power prevails over his bodily power, and he can do many things which are described in detail, but which appear like fantastic miracles. A description of these lands us in the illusive re-

123. A. I. S., I. 50--51.
124. A. I. S., I. 59--62.
125. A. I. S., I. 62--64.

gion of Yoga philosophy[126]. Returning from it to questions of practical morality, we find that evil is defined as springing mainly from three roots, cupidity, wrath and ignorance[127]. The path of liberation is three fold: concentration on Allah, renunciation of things which most men desire, and worship. Worship has to be offered through body, voice and heart, and under the last head are the duties of humility, patience, self-restraint, and cheerfulness[128]. According to Sankhya doctrine a good and pious life in this world is on an inferior plane to one in which absolute knowledge is attained. It may have its reward in happiness, but it does not lead to Salvation. Salvation is only through knowledge. Of this there are several degrees, the final one ending in the "divine lights,"--the absorption into the universal light from which there is no more return to the grosser world.[129]

This account of the philosophic aspect of the Hindu religion by Al-Biruni is remarkable for the extent to which he seeks points of unity with the philosophic aspects of Muslim theology and with Sufi and neo-platonic thought. He could not have laboured his points with more precision if he had set out expressly to show that there need be no antagonism between the two systems of thought when understood in their highest meaning. From this point of view it would not be far-fetched to call him a noble and worthy precursor of Kabir, Nanak, Malik Muhammad Jaisi, and Akbar.[130]

The Hindu system believed in the existence of a certain number of spiritual beings above mankind. These are sometimes referred to by Al-Biruni as "Angels," but the Muslim or Christian conception of Angels is entirely different from that of these spiritual beings. Al-Biruni complains that the Hindus themselves have no clear-cut ideas on the subject, which could be stated with scientific precision, and their enumeration is often vague and inconsistent. The Sankhya and the Gita do not agree in describing them, and the popular view of the majority of Hindus is again different from what may be gathered from any one of their books.

According to the popular view the hierarchy of spiritual beings is headed by the Devas, a word which Al-Biruni translates by "Angels," but which may more correctly be translated as "gods." He notes that the Zoroastrian hostile attitude towards the Indian religion of Buddhism produced a curious result. The Persians gave the name of Deva

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126. A. I. S., I. 68–69.
127. A. I. S., I. 72.
128. A. I. S., I., 76--80.
129. A. I. S., I., 83–88.
130. *Islamic Culture*. Vol. 1, No. 2, April 1927, pages 223-230.

to their devils, while "Deva" in India meant the highest class of spiritual beings.[131] The fact is undoubted, but modern philology explains it in a different way. The distinction goes back to the days of the Rig Veda and the Avesta. In the Rig Veda the gods are the Devas and (at least in the later hymns) the demons are the Asuras. In the Avesta the Devas are the demons, the powers of evil, while Allah has the name of Ahura Mazda, "Ahura" being the Iranian form of the Vedic "Asura." It would seem that Hinduism is directly descended through the Rig Veda from the oldest form of Aryan worship, while Zoroastrianism was a revolt from an old religion, whose gods it converted into demons while it preached a monotheism alien to the earliest Aryan faith[132].

The Devas are supposed to live in the North, which points to the Himalayas as the sacred land of Hinduism. Next after the Devas come the Daityas, who live in the South. They oppose the Hindu religion and persecute the cow. Athough they are so closely related to the Devas, there is constant fighting between them. In the courts of the Devas are their musicians and singers who are called Gandharvas. The female musicians are called Apsarasas. The Yakshas are the treasurers or guardians of the Devas. Below them come the Rakshasas or demons, of ugly and deformed shapes. After them come the Kinnaras, who had human shapes but horses` heads, being the contrary of the Greek Centaurs, who had human heads on the bodies of horses. The Archer among the signs of the Zodiac is a centaur according to Greek mythology. Then there are the Nagas, who have the shape of serpents. Lastly there are the demon sorcerers called Vidyadharas who exercise a kind of witchcraft but not with any permanent results.[133] From other lists we may also add the Pitras and Pishachas[134].

All these spiritual beings are supposed to belong to one category. They have attained their present stage of existence by action during the time they were human beings. They have left their bodies behind them, for bodies are weights which impair the power and shorten the duration of life. Their qualities and conditions are different. The Devas live in quietness and bliss, and their predominant faculty is the comprehension of an idea *without matter*, as the predominant faculty of the human mind is the comprehension of the idea *in matter*. The number of Devas is 33 crores, that is 330,000,000. They eat and drink, live and die, marry and give in marriage, and live within matter,

131. A. I. S., I. 91.
132. *Cambridge History of India* I. 76.
133. A. I. S., I. 91.
134. A. I. S., I. 89.

though in the most subtle and the most simple form of matter, which they have attained by action, not by knowledge[135]. The Pitras are the deceased ancestors of human beings.

If a Brahman attains the degree of Rishi he is halfway to the position of a Deva. and is called a Brahmarshi; if a Kashatriya attains to that degree, he is called a Rajarshi. It is not possible for castes lower than these to attain the degree of a Rishi. The Rishis, though human beings, excel the "Angels" on account of their knowledge. The "Angels" come to learn from them, and there is none above them except Brahman or the abstract idea of godhead. Brahman or Prajapati is the First Cause of all creation and is identical with Nature as an active creative force. Nature, in so far as it has reached the end of its action and is striving to preserve that which has been produced, is called Narayana, which is the second creative force. Nature, in the last stages of activity, when its power slackens, giving rise to destruction and annihilation, is the third force, and is called Mahadeva or Shankara or Rudra. This is the account which Al-Biruni gives of the Hindu Trinity, in which we may recognise the characteristics of the modern names Brahma. Vishnu and Shiva. In Al-Biruni's description "Vishnu" is the name given to the final unity or substance which unites the three distinct characters of their Trinity.[136]

The description of the four classical castes follows the classical models in the Hindu text-books, but is accompanied by some interesting comments. The castes, he says, are Varnas, or colours, from the point of view of race as evidenced by the fair or dark skin; or Jatakas or births, from the point of view of genealogical descent. The pervading influence of caste ideas in Hindu institutions is noted. Al-Biruni adds: "We Muslims of course stand enitrely on the other side of the questions, considering all men as equal, except in piety; and this is the greatest obstacle which prevents any approach or understanding between Hindus and Muslims.[137]"

The parallelism in the position of Brahmans and Kshatriyas on the one hand and the Vaishyas and Shudras on the other hand seems to have been more marked in Al-Biruni's time than it is now. Vaishyas and Shudras in his day, though they differed from each other, lived together in the same towns and villages, and were even mixed up in the same houses and lodgings.[138]

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135. A. I. S., I. 93.
136. A. I. S. I., 93.
137. A. I. S., I. 100.
138. A. I. S., I. 101.

Outside the castes were the menials, who performed the various kinds of services and were known by their professions. There were eight classes of them, who freely intermarried with each other, except the fuller, the shoemaker, and the weaver, with whom the others had no relations whatever. Al-Biruni classes them as Trade Guilds. Besides the three already mentioned, he names the jugglers, the basket and shield makers, the boatmen, the fishermen, and the hunters of wild animals and birds. They had to live outside the villages and towns. Below these outcaste menials of the guilds were a still more degraded class: they did the dirty work. They were supposed to be the offspring of illegitimate unions between members of different castes. The names of four of their divisions are mentioned: the Hāris, the Doms, the Chandāls, and the Badhataus. The Doms still exist as a tribe of vagrant gipsies, and the Chandals are still known as a tribe of sweepers. Probably all the four mentioned by Al-Biruni were representatives of aboriginal races, who were lumped together in one class. The profession of the Doms is expressly mentioned as that of playing on the lute and singing. The Badhataus were the lowest of all; they ate the bodies of dead animals, including those of dogs and other creatures whose flesh is ordinarily considered abominable[139].

The sources of religious law were the Rishis or sages, not the gods, who only came in human form to destroy some evil. No law could be changed or replaced. For the Hindus used the laws simply as they found them. At the same time Al-Biruni was told that many things which were forbidden in his time were allowable in earlier ages, for example, the eating of beef, or the celebration of certain kinds of marriage, or certain modes of imputing legitimate descent. In this matter Al-Biruni was referring to numerous customs like that of Niyoga, which he considered essentially foul, and which in his view brought out by contrast the superiority of the institutions of Islam.[140]

The chapter on idol worship begins with a philosophical explanation of how the vulgar mind is deeply affected by visible emblems in worship. He observed that Hindu students of philosophy and theology and those who were seeking the path to liberation were free from the worship of anything but Allah and did not acknowledge an image manufactured to represent Him. The idol of Multan, called Aditya, was dedicated to the Sun. It was made of wood and covered with red Cordovan leather. Its two eyes were formed of two red rubies. When Muhammd Ibn Qasim conquered Multan, he left the idol where it was, as it was the cause of Multan's trade and prosperity. It was when the

139. A. I. S., I. 102.
140. A. I. S., I. 110.

Karmatian sect usurped power and captured Multan that the idol was broken to pieces and its priests were put to death. "The Blessed Prince Mahmud" (of Ghazna), says Al-Biruni, "swept away the rule of these fanatical sectarians, who had oppressed the territory of Multan for nearly a century. At Thaneshar was a life-size bronze idol of the "Lord of the Chakra," evidently an image of Vishnu, which was taken off to Ghazana. The idol at Somnath was a Linga of Shiva, which was also taken off to Ghazna. In the interior of Kashmir about two or three days' journey from the capital, was a wooden idol called Sharda which was much venerated and visited by pilgrims. There were many and strict technical rules about the construction of idols, some of which are quoted from Varahamihira[141].

In describing the literature of the Hindus, the first pride of place is naturally accorded to the Vedas. Al-Biruni treats the Vedas as a whole as one unit and calls it the Veda, although he mentions that it is divided into four parts and gives their names. The Brahmans recited it without understanding its meaning, and they learnt it by rote in the same way, by oral transmission. There were only a few who learnt its meaning and still fewer who mastered its contents and its interpretation sufficiently to hold a discussion. The Brahmans taught the Veda to the Kshatriyas. The Kshatriyas could not teach it,--even to a Brahman. The Vaishyas and the Shudras were not allowed to hear it, much less to recite it. If one of these lower castes could be proved to have offended against this law, he was dragged by the Brahmans before the magistrate, and his tongue was cut out. It was not permissible to commit the Veda to writing, as the correct chanting of it required certain modulations which could not be represented in writing. They were metrical compositions, which reminded Al-Biruni of the free and primitive metre of Rajaz in Arabic poetry[142].

While the Vedas have a divine origin, the Puranas are of human origin and were composed by Rishis. There are eighteen Puranas, called after the names of animals, gods or planets, and Al-Biruni gives two separate tentative lists of them, although he admits that he had only seen portions of the Matsya, the Aditya and the Vayu Puranas[143].

The Smritis were derived from the Vedas, and dealt with all manner of subjects, including law, religion, ascetic practices, the search after liberation, the methods of science, and the various branches of science as known to the Hindus. Of these sciences Al-

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141. A. I. S., I. 117.
142. A. I. S., I. 127.
143. A. I. S., I. 130.

Biruni confesses the limitation of his knowledge, as he was a foreigner and the Hindus were very exclusive[144].

The Epic of the Mahabharat was held in such high veneration that everything which occurred in other books was supposed to be found in this book, but not everything which is found in this book was necessarily to be found in other books. It consisted of one hundred thousand Shlokas and was divided into eighteen parts, each of them being called a Parvan. These Parvans are named by Al-Biruni, with a brief indication of their contents. He also refers to the Hari-Vamsha, which forms a sort of sequel[145]. The text of the Mahabharat as known to him was not precisely the same that we have now. There were important differences, but the Epic had substantially taken the shape that it has now. And we have independent evidence of this from a contemporary Kashmir poet Kshemendra, who has left us an abstract[146]

The science of grammar (Vyakrana) was held in high esteem. It not only gave the laws of correct speech but also etymological rules and the principles of rhetoric. As most of the Hindu books were in verse, the science of Metrics was of the highest importance. As knowledge was mostly disseminated orally, most of their sciences were contained in metrical treatises. Most Hindus, says Al-Biruni, are passionately fond of their verses and always desirous of reciting them, even if they do not understand the meaning of the words, and the audience will snap their fingers in token of joy and applause. They do not want prose compositions, although it is much easier to understand them,--and. Al-Biruni might have added, prose is more suited for the accurate handling of scientific subjects. The metre most in use was the Shloka. Al-Biruni employed himself in its exercise with a view to its employment in his translation of Euclid and the Al-magest from Arabic. He was also dictating. he notes, a treatise on the construction of the Astrolabe, "being simply guided herein by the desire of spreading science." Presumably this was also to be in Shlokas, as the Indians had an inveterate desire to render everything into the metrical form, with a constrained and affected style. As the whole scheme of grammar and versification in India was entirely different from that of Arabic, Al-Biruni's attempts at mastering them can only be called heroic. He confesses to his own imperfection, although he makes a valiant attempt to describe them according to his lights.[147]

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144. A. I. S., I. 132.
145. A. I. S., I. 133.
146. See A. A. Macdonell's *History of Sanskrit Literature* (1905), p. 290. Compare also Monier William's Indian Epic Poetry, p. 91.
147. A. I. S., I. 137-151.

