Islamic Review & Muslim India

Edited by
Hwaja Kamal ud-Din, B.A., L.L.B


CONTENTS

Page

Frontispiece
220

I. Fitr, of the Feast of Ramazan
224

Prophet in War-Time. By Maulvi Musta-
227

Askhan, B.A.

Our Talk. By Hwaja Kamal ud-Din
239

Birth of Islam. IV.-The Preaching and
the Persecution
254

Religion of Nature. Lecture by Hwaja Kamal-
267

ud-Din

The Excellent Name of Allah. II. By Professor
261

H. M. Leor, M.A., LL.D., F.S.P.

God Speaks to Man. (Revelation). By M.
271

Muhammad Yaqui, B.A.

Islam and Progress. By Mr. Khalil Sbildbrace
276

The Origin and Development of Sacrifice. By
281

D. M. Sadiq
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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THE HOLY QUR-ÁN

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Service, Sermon and Lectures every Sunday at the Mosque, Woking, at 3.15 p.m.
"Religious Reconstruction."

The Western world, sick as it is with the unintelligible dogmas of Christianity, has begun to cry that "the religion should be placed on an inductive basis instead of being allowed to remain on an essentially deductive one." A series of interesting articles has appeared in the Nation, on the reconstruction of the religion; and one of the correspondents has hit the point where lies the failure of Christianity. He says:—

"One practical result of the accepted method of treating theology has been the giving rise to a vast amount of disingenuousness on the part of the exponents and adherents of orthodox religion, which has sapped the moral strength of the Church. So long as membership of the Church is based upon creed or dogma, it is difficult to see how the evil can be cured. The sole bond uniting religious people should be aspiration—effective aspiration, that is—not creed. The Church would then become an organism capable of growth and sure to grow, for the desire for good or God, however much it may be obscured or mutilated, is present in some form or other, at some time or other, in the bulk of mankind.

"If creed were abandoned the Church might possibly begin to understand and practise the rudiments of Christianity. Hitherto the signs of such understanding and practice have not been too numerous. The enormous dynamic of Christianity, which, judging it by its moral and spiritual potentialities and not by its creed, does indeed seem to be the ultimate religion, has, after all these centuries, hardly been tapped. (By Christianity I mean the religion of Christ, not the perversion of it which, for example, enabled, if it did not move, the Church to bestow its benediction on the whole policy of the war.) There is vitality in the Church, but at times it is lowered almost to the point of extinction by thick incrustations of dogma. Instead of lamenting the decay of Christianity, one should pray for its speedy and unhampered growth. It has never really flourished yet. The Church has, but not Christianity.

"Why should not the same methods be applied to theology as are applied to every other branch of human knowledge? The only result of the present system is that piece after piece of the structure is being pulled away. That is necessarily so. Deduction after deduction is being disproved and the major premise is being more and more shaken. The demoralizing effect can only be arrested by reversing the process,
by using the inductive method and following the light whithersoever it leads us. The *morale* of religion would be greatly heightened. Accretion and growth would take the place of crumbling away and decay. For making the change true faith, as distinct from theological faith, would be required. Such faith would be a far more profound faith in God than that insisted on by the Churches. It would be a faith in the inherent truth and goodness of God as shown in his works, and in particular in his chief work, the mind and spirit of man. Theological faith is often the negation of faith, it is often used to extinguish faith. True faith is free from authority, and its essence is that man is made in the image of God."

It is a healthy sign that the Christian world has begun to realize the importance of studying Religion on scientific basis and is on its way to do away with the creed and dogmas which play no part in moulding one's character—the chief function of a living religion. It is the triumph of Islam that the measure which the civilized world has now recognized to be the basis of religion was preached in the Holy Qur-án thirteen hundred years ago. The Holy Qur-án says:—

"Then set your face upright for religion in the right state—the nature made by Allah in which He has made men, There is no altering of Allah's creation. That is the right religion, but most people do not know."

In this verse it has been plainly stated that the true religion is based upon human nature.

As to the principle that the same methods should be applied to religion as are applied to every other branch, it will be sufficient to remark that we have already discussed this subject at length in these pages. Our article, "The Religion of Atoms," is a clear exposition of the fact that there is a perfect harmony between science and religion; and therefore religion should be studied on scientific lines. But it should be remembered that it is only the religion of Islam that receives science with open arms; and therefore those who want to study religion in the light of science are requested to study Islam particularly.

The Status of Women in Islam.

Among the many unfounded charges levelled against Islam, perhaps the most oft-repeated is the alleged degradation of the fair sex. A correspondent of the *Daily News* in its issue of May 9th has repeated the same accusation. He says:—

"There is one phase of Egyptian life which may explain a good deal—sex and the social habits and religious sanctions appertaining thereto. The Egyptian woman is a beast of burden—like the camel or the donkey. The wife can be divorced at will; she has no status, even when she is but the
one wife—which is, of course, the rule. She is regarded as inferior and, in a sense, the exclusive property of the man. She shrouds her face when abroad from her home—which, as a rule, is a miserable mud brick hovel; she is generally dressed in black, and she is altogether a sombre and pathetic figure. This is the darkest phase, indeed, of Egyptian life.

"All this has its origin in history; and—still worse—has the sanction of the Qur-án."

Evidently the writer has but little knowledge of the Holy Qur-án and the Islamic dispensation; otherwise he would not have ventured to pass this verdict against the Book which has done so much to elevate the status of women. The Holy Qur-án has "sanctioned" the title of heritage to women; it has described them to be the "garment of men," implying that the men should be as particular and careful in their treatment of women as they are about their own dress; it has explicitly ordained men to treat the women politely. Besides this, Islam has recognized the equal share of women in spiritual blessings, it has declared that women have received inspiration from God, and thus has established the equality of men and women in the domain of spirituality. The Holy Prophet was invariably kind and considerate to the fair sex. He once released a number of the war prisoners without any condition merely at the request of his nurse. He was so polite to his wives that whenever any of them came to visit him in the mosque, he used to stand up in respect to her. Is it not strange, then, that people have still got the audacity of charging Islam with maltreatment of women?

Let us see, however, for the sake of comparison, what position is granted to women by the Church. In the first place the sin is originated from a woman, in the ecclesiastical history, and she is thought to be the source of the sins of humanity. Decidedly this is not a compliment to the fair sex. Then, Jesus Christ is reported to have addressed his mother in the harsh words—"Woman, what have I to do with thee!" And this mode of speech is assuredly far from being polite.

We think that the Christian writers will do better by referring to the Holy Bible than finding fault with the teachings of the Holy Qur-án.

"What Civilization owes to Christianity."

Under the above heading a correspondent of Sunday Pictorial in its issue of May 16th, pleading for Christianity, writes:

"Is the Gospel a failure? People are telling us on all sides that it is.

"They assert that its claims have been utterly discredited in the eyes of the world by the events of the last five years."
NOTES

They point with triumphant conviction to the visible decline in church attendance.