With the science of astronomy he was more at home. He justly observes that "if a science or an idea has once conquered the whole world, every nation appropriates part of it." He found that the Hindus had used the work of other nations, and as most of their religious affairs were connected with the stars and with astrology, all knowledge regarding the stars was most popular. Our author gives a short account of the contents of some of their famous astronomical and astrological works. Medicine was also considered to belong to the same class of sciences as astronomy . The standard book on medicine was one by Charaka, to which Al-Biruni does not devote much space, as it had already been translated into Arabic for the Barmecide Princes. Al-Biruni wished that he could have translated the Pancha-Tantra, already known in Arabic as "Kalila wa Dimna." He found the Persian and Arabic translations of this work very inaccurate, and some of them consciously misleading. But Al-Biruni was too busy with this enquiry into the sciences to devote much time to a book of fables[148].

Al-Biruni took much pains to understand the system of weights and measures and distances in India, and to determine accurately their relation to the Arabic system. He found however no uniformity of usage in different provinces in India or in dealing with different kinds of commodities. He notes that most of the older books considered the circumference of the circle to be three times the diameter, but that in later times the Hindus had become aware of the fractional mistake in this estimate of what is now known in mathematics by the Greek symbol Π[149].

For writing materials very little use was made of hides and skins. In Southern India they used the leaves of the Tar palm. Oblong pieces of these leaves were prepared and written on, and then bound together by a cord passing through a hole in the middle of each leaf. In Central and Northern India they used the bark of a kind of birch, which was called Bhurja. A piece of the length of a yard and the width of the outstretched fingers of the hand was first oiled and polished so as to make it hard and smooth. It was then written on and the leaves numbered. The book was wrapped up in a piece of cloth and fastened between two tablets of the same size. Such a book, he notes, was called a Pothi. Apparently neither papyrus (qirtas of Egypt) nor paper, the invention of China, was yet used in India, although these handy materials were spread all over the Muslim world.[150]

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148 A. I. S., I. 159.
149 A. I. S., I. 168.
150 A. I. S., I. 171.

The Hindu alphabet consisted of 50 letters, evolved by a gradual process of development. This large number of letters was explained by Al-Biruni as due to two causes. First the A sound (treated as a consonant) was shown with all the long and short vowels combined, each combination being treated as a separate letter by way of a paradigm. Secondly there are many sounds in Sanskrit not found together in other languages, though they may be found scattered through different languages,--sounds of such a nature as to be unpronounceable by Arab tongues and indistinguishable by Arab ears as to the shades between similar letters. Hindu writing was from left to right, although (what was unknown to Al-Biruni) it had once been from right to left[151], as the Sanskritic alphabets themselves were derived from ancient Semitic alphabets which were the parents of most of the known alphabets proper. There were many varieties of the Indian alphabet. The one most in current use was the one called Siddhamatrika, which was used in Kashmir, Benares, and the Madhya-desha, the Middle Country round Kanauj, which was specially known as the Arya-varta. This seems to have been the standard Sanskrit alphabet. In Malwa they used an alphabet called Nagara, which differed little from the first-mentioned alphabet, and which may be considered as the representative of modern Nagari. There was also an Ardha-nagari alphabet, used in Bhatiya[152] and some parts of Sindh. Eight other alphabets are also mentioned by name: some of them must have been Aryan alphabets derived with slight modification from the standard Sanskrit alphabet, while others were undoubteldy Dravidian. The numerals were represented by separate signs, and not by letters of the alphabet. They also varied in shape in different systems, like the letters of the alphabet. Al-Biruni recognises that Arabic numerals were derived from the finest forms of Hindu numerals. He was very much interested in the universality of the decimal system among all the nations known to him, and had written a separate treatise on the subject. He admired the comprehensive nomenclature of the Hindus as regards figures higher than a thousand, for example, Laksha (lakh), Prayuta (ten lakhs), Koti (crore), with ten more orders of higher numerals to follow.[153]

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151. The Kharoshthi Alphabet, in which Asoka's inscriptions in the North-West Frontier are written, read from right to left, but the Brahmi which was cognate to it, and in which Asoka's other inscriptions are written, read from left to right. See E. Hultzch, *Inscriptions of Asoka* (1925) pp. 10-11.
152. A strong fort in Sindh, between Multan and Alor, captured by Mahmud of Ghazna. See Cunningham's *Ancient Geography of India*, ed. S. M. Sastri (Calcultta, 1924), p. 294.
153. A. I. S., I.175.

A number of curious customs are described by Al-Biruni from his own personal observations, which seemed to him so monstrous as to be a sign of "the innate perversity of Hindu nature." He is frank enough, however, to admit that the Hindus themselves were proud of the difference and claimed to be "something better than we." He also reminds himself that he "must not reproach the Hindus only with their heathen practices, for the heathen Arabs too, committed crimes and obscenities.....Islam has abolished them in these parts of India" which have accepted Islam[154]. Witchcraft or Magic which produces a delusion and makes things appear to the senses as different from the reality, was of course of gross deception and had nothing whatever to do with science. Al-Biruni considered alchemy to be a sort of witch-craft or magic, though he saw that the force behind its vogue was greed rather than want of intelligence. For, he says, we find many intelligent people are entirely given to alchemy while ignorant people ridicule the art and its adepts. A sage was once asked why scholars always flocked to the doors of the rich, while the rich were not so ready to call at the doors of the scholars. "Ah!" he answered, "the scholars are well aware of the use of money, but the rich are ignorant of the nobility of science." The ignorant therefore, according to our philosopher, deserve no credit for abstaining from alchemy, as their abstention is not the result of experimental knowledge but only of innate ignorance and stupidity[155].

While Al-Biruni was not able to learn very much about the methods of Hindu alchemy, he found a considerable body of literature in India on the allied science of Rasayana. It had mainly to do with the preparation of drugs and compound mixtures derived from the vegetable kingdom. It claimed not only to restore health, but, says Al-Biruni sarcastically, to make the old as young as eighteen, to make white hair black again, and to prolong life indefinitely. A famous professor of this art was one Nagarjuna who lived near Somnath a century before our traveller. Many tales are told of the deceptions practised in the name of this art. The Hindus had also a firm belief in charms and incantations, and their use against snake bite was a superstition as wide-spread in India than as it is now[156].

When Al-Biruni treats of the concrete facts about India he gives his information under three heads: (1) what he had seen himself; (2) what he had gathered from enquiries from credible witnesses; and (3) what was written in Hindu books. The first we may accept absolutely,

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154. A. I. S., I. 186.
155. A. I. S., I. 188.
156. A. I. S., I. 194.

subject only to the allowances that have to be made for the personal limitations of Al-Biruni himself. The second is interesting testimony. but it is not direct evidence, and has to be tested by comparison and corroboration. The third is usually fantastic and superstitious, the "absurd science, absurd geography and absurd history" which called forth the withering contempt of Macaulay when he pleaded for the construction of a system of modern education for India, based on a study of the English language. Of the physical features of the country. its rivers, its sea-coast, its itineraries and distances, and other geographical facts, I have already given details in another place[157]. and I shall not repeat them on the present occasion. I have also there discussed the practical life- scheme of the Brahmans, their rites and sacrifices, the relative position of the other castes. the pilgrimages and sacred places, and many of the other social institutions of the Hindus as they worked in actual practice.

Although astronomy. chronology, and mathematics occupy a good deal of space in Al-Biruni, they are technical subjects and need not detain us very long here. He regretted that the Hindus of his day had given up the scientific attitude of their ancestors, who learnt freely from the Greeks, and reasoned acutely about what they learnt. In his day there was practically no direct observation. and everything depended upon tradition and authority. Science was further handicapped and the scientific spirit practically suppressed by the subordination of science to religion. "The Hindus" he says, "are devoid of training in astronomy, and have no correct astronomical notions. In consequence they believe that the earth is at rest, more particularly as they, when describing the bliss of paradise as something like worldly happiness. make the earth the dwelling-place of the different classes of gods, angels, etc., to whom they attribute locomotion and the direction from the upper worlds to the lower[158] Although their astronomers knew better. their Puranas spoke of one pole only, and the common belief postulated only the dome of heaven above without a corresponding dome below. The Hindus wrote about stars and spoke vaguely about them, but Al-Biruni was not able to find a single Hindu able to point out to him with his finger individual stars so that he could identify them with the names which he knew from Greek and Arabic astronomy[159]. The astronomers were acquainted with the fact that the earth was round. but the Puranas spoke of it as flat and evolved a fanciful geography of a central mountain (Mount Meru) and seven concentric

157. An address given to the Punajb Historical Society on Feb. 25th 1925, not yet printed.
158. A. I. S., I. 221.
159. A. I. S., I. 242.

seas and continents. The astronomers had not the courage to contradict the popular traditions. Thus the vulgar and the scientific theories became intermingled in their books, and authors who made no independent scientific research mixed up various inconsistent notions[160]. The followers of Arya Bhatta maintained that the earth moved and heaven was at rest, but this was attacked by Brahmagupta and other authorities. The diurnal motion of the earth round its axis was a subject of dispute among astronomers long before the acceptance of the Copernican system. On this subject Arya Bhatta was sounder than the majority of Hindu astronomers, and Al-Biruni himself, though admitting that the solution of the question was difficult, sides with the majority.[161]

In their divisions of time the Hindus had many refinements and subtle distinctions, but on account of a want of the historical or chronological sense, it was very difficult to fix any dates or eras or the beginning or end of the numerous periods of time which they reckoned. They piled on figure upon figure to get imaginary years. For example, the three Yugas already past, in the world's chronology, had nine thousand Dibya years or 3,240,000 human years[162]. A Golden Age was postulated in primeval times, when men lived with each other in harmony and love, without hatred or envy. Afterwards the hearts of men were hardened, and their natures altered. With moral evil came physical disease. And so the evil went on until the last and worst age was reached, the fourth Yuga, called the Kali Yuga, the present age, the age of universal wickedness and sin. In this age Shudras are to be kings, and the laws of Brahmans are to be abolished. Frugality, poverty, and the worship of Vishnu are to be despised, and universal wickedness is to prevail. The end of this final Yuga is to see the birth of a Being of irresistible force, who is to draw his sword and clear the wicked off the face of the earth. Then will come again the Golden Age; and the cycle of four Yugas be repeated for ever[163].

In all the mass of confused Hindu chronology, Al-Biruni, in order to take a standard for comparison and fix up some of the dates and eras used in Indian reckoning, adopted the 400th year of the Persian era of Yazdejerd, as it had a figure of even hundreds and corresponded roughly with the decease of Mahmud Ghaznavi, "the pattern of a prince, the lion of the world, the wonder of his time[164]." Of this Persian year the New Year's Day fell only twelve days before the cor-

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160. A. I. S., I. 265.
161. A. I. S., I. 277.
162. A. I. S., I. 374.
163. A. I. S., I. 382.
164. A. I. S., II. 2

responding Hindu New Year's Day, and the death of Mahmud occurred precisely ten complete Persian months before it. This standard date, the New Year of the 400th of Yazdejerd, would correspond with Thursday, the 25th February 1031 of the Christian era, and the 28th Safar, 422 of the Hijra. Compared with this standard date, the date of Rama would work out to be 18, 148, 132 years before it[165].

The Hindu year being solar and the months being lunar, an additional month called the Adhimasa was added periodically according to certain rules to bring up the calendar to the solar reckoning. The different methods and formulae by which the number of days are counted in a number of years solar or lunar or in a number of cycles of different kinds of years are fully explained and discussed. The cycles of the planets lead to a discussion of the order of the planets, and their distances and sizes, as well as to a discussion of some of the constellations. Here again the popular notions are compared and contrasted with the theories of their astronomers, which did not form a consistent or unanimous whole. The 27 lunar mansions or stations of the moon were of great importance in the practical astronomy of the Hindus, as they affected the casting of horoscopes, the calculation of calendars, and many of the rites and ceremonies of practical life. As regards actually fixing them by the observation of the fixed stars, he found the Hindus very ill-informed. He says: "I never came across any one of them who knew the single stars of the lunar stations from eyesight, and was able to point them out to me with his fingers. I have taken the greatest pains to investigate this subject, and to settle most of it by all sorts of comparisons, and have recorded the results of my research in a treatise "On the Determination of the Lunar Stations[166]." The heliacal rising and setting of the stars was connected with various omens and superstitions, which were however put together into an elaborate pseudo-scientific system.[167].

The ebb and flow of the ocean were explained in a curious way. As the rivers perpetually flow into the ocean, they postulated a fire called Samvartaka which from time to time drank up the water of the ocean[168]. Thus there is a constant addition from the rivers and a constant depletion from the fire. Another idea was that when the fire drew breath the sea was blown up by the wind and caused the flow of the tide, whilst when the fire exhaled breath and the sea ceased to be blown up by the wind, there was ebb-tide[169]. Against this must be set

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165. A. I. S., II. 4.
166. A. I. S., II. 83.
167. A. I. S., II. 90-100.
168. A. I. S., II. 101.
169. A. I. S., II. 104.

out a more fanciful explanation, that Indra, the ruler of the heavens, took up the ocean in the shape of a cloud, and sent it down as rain, thus causing a diminution and an increase, which balanced each other. This would certainly account for a constant quantity of water in the ocean, but not for the daily or monthly tides.[170] In fact the educated Hindus knew by observation that the daily phases of the tides were determined by the rising and setting of the moon, and the monthly phases by the increase and waning of the moon, but the physical causes of these phenomena were not clearly understood by them[171]

On the subject of the solar and lunar eclipses, the Hindu astronomers knew perfectly well that the moon was eclipsed by the shadow of the earth and the sun by the shadow of the moon. It was on that basis that they made their calculations for their almanacs and astronomical handbooks, and yet they humoured the popular idea of a dragon lying in wait for these luminaries and trying to swallow them up. Brahmagupta, who was certainly one of the most distinguished of their astronomers, yet lent himself to the imposture that the sun was lower than the moon in the heavens and that a Head was required to bite the sun in order to produce its eclipse. Al-Biruni apostrophises him in the following words: "If people must under circumstances give up opposing the religious codes (as seems to be your case), then why do you order people to be pious if you forget to be so yourself? Why do you, after having spoken such words, then begin to calculate the diameter of the moon in order to explain her eclipsing the sun, and the diameter of the shadow of the earth in order to explain its eclipsing the moon? Why do you compute both eclipses in agreement with the theory of those heretics, and not according to the views of those with whom you think it proper to agree[172]?" Al-Biruni quotes a number of other absurd notions, which he would forgive more easily if they were due to ignorance and not to an unworthy desire to play with their scientific conscience and pander to popular or theological ignorance.

The discussion of the different kinds of cycles which have or have not their peculiar Dominance leads us into the regions of astrology, to which we shall not follow our author. The same remarks apply to the sixty years' cycles of Jupiter[173].

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170. A. I. S., II. 102.
171. A. I. S., II. 105.
172. A. I. S:, II. 111.
173. A. I. S., II. 115-129. It is curious that the fame of Al-Biruni himself among later Muslims rested on his supposed occult powers: The Chahar Maqala, of Ahmed b. Umar, b. Ali Nizami Arudi, written only a century after Al-Biruni, notices him only for his astrological feats of an incredible nature!

The extraordinarily minute attention which the Hindus devoted to divisions of time, and the meticulous care with which they calculated the lunar days (*tithis*) and the two halves of the lunar days (*karanas*) as distinguished from the two natural divisions of a solar day which are ordinarily called day and night, show the extent to which astrology had taken possession of Hindu life. To the several karanas were ascribed various kinds of dominance, and elaborate rules were laid down showing what must be done and what not done in each karana, and what were the rules for calculating the lucky and unlucky days and hours and even moments for given acts. Al-Biruni had not a prophet's vision and could not in his day foresee the extent to which the Muslims in India in subsequent centuries would adopt and even improve upon Hindu superstitions, until in the life of the later Mughal Empire the degenerate Muslim nobles were caught up in an even more elaborate net-work of superstitions connected with lucky and unlucky moments, lucky and unlucky directions of travel, lucky and unlucky times and seasons for marriages and public ceremonies than were even devised by the fertile ingenuity of the Brahmans whom Al-Biruni criticised.

Al-Biruni's picture of India's mind in his day is not only valuable for the historical insight which it affords us. It is even more valuable to us latter-day Muslims as a reproach and a criticism of what his unworthy successors in India have made of Islamic culture in the fourteenth century of the era of our Prophet.

CHAPTER 5

EDUCATION & LANGUAGE

- Education in India
- Importance of Hindustani: Urdu
- Modern Hindustani Drama
- Note on Urdu Orthography

Education and Language

Education in India: The New Outlook

Two years ago Sir Malcolm Hailey, then Chancellor of the Panjab University, in his convocation address asked the question: 'What does the University stand for in the life of the people?' He could find no satisfactory answer. If a mind so acute, enriched with the most varied experience of a lifetime of devoted and zealous service for India, could find no factor which his own university, as such, had contributed to the life and thought of modern Panjab, will anyone claim more for any other Indian university? It may be claimed for Indian universities generally, until at least quite modern times, that they did build up professional standards, that they did provide the raw material for public services, better than would have been available without them. The most pessimistic critic of Indian universities will have to admit that the Indian graduate of the half-century succeeding the establishment of the three Presidency universities in 1857 provided the foundation on which the Indian personnel of the subordinate services and the professions of law and medicine was built up. Much may be said to the credit of this achievement. But there is also much on the debit side.

Mr. Arthur Mayhew, in his *Education of India,* has pointed out in great detail how our universities touched these graduates only in their outer or professional lives. Their own inner lives went in the old grooves. Their homes and home habits remained unaltered. The social foundations of their lives suffered no shock. Caste, the joint-family complex, early marriage among the Hindus, and Pardah among the Muslims, remained sacrosanct. The scale of values in life was not revised, except perhaps that 'education' became a sort of harbinger to the dawn of an unabashed plutocracy. The core of the soul received no new awakening. Indeed, a sort of double life took the place of the

simpler unity of life in the earlier days-- the outer life of such modernity as India borrowed for a few hours a day, and the inner life, the real life which reappeared when the garment was flung off. Such reforms as there were in religious or social life came, not from the universities, but from other influences, and in any case they left the masses untouched. Even in the outer or professional life the front rank leaders have been men who had foreign training. In their case it made no difference whether they had or had no Indian degrees also. Could anything be more significant than this of the lack of the vitalising factor in Indian degrees?

Since the flood of numbers began to engulf the Indian universities from 1916 onwards, even the modest claims that could be made for the Indian degrees at an earlier stage have to be modified. The degree has become a drug in the market. Its actual value is small--the amount of sound and accurate learning behind it is ludicrous; in foreign universities it is accepted, not at its face value, but as an unknown quantity hardly worth more than a pass in a matriculation examination.

The flood has risen in two ways--in the number of universities and in the numbers of students that flock to each university. There are seventeen universities now in India, with projects for more, while five universities served the whole country until 1916. The number of colleges is rising even faster. This sudden multiplication of universities and colleges is not without its dangers. A good university or college needs not only a large expenditure of money in buildings, equipment, playing-fields and hostels, but also an adequate number of properly trained teachers whose minds and training are sufficiently flexible to adapt themselves to new needs and new situations as they arise. Most important of all, a good university or college requires for its power and efficiency a mass of *imponderabilia* which it is impossible to describe, but which every educationist knows to be essential These have to do with the moral atmosphere, the personality and experience of the teachers, the psychology of the governing body and its relations with the staff and pupils, the interrelations of the staff amongst themselves, of the staff with the pupils, of the pupils amongst themselves, and that vague undefined background which lies in the home life of the pupils and the social and public life in the environment from which teachers and governing bodies are drawn. It may be that financial resources can be provided with an effort, but nearly all the official reports speak in a minor key of financial stringency, although they naturally exhibit with great self-complacency the enormous increase in the expenditure on education which has taken place in recent times.

Whether any or a great part of that expenditure is wasted or produces results commensurate with expectations I shall examine later. But any sudden increase in the trained teaching staff is impossible, and any sudden increase in the resources which I have called the *imponderabilia* of educational institutions is quite out of the question, seeing that the growth of social and moral ideas depends upon so many other things not directly concerned with education, and is often, not a matter of generations, but of centuries. No wonder, therefore, that there has been an admitted deterioration in the quality of higher teaching in recent years.

Part of this deterioration may be due to the silent but unseemly competition amongst the teaching institutions. The universities and colleges have different histories, different courses of development, in many cases very different aims, methods, and standards of instruction, organisation, and corporate and student life. The recognition of Indian universities by foreign universities is not uniform. The students of some receive more recognition and concessions than those of others. I am not prepared to say that this differentiation is not based on good reasons, though I regret very much that the want of a uniformly high standard often penalises good universities for the faults of the bad ones. The Panjab Education Report for the quinquennium ending 1926-27 frankly admits that the standards of teaching in the colleges have tended to deteriorate. Speaking of the matriculation examination, it indorses the school board's conclusion that 'the standards of examination in general are low and are deteriorating, especially in English. The attainments of the first year students in colleges are such that very many are unable to follow the lectures adequately.'

The enormous increase in the number of university students is appraised at its true value in the latest Panjab quinquennial report. It describes the figures as 'somewhat disturbing'. I should use a much stronger phrase. In five years the number of 'arts' students increased from 4927 to 8882. But the number of graduates during the same period only increased from 707 to 807. Obviously the large influx in the entry to the universities implies no corresponding expansion in higher education. In figures alone it remains practically stationary. In quality there is a suspicion that it is actually deteriorating. But behind the figures lurk mass tragedies which are well known to teachers and educationists. When the results of university examinations are published they are taken up by students with the fear and trembling with which ordinary citizens took up casualty lists in war-time. The number of candidates in the Panjab matriculation examination of 1927 was over 13,000. Only 1162 passed in the first division, the only kind

of pass which an experienced Indian educationist can consider a pass at all. The preparation for the examinations has been so inadequate that, even with the lax standards existing in India, barely 9 per cent of students are really fit for any high university standards. The enormous wastage of effort implied in these figures casts its shadow on social life and the unemployment problem. It cuts even deeper into individual lives, and accounts for much stunted growth, aimless drift, discontent, and despair in the life of young India. I know at least one educationist of lofty character and ideals (not an Indian) who feels so appalled by the facts behind these figures that it is a matter of conscience with him whether he can continue to be part of a system in which such things are possible.

It is unnecessary here to enter into a discussion of the communal problem. In the Panjab and the United Provinces it is the most serious obstacle to the development of a rational, uniform, and effective system of public instruction. In Bengal it has recently taken a more acrid tone than used to be the case in previous decades. As an all-India problem it has loomed large in the Central Legislature, in the pronouncements of the present Viceroy, and in the discussions and negotiations of the various groups and combinations (I can hardly call them parties) which have embarked on the thankless task of hammering out a constitution for India. It is, I think, a legitimate criticism of our universities to say that they have in no way helped to solve this problem and in many ways contributed to its accentuation and exacerbation.

Nor have they built up a tradition of self-reliance, independent judgment, or unbiased criticism. It is the function of liberal education to induce that temper in the public mind which is above the vagaries of mere herd instincts. Can we honestly say that we have acquired even a glimpse of that temper? The answer is furnished by the impatiently intolerant attitude shown to all opinions which run counter to the current moods of the crowd and by the numerous devious ways in which Indian history and political legends are manufactured. Every crowd must necessarily have its own prejudices and passions. But it is the function of a liberal education to lift us above these, to train the critical faculties, and to enable us to construct syntheses out of conflicting points of view--in other words, to build bridges across barriers of prejudice and ignorance.

In the economic sphere the truly educated man is the one who harnesses his physical and muscular powers to the will and command of a guiding and controlling intellect. In an educated nation the national economic work is organised on a harmonious basis, in which

manual labour receives guidance from intellectual leaders. The classes representing intellect, skill, and physical stamina tend to merge and coalesce. I do not contend that universities should exist to train mechanics. But I do claim that all arts and crafts, all agriculture and industry, all economic activities, have a right to obtain the guidance of intellectual and scientific leaders, and that such leaders should be in touch with every phase of life. I am aware that universities in the West have not unnecessarily fulfilled the requirements of that test. But they are all trying to establish contacts. Their isolation really arises from the fact that the complexities of modern life have in many cases outstripped the ideals of the older universities. There is a constant and continuous attempt at adjustment, both in the reconstruction of older universities and in the constitution of new ones. In a country like India, where the universities have as a whole grown up along with the growth of these complexities, there is no excuse for their standing isolated and apart in a rarefied atmosphere, remote from the realities of modern life. It is this remoteness, this immaturity, which places the Indian student at such a disadvantage when he comes to the universities of the United Kingdom or goes to those of the Continent or America.

I have the highest opinion of the Indian student, both as to his intellect, his character, and his adaptability. I wish I could say the same about his physique. But he never gets a chance in his own country. In a land full of sunshine there is no sunshine on his childhood. The schools have to contend against traditions and habits brought from the home, and often contend with inferior resources. The schoolboy misses the corporate spirit and the happy innocent joys and adventures of a breathless exploration into facts of Nature and life. By the time he leaves school he has not been helped to any plans for his vocation in life or to any vantage ground from which he can climb to the glories of college or university life. He is prematurely old for his years, and in some cases is burdened with physical and social responsibilities on account of early marriage or the care of others, to whom he is as helpless as he is to himself.

Indian secondary education can hardly be said to have been systematised even to the extent of university education at one end and primary education at the other. The idea is too prevalent that secondary education is merely a stage between primary and university education. A sound system of secondary education, in my opinion, should be framed on the supposition that, in the large majority of cases, middle-class boys will find their educational needs satisfied at the secondary stage. Secondary education should be self-contained, and

should provide an adequate amount of general equipment for the current needs of the average citizen. It should cater not only for the brilliant, for whom it will be a transition stage leading to higher education, but for everyone according to his needs and capacity. In a well-ordered State primary and secondary education will form twin portions of a well-diffused educational system.

The function of secondary education is to sort out the children and provide fit pabulum of substantive knowledge for each, or each group, according to its capacities and chances in life. The sorting-out process need not take place at the early stages, but it should be kept in view. It will be a gradual process; but as it proceeds, the most intellectual types, those fit to be leaders of thought, pioneers of reform, explorers in science and research--in other words, those whose true place should be in a university--will be searched out and, whether rich or poor, given every encouragement and help to reach the very highest in education. Scholarships, exhibitions, and studentships will be provided for them and for no others. The educational ladder will be firmly established for them if they only wish to climb. But those will be the chosen few. For all there will be varied material according to their needs.

Apart from this work of classification, there will be the work of imparting useful knowledge and training. This will be graded according to capacity, and imparted according to needs with a view to preparation for life. At some mental age--which is not the same as physical age--(say fourteen or fifteen), some sort of idea could be formed about the boy's or girl's bent, and a future profession held in view, except for those who desire and are considered fit for the learned professions, in whose case the age will have to be much later, as they will go to the universities. In forming the vocational idea the pupil, the teacher, and the parent or guardian will all have their say. The prospective employers, as a class, should be consulted also on general principles. The decision--if it must be called a decision--will be merely in order to give a bias to later studies. Such studies will still be general, for secondary education should not trench on the spheres of vocational or technical education, though it should run parallel at certain stages. Some elastic idea of what the pupil is going to do in after life will give a definite direction to studies and will avoid the aimless drift which we find in the higher classes of school life to-day.

Secondary education should be the pivot of a national system of education. Its institutions should be of the most varied kind, scattered all over the country, and teaching a wide variety of subjects, among which students can choose or can be helped to choose intelligently. In

this way we should link up our secondary education with vocational and technical education on the one hand and higher education on the other. We should train up educated artisans, mechanics, electricians, agriculturists, cattle-breeders, manufacturers, chemists, merchants, clerks, foremen, and organisers of all kinds--the bulk of the nation. The higher general staff will be the university men. An educated nation must have a sound system of secondary education, practically universal. 'Unskilled labour' is a relative term. In its bare meaning it tends to disappear from the life of a truly educated nation.

The vernacular side of our secondary education is particularly weak. The vernacular middle school does not impart sufficient accurate knowledge or discipline to form a factor in the growth of the people. It leads nowhere. It is not linked up with useful or lucrative trades. On account of the limited range of the vernaculars, it has no value beyond certain limited areas. There is one defect from which it suffers which is irremediable, except by making a second language compulsory. The vernaculars are not coterminous with provinces, and with the modern communal tendencies in favour of the revival of archaic vernaculars or the artificial creation of practically new vernaculars, no one vernacular has an exclusive area. The Panjab University recognises four vernaculars side by side, and the Panjab schools often teach several vernaculars. This does not give a full chance to any. And much effort is wasted over the vernaculars. Communal bickerings invariably intervene in the discussion of the vernaculars, and the wisest course might be to have English as the compulsory second language. With the new nationalistic outlook, English is in a corner in disgrace, and so we have an *impasse.*

This being the case, Anglo-vernacular schools, which lead up to the universities, have suffered enormously in efficiency. They should be the backbone of our secondary education. They depress higher education by supplying deteriorating material, and they are of no use in themselves except as feeders to higher education. To my mind the problem of secondary education is more difficult and baffling than any other in the Indian educational field. And yet it is the one on which India can get more light by the study of the systems of progressive nations--the English and American secondary schools and the *lycees* and the *real-schulen* of the Continent. The Board of Education in England has devoted recently a good deal of attention to the separation of junior and senior schools, the creation of 'central' and 'modern' schools, the concentration and classification of children, and the problem of the adolescent. In our educational reverie we are not even aware of their experience.

In primary education we come into some contact with the masses. I have indicated my view that if we had a national system of education, both secondary and primary education would be, and remain at all stages, in contact with the masses, and university education would also be in contact with the masses, though in a different way. But even our primary education is only just beginning to touch the masses. The attack on illiteracy would have to be pushed home much more energetically before it makes any real impression.

No country has succeeded in educating its masses without free and compulsory education. But there are other factors to be considered in India. In our first enthusiasm we thought that we had but to say 'free and compulsory education' and our masses would be educated. We have been timidly, tentatively nibbling at the idea for the last few years, but he would be a bold man to-day who could say that, with or without an 'alien Government,' we should have educated the 229,000,000 illiterates of the 1921 census in British India within a century. Selected areas are being gradually brought under the compulsory system, and as far as boys are concerned, there is no opposition from the people. Quite the contrary. With girls it is a different matter. But the difficulties arise from other causes.

Supposing all the boys and girls of school-going age were attending primary schools, but the schools remained as they are now, would the children be educated? Something like 75 per cent. of all pupils in educational institutions of all kinds are at the lower preparatory stage, and 65 per cent. in the infant and first classes. The attendance is casual, and the attention which the pupils receive may almost be called negative. Mr. Richey, of the Education Department of the Government of India, once found a small schoolboy of average intelligence who had been at school at least two years and had not yet mastered the alphabet. It is estimated that over 50 per cent. of those who attend primary classes never become literate, and a good proportion of those who leave at that stage soon lose their literacy. It has even been found that some of the names on the school rolls are fictitious. For real elementary education there should be well-organised schools with regular attendance, teachers with a sense of vocation, and a certain number of years of compulsory attendance, and up to a certain appreciable standard of education.

These conditions have not been attained in India; and therefore our compulsory education, even where it has been introduced, is still really a paper affair. What is called optional compulsory education may be politely described, like the curate's egg, as only good in parts. A compulsory Education Act is passed by a provincial council, but it

does not come into effect until it is adopted for any given local area. It may be adopted only for boys and not for girls. Until we get women teachers the prospects of compulsory universal education are not bright. And we cannot get women teachers in any numbers until girls are widely educated; and girls cannot be widely educated as long as child marriages are not only permitted, but common. Women's education is the crux of the whole educational problem when you want education to be widespread among the people.

And what about finance? Education is a 'transferred subject,' and we are told that our educational destinies are in our own hands through our elected representatives. But our elected representatives under present conditions do not control finance, and they would hesitate very much before incurring the odium of fresh taxation. How much the question of finance enters into the question of primary education will be suggested by the fact that by far the greater number of primary school teachers are paid less than 3*l.* a month, and there are teachers who start on less than 1*l.* a month. Further, communal friction prevents our Ministers from representing the people as a whole. In the United Provinces a very able Education Minister who was a Hindu was violently attacked by the Muslims as an enemy of Muslim education. In the Punjab a Muslim Education Minister, whose brilliant abilities now find scope in an 'unrepresentative' sphere of work, was violently attacked by the Hindus as hostile to their interests. And in truth, where communal vernaculars, communal cultures (or what pretend to be such), and communal religions are not on speaking terms with each other, the difficulties are perfectly intelligible, not only for ministers, but for teachers, managers, and organisers as well. Primary education must necessarily be carried on in the vernaculars; a multiplicity of them adds to the complexities of the problem. And no parents like their children to be given a bias at early school age against their own religion or modes of thought.

We are now spending on education close on 13 crores of rupees from public funds, while in 1905 we scarcely spent 2¼ crores, and as late as 1915 less than 6¼ crores. Place this sudden and enormous expansion of expenditure side by side with what I have said about teachers' salaries, and what I could say about many other urgent educational demands if space were not limited. Two questions arise. In spite of the enormous rise in the expenditure on education, are we spending enough? We spend more than four times as much on armaments and defence as we spend on education. But supposing we could not possibly spend more than we do on education, are we getting our money's worth? Could we spend the same money in any other way

and obtain greater efficiency? Have we any fancy expenditure which we could put to better use? I am firmly convinced that we can spend more wisely. Let us save on bricks and mortar and spend on the living teacher. Let us save on shams in order to spend on real education. Let us examine very carefully and critically the allocation of the money to different schemes and apply it most to the parts which will fructify in the minds and character of the people.

You must not take education too expensive. You must get your full money's worth for every anna that you spend out of public funds. The standard of expenditure from public funds will react on the expenditure of private citizens on education. And the strength of our chain of education will depend on the strength of its weakest link--some neglected, impoverished schools or colleges in remote corners, whose struggles and failures pile up the tale of our national inefficiency.

But the greatest need for examining the whole position lies in the question of numbers. The schools and colleges have been flooded with pupils, and the rise has been phenomenally rapid. The numbers under instruction in 1900 were only 4,250,000. Now they are between 11,000,000 and 12,000,000. The question is: Are all these people being really educated? Do the right class of boys get the full facilities for the right kind of education, or are some of the most intellectual boys being pushed aside and wrecked in the great flood with which neither our organisation nor our resources in money, teachers, and buildings are fitted to cope? I have indicated that in primary education much of the money must be wasted on pupils who never become literate or who lapse into illiteracy after they leave school. In secondary education there are not enough pupils, considering the numbers in primary education, and there are not enough facilities for giving a self-contained education such as will fit the best part of the nation to become good men and women, good citizens, and efficient workers in our very loose economic system. By far the largest proportion of those who seek university education, so-called, seek it for clerkships and petty posts, and would earn a more lucrative and certain livelihood, as well as be more self-respecting units of society, if they were absorbed in a reasonable scheme of secondary education combined with vocational and technical training in the numerous openings which modern life makes available. Such a reorganisation of secondary education would also afford a solution to the question of numbers in colleges and universities. A halt should be called to the further multiplication of universities and colleges until the resources are available for well-trained teachers, well-equipped laboratories, libraries and instruments

of research, and well-educated students who can profit by the opportunities opened to them. To multiply numbers without these conditions is to ask for the depression of standards. On the other hand, more money should be spent in order to make elementary, secondary, and university education real links in the building up of a harmonious nation.

The greatest problem in Indian education is that of moral education or character building. Indian human nature is not more perverse or unregenerate than any other human nature, but the circumstances and institutions which we offer lead to many of the undesirable results which we deprecate. I do not think that moral education by text-books will by itself do much. It will only add another subject for cramming. But the removal of the many causes that lead to temptation is the first essential as far as educationists are concerned. The supply of teachers with great force of character and personality is all important; but this supply cannot be hastened, and will itself depend upon a more healthy and efficient system of education, including the education of women, the makers of the home. Religious education has been tried, and a large majority of Indians pin their faith to it. But they take no steps to organise religious education on right lines or to prepare teachers who can impart the true religious spirit and command the respect of their pupils by their character and modern attainments. The young man or young woman of the present day is not going to take mere subjects of religious doctrine on trust from old-fashioned people. He or she will require to be convinced in precept and morally 'forced' by example. The communal schools and colleges, whose main justification is the need for religious instruction, have signally failed in that respect.

These suggestions point to the need of a complete and reasoned survey of education in modern India. Many of the evils have long been known, and some have even been exaggerated. Some of the remedies are obvious; many are controversial; not a few are likely to introduce more difficulties than they will solve. In all my criticisms I must never be understood to imply that I do not appreciate the life-long devotion of the many men and women who are working for or have left their mark on Indian education. I admire their work, the skilful way in which they have tried to face new situations, and the discernment and strength of character which they have shown in meeting the strain put upon the educational machinery. I have said nothing which many of them have not said and felt. But educational reform in modern India will not come only from experts, and if it is forced on the country it will lose its efficacy. Sometimes, too, experts only see one side of a question, and educational problems have many sides. Public opinion

requires to be taken into counsel; causes and cures have to be discussed with people who will weave the texture of life in the present and the next generation. Prejudices have to be met; suspicions have to be allayed; motives have to be explained; distrust has to be overcome; conflicting views have to be reconciled, and schemes prepared openly, with the co-operation of those who will have to work them or suffer from them. Has the time come for a comprehensive public survey by a Royal Commission, manned mainly by Indians competent to judge of education and other things that affect education, and competent to modify the moulds of life in which education has to be cast?

In my own mind I have no doubt that the time has come, if it is not overdue. No comprehensive public survey has been made since 1882. But the India of 1928 is very different from the India of 1882. The Universities Commission which led to the Act of 1904 assumed the foundations of the older policy and only made useful suggestions about reorganisation, supervision, and teaching in the universities. The more recent Sadler Commission was appointed to deal with the problems of the Calcutta University; its recommendations have not been carried out by Calcutta, but have been partially adopted by two universities and have influenced other universities, with results which are still very doubtful. Experience with the new unitary universities still leaves it doubtful whether the old affiliating type was not after all the best suited to India's social, geographical, and financial conditions. Meanwhile, big political and social questions have come into the foreground: the very foundations of State policy have been questioned in India; a new temper has grown up in the rising generation which requires wise guidance and discipline. If efficient education means the conscious attempt to adapt the machinery of life to its environment and the conscious stimulus to the adaptation of the environment to the mental, moral, and spiritual needs of a community, the whole problem has to be studied and faced anew with every weapon that modern public life can give us.[1]

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1 *Nineteenth Century and After* (London), December 1928, pages 745-756. It is worthy to note that this article was not available either in Pakistan or in Saudi Arabia, so we got a copy from British Library, London, for which we are thankful to the British Library.--editor.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HINDUSTANI: URDU[1]

According to the Arabic proverb "the words of kings are the kings of words". His Majesty the King in his speech at the opening of the School said, "The ancient literature and the art of India are of unique interest in the history of human endeavour." He added that we must develop this "intellectual tradition". One of the finest functions of the School would be to establish, in Lord Curzon's words, "a clearing house for ideas between the East and the West."

Hindustani has been, and is, a fine vehicle for this purpose. But what is Hindustani? The frontiers of the Aryan languages of India are not easy to define, but if we take Urdu and Hindi together, we shall find a vast area and population within the circle of ideas covered by these languages. Scientific definition differentiates between Western Hindi, Eastern Hindi, Behari, and Rajasthani, but these terms are not used in that sense in the mouths of the people, and the census results do not coincide with the figures of Sir George Grierson's monumental Linguistic Survey. For our purpose we may speak of Urdu and Hindi, which are structurally one language and are prevalent in the United Provinces, the Eastern Panjab (where the Delhi Division is solidly Hindustani), Bihar, the northern part of the Central Provinces, and a great part of Rajputana and Central India, while Urdu is the language of the Muhammadans of Hyderabad and of most parts of India. In this way we get a Hindustani area roughly of 500,000 square miles, and a population of 113 millions, but a higher estimate of population, 136 millions, is defensible. For the influence of Hindustani extends beyond those whose mother tongue it is. Linguistically it has a most interesting history, and sociologically it represents many different social systems and circles of ideas (illustrations given).

But apart from these external considerations, it has many intrinsic merits both as a language and a literature. It is flexible, and is growing daily. It is perfectly catholic in its adoption of foreign words, phrases, ideas, and literary standards, while it has well-developed traditions of its own (illustrations).

Its literary wealth can be considered in the following aspects:--

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1. This is an abstract of a public lecture which was given at the school of Oriental and African Studies by A.Yusuf Ali where he was Lecturer in Hindustani and Hindi (Urdu) on Wednesday, March 7, 1917--Editor.

1. *Religious Literature.*--Kabir, Dadu, Nanak (the Granth of the Sikhs is mainly Hindi), Malik Muhammad Jaisi's Padmawat (Sufi ideas), the Ramayan of Tulsi Das, the Satsaiya of Behari Lal, and the Brij Bhasha Love Poems--these are among the most valuable contributions, in any language, to the world's religions literature. The modern literature of the Arya Samaj, of the Quadiani Musalmans, of the so-called Wahabi sects, and of Orthodox and Sufi Islam, is in Hindi or Urdu, while the Marsiyas of Lucknow have added a new chapter to Shia Islamic literature.

2. *Folk Literature, Epics, Witty Sayings, Pahelis, etc.*--Dhondu Khan's Ballads (Bulandshahr), Ahir songs, Eastern Districts of the United Provinces, Alha and Udal epics. Nazir's *genre* poetry, like the Dutch School of painting. (Illustrations given and extracts read from Nazir's poem on the *kakri* (cucumber).

3. *Dramatic Literature.*--The Drama of Behar, with a long history and tradition behind it. Oudh (Indar Sabha in the Court of Wajid Ali Shah). Vast mass of modern Hindustani drama, produced by Hindustani Companies in Upper India, as well as Parsi Companies (from Bombay and Calcutta).

4. *Lyrics, Ghazals, Qasidas.*--Bahadur Shah, the last of the line of Moghal Emperors, has left a touching poem on the fall of his dynasty. Dard and Ghalib have left some fine Ghazals and Qasidas.

5. *Satires.*--Sauda, died 1780. Syed Akbar Ali, a living author.

6. *Serious appeals to religious or social instincts.*--The poet Hali in poetry, Maulana Phulwari in sermons, Maulvi Nazir Ahmed in oratory, Philosophical poems and writings, such as those of Iqbal, may be classed under this head.

7. *Essays.*--Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Maulana Shibli No'mani, Khwaja Ghulam-us-Saqlain.

8. *History.*--Maulvi Zakaullah, Maulana Shibli No'mani.

9. *Novels.*--Pandit Ratan Nath Sarshar, Sharar, Azad.

10. *Medicine, Arts, Sciences, Music, etc.*--Besides all this, there is the every-extending influence of modern journalism, with daily, weekly, and monthly papers (also papers published twice a week and thrice a week). The *Makhzan* of Lahore is well known for its fine contributions to Urdu poetry, while the *Zumana* of Cawnpore can take rank with illustrated magazines in any language.

Modern Tendencies. Urdu has been adopted as the language for the proceedings of the All-India Moslem League. Hindi has been recommended as the common language and script of India by the Hindu

Sabha. There are lively and even bitter controversies as to the relative merits of Urdu and Hindi. These controversies resolve themselves into a phase of the Hindu Muhammadan question. But, as Sir Charles Lyall has pointed out, the Urdu language was really created by the Hindus to facilitate their intercourse with the Muhammadans, who spoke and wrote Persian for centuries after they settled in India. There need be no sharp line of demarcation between Urdu and Hindi as actually spoken. The script question will give rise to some difficulties, but they need not be insuperable. The All-India Urdu Press Conference, which recently met, showed the existence of a vigorous body of opinion in which both Hindus and Muhammadans were represented.

Lord Chelmsford's reference to the vernaculars and their value in Indian education points the way to a greater utilisation of Urdu in the formation and development of national education and national character in Upper India. The Universities in India must sooner or later tackle this question of the vernaculars.

The possibilities of a future "Academy" for Hindustani, or at least for Urdu, will have to be considered seriously if the standard of purity for literary Urdu is to be preserved, on the one hand from the chaos of unregulated anomalies, and on the other from the pedantic tendencies of authors who live in their studies and despise the fresh breezes of actual life in the world at large. Such an academy cannot only systematise the words and structure of the language, but can render inestimable services towards their deeper study and the study of ideas, of the collective psychology, and of the social systems that lie behind them.

Who shall say that what Kabir, Tulsi Das, Malik Muhammad, and Nazir accomplished in the past, no product of the blended civilisation of Britain, Islam, and India will be able to achieve in the future?[2]

THE MODERN HINDUSTANI DRAMA

The Modern Hindustani Drama is as composite in its origin and its structure and growth as the Hindustani language. To understand its chequered character, a brief consideration of its sources and the traditions which it inherits is necessary. But before I proceed to describe them, let me explain what I mean by Hindustani, the area, population,

2. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, London. Vol. 1, 1917, pages 109-111.

and social systems which that language represents, and its influence in India generally and on Indians living beyond the frontiers of India.

All living languages, especially with reference to living neighbours of the same kin, tend to have undefined frontiers. This is markedly the case with Hindustani, especially in its relations with the other Indo-Aryan languages of India. In spite of their great diversities there are so many features of similarity between them that a common grammar of the Indo-Aryan languages is possible, and its study reveals in a remarkable way the workings of human psychology and the laws of human speech. Even the Dravidian languages of Southern India have been very largely influenced by the Indo-Aryan vernaculars and their literatures. But Hindustani, as the *lingua franca* of the large mass of people living in the United Provinces, the Eastern Punjab, Behar, the Northern part of the Central Provinces, and a great part of Rajputana and Central India, as well as of the Muhammadans of Hyderabad, and most parts of India, has, by its position, its historical and imperial prestige, its catholicity and flexibility, its facility for the incorporation of modern and foreign words, and the hold which it has on some of the most vigorous races and communities of India, attained peculiar importance as the vehicle of Indian ideas. The areas which I have mentioned total up to about 500,000 square miles, with a population of between 113 and 136 million--roughly, half of the area of British India including Burma, and about half its population.

I include in Hindustani both Hindi and Urdu. These two languages (if they are to be called separate languages) are structurally identical, and only distinguished by three tests: (1) the use of the Nagri or the Persian alphabet; (2) the use of Sanskritic or Arabic-Persian words for the expression of abstract and religious ideas; and (3) their use by Hindus and Muhammadans, implying also allusions, associations, and literary traditions of the Hindu and the Muhammadan world respectively. But these distinctions are not clearly defined or rigidly enforced in practice. Musalmans, especially the half-illiterate ones in the villages, use the Nagri character, and on the other hand, educated Hindus in Upper India use the Persian character, which has a cursive script almost as rapid as shorthand. Muhammadan poets like Malik Muhammad Jaisi have used Hindi for their poetry, and Hindu novelists like Pandit Ratan Nath have made a fine use of Urdu for the expression of their highest thoughts as literary artists. Dramatists like Amanat have freely used the Hindi associations of Brij and the Krishna legends in their lyric poetry, and purely national Hindu folk poetry like the 'Cycle of Alha and Udal' is full of allusions that imply some acquaintance with Musalman life and cul-

ture. The fact is that in the mouth of the people, Hindi and Urdu are not two separate languages, but one language. The modern stage, except in plays with a purpose, has no particular interest in supporting one particular party or another, and the diction which it employs is broadly that which is used by every-day people, subject only to its consonance with the characters which it seeks to depict. Hindustani, as I use the term in this paper, refers to this common language, and includes both Hindi and Urdu in their literary manifestations.

The social systems which Hindustani drama, as I have defined it, reflects, are all those varied ones which make up the lives of the 136 millions of people into whose heritage the Hindustani language or influence enters. It includes the caste system of the high-caste Hindus, the semi-caste system of the Hinduised Muhammadans, the democratic trade-union caste system of what are called lower-caste Hindus, the Europeanised or semi-Europeanised system of the "England-returned" men, Hindu and Muhammadan, who are emancipated from the main trammels of their "old-fashioned" folk but who still in varying degrees have a "race memory" of various customs, feelings, and institutions which they consciously reject in their own persons and unconsciously tolerate in their *entourage.* There is another social system which is also reflected in modern Hindustani drama in a proportion far greater than in the actual lives of the people. This is the floating Bohemian casteless society of Indian towns, whose artistic temperament makes them *awara-gird* (stray sheep) to their smug and respectable fellow-Indians. That is the society into which, or out of which, most of the actors and actresses are recruited. The successful play-wrights, but not always the theatrical managers (or managing directors, as they are called), also tend to gravitate into that circle of ideas. They are naturally closely familiar with its conditions, and the pictures they draw, if lurid, keep close to the facts as drawn from direct observation and experience. The parallel of the Russian novelists will at once occur to most students of European literature. The main stream of life in Russia is very different from the scenes which these novelists paint. They seem almost to come from an under-world of imagination, and yet they are the closest in fidelity to the lives actually experienced by the artistic world to which they belong, and the strong feelings, and passions, and outbursts, which seem so strange and over-coloured to the slow-moving susceptibilities of the West are as the very atmosphere of that morally volcanic world.

There is indeed one social factor which is the central theme of all drama and all poetry (with the doubtful possible exception of epic poetry) and which nevertheless is treated of in a somewhat artificial

vein in modern Hindustani drama. This is the theme of Love--the romantic, healthy, and full-bodied love between man and woman. It is inevitable that in a society which counts among its canons of respectability the seclusion of women, this theme can only be an exotic. Conjugal love exists in abundance in India, but that is very different from romantic love. Romantic love--of a kind--also appears in the Bohemian society which centres round the stage, but the sordid conditions that surround it and the absence of that stimulus of high endeavour and aims which weaves romantic love into the very texture of the every-day lives of young people of both sexes, doom the "Love" of the Hindustani stage to the character of a wail of despair or the empty semblance of such incidents as the loves of men with Peris (Fairies) or the love whose chief mechanism is not life but magic.

In the classical Sanskrit drama itself the theme of love is treated somewhat differently from the treatment it receives in either the Greek drama or the modern national dramas of Europe. In Greek comedy love is a thing to laugh at: in Greek tragedy it is a thing of pain and disaster. And the whole subject, tragic or comic, is treated in too high a key, whereas love is illogical, airy, and fantastic. The modern national dramas of Europe have for the first time brought its tragi-comedy into actual relations with every-day life, and while they have ethereaslised its virtues and sought a reconciliation of its whimsicalities, have also in a great measure influenced and refined the actual lives of the people and the relations of the sexes in society. In holding a slightly flattering mirror up to Nature, they have also induced Nature to live up to her reflection. The aim of the Sanskrit dramatists was different. They have given some fine passages of romantic love, but it was depicted only as a first phase--an earthly love as a stepping-stone to that higher spiritual love which is free from passion and endures for ever. This presentment still persists in that part of the Hindustani drama which looks for its canons to the classical Sanskrit drama and which is mainly Hindu. On the other hand, that part of the Hindustani drama which is mainly Muhammadan and takes its canons from Persian poetry, gives a colour to love like that of the Persian mystics. Earthly love must point and lead up to heavenly love, but to the end it must remain a passion, a frenzy. Indeed, it must gather momentum the higher it progresses, and the final *fana-fillah* (absorption in the divine) is like the extinction of the moth in the flame of the candle. That was the idea of Muhammadan love poetry at its best, but it is hardly suitable for dramatic presentment. The result is that, in its degeneration, it becomes a series of marvellous plots and intrigues, and magical transformations which take us farther and farther from the actualities of life. In the more human comedies and tragedies (I

13 use the conventional English term, though such a division really does not apply to Hindustani plays), love is not the central or inspiring theme, but is either a subordinate episode or is oppressed by a number of low and cunning passions, which do not triumph only because the dramatist does not wish to break the dramatic proprieties.

The appeal of the Hindustani drama is coextensive with the appeal of the Hindustani language. I have mentioned the area and population in which the language is commonly used: but all over India the language is used by the Muhammadans (with minor exceptions), and it is understood in its colloquial form as the language of the street by the population at large and by the many visitors who pass through the country. Both Bombay and Calcutta, which are outside the general Hindustani area, are the homes of some of the most important Hindustani theatrical companies which tour over Northern India and maintain standing theatres in the Presidency towns. The Parsis, whose language is not Hindustani, are among the leading exponents and theatrical managers of the Hindustani drama. An enterprising Karachi company has often toured through Upper India. In Southern India, Hyderabad, the capital of the Nizam's dominions, is also an important centre of Hindustani culture. Hindustani companies reap a rich harvest there. The Parsi Curzon Theatrical Company of Calcutta, which specialises in scenic effects, has toured not only all over India, but has extended its triumphs to Burma, Straits Settlements, and Penang; which implies the interest taken in Hindustani drama in the little Indian Settlements beyond the seas. The Hindustani play, Amanat's *Indar Sabha*, has been edited, annotated, and published with a German translation in Europe,[3] having formed the subject of an Inaugural Dissertation in the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Leipzig. I am not aware of any English editions, translations, or productions of Hindustani plays, but these will not doubt follow the entry of India into the Imperial family circle. It is clear, however, that the appeal of Hindustani drama is very wide, and its influence is extending.

Let us survey the different influences which have produced the Hindustani drama. They will help us to classify the plays on natural lines, and to understand the different features of each in relation to their historical origins. We shall then be able to pass on to individual plays, stage conditions, dramatists, actors and actresses, and the companies or managers that produce them.

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3 *'Die ndar Sabha des Amanat.'* Friedrich Rosen, Lepzig, 1891, and a lithogrphed edition of the text, 1892.

There are five main streams of influence whose channels still run separately, though there is a distinct tendency towards convergence and the elimination of factors inconsistent with modern conditions, or unsuitable for the modern stage. These streams are:

1. The influence of the classical Sanskrit drama;
2. The influence of the purely religious Hindu play;
3. The influence of the Folk play;
4. The influence of the Perso-Muhammadan love poetry and legends; and
5. The influence of the English stage and modern European stage traditions.

The influence of the classical Sanskrit drama is slight, but perceptible. I believe that the Bengali, the Marathi, and the Gujarati stage owe more to these classical languages than the Hindustani stage. The influence of the Muhammadans predominates over the Hindustani language as popularly spoken, while the other three languages are almost purely Hindu. Plays like `Shakuntala' or 'Harish-chandra` are, however, produced in Hindustani, especially in the smaller Hindu States of Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand, but the elaborate stage traditions of the classical Sanskrit drama are rarely observed. The comic character of the Vidushak is rarely introduced, and the intricate plot of the Sanskrit dramatists, with scenes piled upon scenes, are rarely met with on the Hindustani stage.

The purely religious Hindu play is a very strong factor in the modern Hindustani drama. Its technique and methods have been developed on lines of its own, and its appeal is universal to the religious-minded. It is financed by wealthy patrons, or temple priests, or by subscriptions, and the audience are admitted entirely free. It is not acted in a permanent building, but in the courtyard of a temple or other open space, covered over with a canopy. It is an epic drama, and the whole story of the `Ramayan` or whole episodes from the Krishna legend are recited and acted, night after night, for eight or ten nights in succession. It is not acted all the year round, but only at appropriate festivals. The book of the play, in the case of the Rama legend, has, as often as not, the great Hindi epic, the `Ramayana` of Tulsi-Das, for its basis. The Dohas of this famous classic are given in a sort of recitative, and the dramatic passages are given as they stand; but many dialogues are specially composed for the occasion, and songs by local poets are freely interspersed. Topical allusions are not wanting; and the scenery is composed in three dimensions, and not merely indicated by painted scenes on a picture stage. The actors are

not paid salaries: if any of them are poor they are paid their expenses, but the whole thing is a labour of love, in which the local men--goldsmiths, shopkeepers, shoemakers, cowherds, professional chanters, and poets co-operate as a labour of love. There are no actresses; the part of women is taken by boys. It is quite proper--and indeed meritorious--for women and children, as well as men, to see these plays. They appeal to the higher instincts of the people, and I look forward to future developments in which this species of play will exert its purifying influence on the stage generally.

The folk-play also derives its rude strength from the soil, although it caters for a humbler class of audience and assumes many protean forms. It has not the dignity of temple associations, and is rarely housed in a building or tent, or even under a canopy. It is often given in street corners in the open air, and while the central theme is arranged before hand, and there is a certain amount of dressing up, and actual words used on a given occasion are improvised. Its object is frankly comic, and nothing escapes from its lash. At one end it touches the dance, the mimic play, the Bahrupia's art, or the acrobatic performance. The Hindustani word for Drama or a Play (*Natak*) is derived from the same root as the word for the Dance (*Nach*). At another end, in the shape of the Yatra or the Ras, it almost touches the religious play.

Probably the *swang,* or the comic sketch (or farce), when properly developed, will be the true precursor of a Comedy of Manners. At present it hides its head as a thing of low degree--for sweepers and cobblers to enact and to witness. To do it justice, it can sometimes be fairly scurrilous. It only escapes attention because it has no *litera scripta* on which it can be brought to book, and it is despised as beneath contempt. I have, however, seen *swangs,* which "take off" high personages and high-sounding movements with the greatest freedom, and the applause of the street crowds shows that all the shafts reach home. This sort of play goes to the bed-rock of realities, and if ever a talented writer takes it in hand, it ought to have a great future as being free from the artificialities and airy nothings of the developed legitimate drama.

The bulk of modern Hindustani plays, as acted in theaters, reflect the influences either of the Perso-Muhammadan love-poetry and legends or of the modern English stage and European stage traditions. These influences are now almost completely blended. In stage-craft, in the mechanism of the theatre, in scenery and costumes, in organisation and management, in the hours and manner of performances, in the arrangement of the audience, in the divisions of the play and the ar-

rangement of the parts. English influences are obvious, while in the subjects of the story, the mode of its telling, the characterisation and the morals to be drawn from it, the influence of the early nineteenth century Perso-Muhammadan love-poetry obtrudes itself even when the writer consciously tries to emancipate himself from its trammels and strike out an original path for himself.

The name of Shakespeare is decidedly popular, but if you examine the acting editions of Shakespeare in Hindustani, you will find that they merely take Shakespeare's plots and treat them with all the paraphernalia of *ghazls*, intrigues, and a social *milieu* which completely transform the atmosphere and make it almost wholy Indo-Muhammadan. Even the names and characters of the *dramatis personae* are altered. Thus the romantic Romeo becomes the pale-blooded Firoz Laqa, and the passionate Juliet becomes the frightened Gulnar, while the distinterested and sympathetic Friar Laurence becomes a somewhat crafty and worldly minded Qazi. The famous balcony scene is not acted from the balcony, and the tender argument of the ardent lovers exchanging pure vows of eternal fidelity is misunderstood. The straightforward moral drawn by the Prince at the end of the play, and addressed to the warring houses of Montague and Capulet-- "See what a scourge is laid upon your hate!"--is transformed into a trite saying which might have come from a latter-day commentator of Hafiz: "In this earthly love is a stepping-stone to heavenly love"[4]. The hollow didactic tone of the play is seen in the preface to Mirza Nazir Beg's edition. We are told that the play is founded on "the late Mr. Shakespeare's famous play," and that "though apparently a play, it is really a matchless book of wisdom."[5].

Of course the scholarly translations of Shakespeare follow him with more fidelity, but alas! they smack of the midnight oil, and would be impossible to act on the Hindustani stage. They are made by men not conversant even with the technical terms of the modern Hindustani stage, which are almost entirely English, and their pedantic renderings deprive Shakespeare of all the grace and naturalness of which he is such an unquestioned master.

The *Ashiqana* form of Urdu poetry first assumed dramatic form in the Court of Wajid Ali Shah, the last king of Oudh. Wajid Ali Shah was himself a poet and a great patron of all the Arts. His dream to make Lucknow, his Capital, famous for art, music, and literature, was rudely cut short by his deposition in 1856. But meanwhile he had

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4. 'Ishq majazi men ishq haqiqi ka zina hai.
5. Pand-nama la-jawab.

collected some French statuary and Italian paintings, and he founded with Amanat's 'Indar Sabha' the modern school of Hindustani Drama, which has taken deep root, and shown a power of vigorous growth and development which augurs well for the future. And yet the 'Indar Sabha' stands out, as compared with its progeny, to be numbered by the thousand, like a Primitive among the less sincere but more technically elborate schools of later Art. The play still holds its own on the Hindustani stage after a run of seventy years, and its universal popularity is proved by the numerous but unsuccessful imitations made of it. Most companies even now include it in their repertory.

The plot is of the thinnest. Indar, the King of Ceylon, is a sort of type of Wajid Ali Shah, the King of Uudh: he cannot rest without seeing the Peris dancing and singing in his Court. They all come, the Topaz, the Saphhire, the Ruby, and the Emerald, one by one, dressed in gorgeous costumes, and give a whole gamut of dances and song, in Urdu and Hindi, the Braj dialect of the Krishna legend. The songs and music include all the popular Hindu and Muhammadan airs--the "Chaubola," the "Sha'ar," the "Chhand," the "Thumri," the "Basant," the "Gazal," the "Holi," the Sawan." There are wonderful descriptions of Nature in all her moods. But the Emerald Peri is in love with a mortal, and conceals him in a box tree. One of the Deos discovers him, and betrays the Peri to Indar, who banishes her and imprisons the man Gulfam (rose-face). She goes, but comes back disguised, as a religious devotee. With the power of her music she enchants the heart of Indar, who offers gift after gift, which she refuses. At last he asks her to name her own reward. She promptly throws off her disguice, and asks for Gulfam, with whom she is united in a further dazzling scene of dance and song. The supernatural there is, but there is very little extravagance. The diction is not laboured, but popular and poetic. A high appreciation of Art, with a complete disavowal of mercenary motives, is put into the mouth of the Topaz Peri:

> "Nor throne nor crown is my desire,
> My Art alone I prize;
> Throughout the world, my Lord, I seek
> That my Master's word prevail."[6]

Limitations of space do not allow of a further notice of individual plays. But they may be noted generically. As I have already stated

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6 Hunar apna Chahiye,
Takht na mujh Ko taj:
Jag men bat Ustad ki
Bani rahe, Mahraj!

there are numerous plays about Peris and Demons, the loves of Men and Peris, and assemblies of dance and song in the regions of the air. Legends from the `Arabian Nights` are freely used, such as "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," and "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp." The famous lovers of Moslem and Hindu tradition are also favourites, *e.g.*, Laila and Majnun, Farhad and Shirin, Chitra Bakawali, Nal and Daman. Legends from Indian folk-lore and history are often drawn upon, such as Puran Bhagat, Allah and Udal, and Sultan Mahmud. Themes from the Sanskrit classics are treated of in a much lighter vein than in the religious drama, *e.g.* `Ram Lila,` `Harish Chandra, or `Pahlad.` Modern sketches (*naqls*) are generally given as curtain-raisers, and are then of the lightest description; but sometimes political and social controversies are presented in a serious vein for the edification of special classes. A `Police Drama` satirised the foibles of the police force, and its presentation was only rendered possible by enrolling as its patrons the magistrate and the Judge of the district. Various widow remarriage plays were given in the nineties of the last century, to resist the legalisation of widow remarriage among the Hindus, about which legislation was then proposed. The excitement caused by the Ilbert Bill in Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty was also exploited on the stage, while the more recent controversy about the comparative merits of Hndi or Urdu has given rise to some propaganda plays mostly on the side of Hindi. These plays, however, are sectional, and are generally given free to those who come to applaud the particular doctrines suggested. There is much room for plays which will hold the mirror up to Nature and refine Society by showing characters as others see them--a difficult art in a society with so much diversity that generalisations are next to impossible.

Among foreign (*i.e.* non-Hindustani) plays, there is no magnet like the name of Shakespeare of the Hindustani stage. As I have said, there are as yet no adequate Hindustani translations of Shakespeare, and the scholars` translations which exist may be ignored for stage purposes. The stage pieces are not translations, and hardly even adaptations. They take the plot and work out the whole play in an Indian atmosphere. In this way, the following plays have been known to be produced on the Hindustani stage: `Romeo and Juliet,` the `Comedy of Errors` (three versions), the `Merchant of Venice` (three versions), `Cymbeline,` `Hamlet` (three versions), `Macbeth` (*not* a great favourite), `Measure for Measure,` `As you Like It,` `Mid-summer Night`s Dream,` `Winter`s Tale,` `The Tempest` (two versions), `Othello,` `Love's Labour`s Lost,` `King John.` This is far from being an exhaustive list, but I have confined myself to the plays that I know. Apart from Shakespeare, there are a few other English plays some-

times given, but treated in the same way, *e.g.*, Sheridan's 'Rivals' and Bulwer Lytton's 'Lady of Lyons.' Quite modern English plays are rarely given, and Continental plays are not the fashion, although 'Faust' has been played by the "Civilised Theatrical Company of Calcutta" at Delhi. This was, of course, before the war.

The stage conditions are not as yet of a very elevating character. Of the actors and actresses and companies I shall speak presently. Of permanent theatres there are very few, and those are almost entirely in the Presidency towns. In the provincial towns temporary tents or pavilions are erected when a company comes round or when a local company gives performances.

Electric light or even gas is rarely available in the provinces, but the stage and the threatre precincts are lighted with acetylene, and sometimes lime-light is used for the principal actor or actress. Smoking is strictly prohibited in all parts of the theatre. The mechanical devices on the stage are primitive, judged by London standards, and yet the best companies pride themselves on what they call "elaborate appliances" and advertise the fact. The advertisement is generally done by marching in a procession with the properties through the principal streets, supplemented by play-bills often rudely illustrated. Scene-painting for the stage is becoming quite a specialised profession. Enterprising companies like the Parsi Theatrical Company of Calcutta, advertise special scenes painted for the company by the "celebrated Parsian painter, M. Larouffe." In one play you have, among the scenes, a magnificent Royal Durbar; a crowded bazaar, full of colour; an ocean, with moving ships; a soldier's camp, with bustle, activity, and swearing; and a dream--a bedroom melting into Heaven. The dresses are gorgeous according to the wealth of the company, but little attempt is made to study historical or ethnical accuracy. A Musalman heroine might appear in English dress (so-called) and wear Hindu jewellery, while the hero might step forward with a sword that might do duty impartially for Hamlet, or King John, or a Rohilla bandit, or Sindbad the sailor.

The music is a special feature of the theatre, but very little money in proportion is expended on music. There is often a band, but rarely any pretence to an orchestra. One or two men sit in the wings with portable harmoniums, or what are called "Dwarkin flutes," and play the accompaniments to the songs. He or they also in many cases do duty as prompters. The music itself is not of a very high order, but it contains catchy tunes that soon spread over the bazaars. The best Indian music makes an appeal to a special cult, but this free and easy rag-time music of the stage is developing a special school of its own.

The hours of the plays are inordinately long. Usually the play begins at 9 or 9.30, and the doors are opened an hour beforehand. When it ends, only a hardened playgoer can tell. Long though the plays are, the audience never have enough. Besides the play there is often a curtain-raiser: then a farce or two may be inserted between the acts; and there may be a final bonus in the shape of a *Naql*, or light sketch, with possibly just a spice of local malice, which will escape the notice of the police and the dignitaries, who will be sure to have left long before!

The Indian actor or actress has no place in society. The actresses are recruited from the professional singers and dancers, and as the dance and song form a very important part of the play, the companies as it were get their recruits ready-made. Cases are known of actresses playing the leading parts in a year or two after they join the stage, and they sometimes write their own plays. The actors are recruited from the Bohemian nondescripts of the towns, but sometimes wealthy young landowners are stage-struck and go through their fortunes, first as spectators, then as actors, and fianally, if they have any money yet left, as playwrights and managers of companies. Very few of the actors are themselves managers, and most of them are in sordid poverty. The play-bills make a point of reminding the trades-people that no credit should be given to actors or actresses, and that unauthorised debts will not be recognised. The majority of the actors and actresses are Musalmans, but a few talented Parsi have made a name on the stage, and there is a sprinkling of "Anglo-Indians."

If an actor or actress prospers and has education, he or she wants to turn into a play-wright, and if he or she has capital, ambition points the way to become a manager; or (the usual term) managing director. But a large number of managers or managing directors belong to a class quite different from the actors, as their work requires both business ability and capital, and artists are proverbially deficient in both. Among the managing directors, the Parsis have shown special aptitude and enterprise, and their companies are reputed to have made huge profits.

The dramatists are not sharply differentiated from the theatrical managers. Practically every successful dramatist is a theatrical manager or actor, although there are many theatrical managers who are not dramatists. Then there is a large class of hack writers for the stage. The manager conceives or adopts an idea, and it is handed on to one of these hack writers, whose name will perhaps never be known. Some of this work is meritorious. Occasionally it passes under some well-known name, and quite frequently it bears no name at all. Many of the

plays are also touched up, improved from an acting point of view, or from the point of view of the public taste, or adapted, with new songs, and some are frankly plagiarised. All these conditions carry us back to something that was quite familiar behind the English stage in Shakespeare's time.

There are innumerable companies that produce the plays. Almost all of them are touring companies. There is no one centre where any of these companies can establish itself permanently and make a living. Many of them are mushroom companies that start on borrowed capital and break up within a few weeks. The up-country companies have each a patron, some ruling Prince or influential personage, who can protect them from molestation and also render financial assistance to concerns not at all over-capitalised. The names of the companies are quaint and reveal unexpected glimpses of psychology. Wherever possible the words are English. You have the New Shining Star Theatrical Company of Karachi; the Indian Shakespeare Theatrical Company of Bombay (which has as much to do with Shakespeare as the Shakespeare Theatre of South London); the Civilised Theatrical Company of Calcutta; and so on. There are companies called after the Jubilee and the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria respectively. The name of Royalty is a useful adjunct. There are companies called after Queen Victoria, King Edward, and King George.

We have seen that the output of Hindustani drama is considerable, and its scope and variety gradually extending. Its quality also shows progressive improvement. Inasmuch as the pale sentimental, artificiality of Ashiqana poetry is slowly giving place to a healthy living interest in the actualities of life, and dramatists are trying to observe for themselves and furnish a commentary and criticism on contemporary manners, there is a bright future for Hindustani drama. Hindustani literature has definitely, in its newer schools, cast aside the conventions of an earlier age, and the movements of general literature must influence the drama. But it is not to literary celebrities of other spheres that the drama should look for its most promising hope of rejuvenescence. It is by the penetration of the stage with brains and a high sense of vocation that its ultimate salvation will be achieved.[7]

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7. Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature, London. Vol, 35, part Second Series, 1917, pp. 79-99. This article was read on the 21st February, 1917. This article was not available either in Pakistan or in Saudi Arabia, so we sent a request to the British Library, and they very kindly sent us a photocopy of the above article, for which we are grateful to the British Library.–Editor.

Note On Urdu Orthography

It is not my intention in this note to discuss the question of Urdu Orthography in any comprehensive manner. All I wish to do is to draw attention to two points in Urdu Orthography in regard to which European printing presses can render us a great deal of service.

My first point may be summed up in a general plea for uniformity of Urdu Spelling. My second point urges the necessity of supplementing certain Urdu letters by modified forms to represent distinct sounds. This especially refers to vowels sounds.

As to uniformity: the question chiefly arises with reference to the treatment of compound verbal forms or compound forms of other words involving suffixes.

I take up a book lithographed in India, and on a single page I find the following forms:--

رهے گی ـ
هو جائیں گے ـ
رهیگا ـ
ترقی کرتاجائے گا ـ
دوده پلانے والا حیوان ـ
دیکهتے دیکهتے ـ
کردیجائے ـ

Now spacing, as between words, is not a strong point in lithographed books. Fortunately it is to be found with reasonable accuracy in printed books, especially those printed in Europe. But in compound forms no uniform law is yet established. And yet a few general principles can easily be formulated which will govern all cases.

Why should anyone write or print دیکھتے دیکھتے ? They are two distinct words, and their grammatical duplication does not justify their orthographical blending. In کردي جائے we have a compound verbal form, in which we have three distinct verbs combining to produce a definite phrase; each of these must be printed separately. In کرتا جائیگا we have two distinct verbs, viz. کرتا and جائیگا; but the latter is itself a compound form with a suffix. But as the suffix has no meaning by itself we join it on to the word which it modifies.

I would express the rule in two propositions as follows:-

I. *In compound forms of verbs or other words, where the component parts are distinct words, they should be written and printed separately.*

II. Where there is a mere suffix or prefix with no independent meaning of its own, it should be joined on to the word which it modifies.

The seven examples which I started with quoting would, under these rules, be correctly written and printed as follows:-

رهیگی —
هو جائنگے —
رهیگا —
ترقی کرتا جائیگا —
دودہ پلانے والا حیوان —
دیکھتے دیکھتے —
کر دي جائے —

The principle of treating all postpositions and (Persian) prepositions as independent words may not perhaps command universal assent, but the analogy of all advanced languages will leave no doubt that that is the correct principle to follow. Thus we should write:--

correct.	Incorrect
گھاٹپر	*not* گھاٹ پر
دوپہرسے	" دوپہر سے

(The reason for treating دوپہر as a compound word will be referred to below).

لڑکیکو	*not* لڑکے کو
بدستور	" به دستور

The position of the genitive particle, کا, کی, کے is not quite so clear; but on the whole, I think it may be assimilated to that of the postpositions and prepositions. Thus:--

صاحبکا *not* صاحب کا

We may now state the third rule as follows:--

III. *Postpositions and prepositions should be written and printed as independent words.*

There are a large number of compound nouns or adjectives in Urdu, of which the corresponding forms would be written in English with a hyphen. Thus:-

کن پھٹا *Kan-phaṭa*, **slit-eared.**
نیل کنٹھ *Nil-kanth*, **blue-throated.**
کام چور *Kám-chór*, **one given to scamping work.**
دوپہر *Do-pahar*, **noon.**[1]

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1. If we wish to say "two pahars", we must write the two words دو پہر separately.

In such cases the correct principle is to write the two words together, without spacing between them, but without running the letters of the one on to the other, as in the following incorrectly written forms:-

کنبھٹا
نیلکنٹھ
کامجور

This give us our fourth rule:-

IV. *Compound words, formed by the juxtaposition of one word with another, usually nouns and adjectives, should be written and printed with no spacing between them, but without running the letters of the one on to the other.*

Next, as to be supplemental shapes of Urdu letters. There are three vowel sounds in Urdu which we represent by the letter ی, viz:

ī as in دهلي, *Dihlī.*
e „ لڑکے کو, *Laṛke ko.*
ai (diphthong) „ هيـــ, *Hai.*
پیسا, *Paisa.*

In the final ي we already use the three distinct shapes to the denote the three sounds, viz.:

ي (deep and round, as in دهلي).
ے (turned back, „ لڑکے).
ـــي (shallow and long, left-hand end not turned up, as in هيـــ, *ai*).

But the practice is by no means uniform. The most accurate writers use the three forms, but a lazy practice has grown up in lithographic presses of using the first and second forms only, and expressing the third sound by the second form, although the third sound has nothing whatever in common with the second sound. I urge that the triple distinction should be carefully and uniformly observed, and that European printing presses should cast types accordingly.

A corresponding distinction should be introduced in writing the medial ـيـ. Fortunately the question does not arise in connexion with the initial يـ.

The distinction I propose has reference to the writing of the dots of the ـيـ. It has the merit of not confusion anyone who is not used to the system.

For the *i* sound I would write the ordinary Arabic medial ـیـ with the two dots written side by side. Thus:--

هیرا *Hīra*, a diamond.

کھیر *Khīr*, a rice pudding.

For the *e* sound, to rhyme with *ray*, I would write a short horizontal straight line to represent the two dots. Thus:-

بھیڑی *Bhéṛi*, a sheep.

ھیرا *Héra*, he pursued.

For the *ai* (diphthong) sound I am indebted to Sir E. Denison Ross for the suggestion that the two dots should be written one on the top of the other. Thus:-

پیسا *Paisa*, a pice (a coin).

کھیر *Khair*, a tree, the *Acacia catechu*.

There are not a few words which have a different meaning according to the sound of the medial letters, e.g.:

بیر *Bīr*, a hero, warrior.

بیر *Bér*, a kind of berry, *Zizyphus jujuba*.

بیر *Bair*, enmity, hatred.

A proper distinction in writing is therefore necessary for accuracy.

Similarly, the letter و represents three vowel sounds in Urdu, which can all be accurately represented by slight modifications. The sounds are:-

ū as in بھوت, *Bhūt*, a ghost.

o ,, گھوڑا, *Ghóṛa*, a horse.

au (diphthong) ,, جو, *Jau*, barley.

I represent the *ū* sound by the simple Arabic و; for *o* I slightly curve the lower end of و ,thus ۆ, but do not complete the loop; for *au* I loop the end of و , thus ۏ. In this way we can distinguish--

جو *Jo*, which (relative pronoun),

and جو *Jau*, barley,

also تھوک *Thók*, heap,

from تھوک *Thūk*, spittle,

and so on.

Fortunately no question of medial or initial shapes arises for this letter.

The letter ن represents two sounds in Urdu, viz.:

1. *n* as in نو *nau*, nine.

2. A nasal sound like French *n* in *bon*, as in کریں , *Karen*, let us make.

The final nasal is represented by the ں without the dot, but a medial nasal cannot be so represented. For example, there is nothing to distinguish between---

کنور *Kunwar*, a raja's son,

from کنور *Kanwar*, a boil on the temple.

I suggest that the nasal *n* should have a hollow dot ', which it would be optional to omit in final nasals. Thus:--

گنواڑ, *Ganwār*, a peasant.

اینٹ, *Iṇṭ*, a brick.

ہم ہیں, *Ham haiṇ*, we are.

The two shapes of ہ for an *h* that is joined on with a preceding consonant and one that is not so joined on, are clearly distinguished in European printing, but not yet universally in lithographed books. Thus:--

بہائی *Bhai*, brother, not بہائی

بہائی *Bahai*, a follower of the religious sect of Baha-ullah, not بہائی.

Finally, may I suggest that European presses that print Urdu should discard the antiquated four dots for cerebral and hard letters and adopt the mark ـٹ as in all lithography and writing? Thus:--

ٹوٹنا *Ṭūṭna*, to break, not ٹوٹنا

گھڑی *Ghaṛi*, a watch, not گھڑی

ہڈی *Haḍḍi*, a bone, not ہڈی (1)

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1. Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. University of London. Vol. 1, 1917 - 1920, pages 28-34. This lecture was delivered at the School on February 23, 1919.

PERSONAL PROFILE

Muhammad Haneef Shahid in Chronological Perspective

Name: Muhammad Haneef Shahid
Father's Name : Mian Aziz ud din
Country : Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Place of Birth : Lahore, Pakistan.
Date of Birth : 1st January, 1939.
Address:
(i) In Saudi Arabia: King Saud University, P.O.Box. 22480, Riyadh: 11495, K.S.A. Ph Off: 4676118/119-Res: 4011822.
(ii) In Pakistan: 170-Jehanzeb Block, Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore-54570-Pakistan. Ph : 5419987.

Education (1956 - 1970)

a) Matriculation from the Board of Secondary & Intermediate, Lahore - 1956.
b) B.A. from the University of the Punjab, Lahore - 1962.
c) Diploma in Library Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore-1963.
c) Certificate in French Language and Literature, University Oriental College, Lahore - 1965.
d) Master of Arts from the University of the Punjab, Lahore-1970.

Research Scholar, University of the Punjab, Lahore doing research Work on the 'Life & Works of Sir Sheikh Abdul Qadir. Editor Punjab Observer & Makhzan' for Ph.D.

Honours

1977-1988: Participation in the International Seminars and Conferences

a) Participated in the 'Allama Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal International Congress' held at Lahore from 02 to 08 December, 1977 and contributed a paper entitled 'Iqbal & the Government College, Lahore - 1977.

b) Participated & presented a paper namely 'Educational Philosophy of Allama Muhammad Iqbal' at the International Iqbal Symposium held on 9th April, 1987 at Riyadh, K.S.A-1987.

c) Presented a paper entitled 'Allama Muhammad Iqbal and the Arabic Language' at International Iqbal Congress held under the auspices of Association Morocains Pourla Slidarite Mussulman, Rabbat, Morocco held on 28-30 March, 1988.

(d) Participated and presented a paper namely 'Allama Muhammad Iqbal and Imam Muhammad Bin Abdul Wahab's contribution to Islamic Thought' at the International Symposium held on 19th February, 1990 at Riyadh, K.S.A.-1990.

(e) Contributed a number of papers at various Conferences and Seminars on Allama Muhammad Iqbal and Quaid-e-Azam organised by the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Pakistan Cultural Group, Pakistan Writers' Forum, Pakistan Writers' Club, Pakistan Muslim League, etc held at Riyadh, K.S.A.-1990-98.

1972 - 1998: Dialogues and Talks on T.V. and Radio at Home and Abroad.

(d) Participated in different programmes conducted by the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, Lahore. 1972-77.

(e) Participated in 'A- Dialogue on the Political Views of Allama Muhammad Iqbal and Quaid-e-Azam', a programme telecast by the Pakistan Television Corporation, Lahore in 1977 in cooperation with Prof. Dr.

Munir-ud-din Chughtai, Syed Nazeer Niazi and Prof. Syed Viqar Azeem - 1977

f) Participated in 'A Guest and a Dialogue; Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal; the Poet of Islam, a programme broadcast by the Saudi Arabian Broadcasting Service, Riyadh, on the 10th November, 1985.

g) Participated in 'Views and Thoughts; Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal; Poet of Islam' a Television programme telecast on the 20th & 27th December, 1986 respectively by the Saudi Arabian Television, Second Channel, in Riyadh K.S.A-1986.

h) Radio Talk; Urdu Service from Jeddah, K.S.A. 'Iqbal Studies in Riyadh' -1994.

i) Radio Talk; Urdu Service from Jeddah, K.S.A. 'Literary Activities' broadcast on 21st May, 1997.

j) 'Bridges of Friendship'; a Radio Talk from Riyadh on Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal - 1997.

k) 'Development of Urdu' a Radio Talk from Radio Riyadh broadcast on 28th May, 1997.

l) 'Ramadhan in Saudi Arabia'; Guest Speaker; a Radio Talk broadcast on 26th January, 1998.

Career in Librarianship

m) Punjab University Library, University of the Punjab, Lahore. - 1963-1966.

n) Urdu Digest Publications, Lahore. - 1966-68.

o) Punjab Public Library, Lahore. - 1968-1979.

p) Present Deanship of Libraries, King Saud University, Riyadh, K.S.A. - 1979.

Distinctions

1963-1998: Membership National and International Bodies.

i) Life Member, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore.

ii) Secretary General, International Islamic Research Institute London, Branch Office Riyadh, K.S.A.

iii) Member, International Intellectual's Forum, Riyadh, K.S.A.
iv) Life Member, Pakistan Library Association, Lahore.
v) Member Pakistan Writers Guild, Lahore.
vi) Member, Punjab University Library Alumni Association.
vii Life Member, Punjab Public Library, Lahore.
viii) President, Bazm-e-Iqbal, Riyadh, K.S.A.
ix) Member, National Geographic Society, U.S.A.

Tributes

1970-1998: Tributes to the Author on his Scholarly Service to the Nation.

1) It would not be out of place to mention that the Author's Personal Profile is included nearly in all the Reference Works and Who's Who in Pakistan.
2) It is note-worthy that about fifty percent publications of the Author are processed and preserved in the Library of Congress, Washington, U.S.A.
3) It is creditable that a live photograph (Portrait) of the Author has been placed in the "HALL OF FAME", Conference Hall, Pakistan Academy of Letters, Islamabad as a national recognition to the contribution and services rendered for the cause of Pakistan and Islam.
4) It is also worth mentioning that the Author has been named in the "WHO'S WHO in the WORLD" of Marquis WHO'S WHO, U.S.A. in the 13th Edition 1996.
5) It is also note worthy that the Author has been named in the 'DICTIONARY OF INTERNATIONAL BIOGRAPHY", 26th Edition, 1998, Cambridge, England.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Allama Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, War heroes, Pakistan Movement, Islam and Urdu Language and Literature in Chronological Order

* Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed, N.H.; life and services (Urdu), Sh. Ghulam Ali & Sons, Lahore - 1969. pp.400.

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YUSUF ALI

Compiled by
MUHAMMAD HANEEF SHAHID

SH. MUHAMMAD ASHRAF
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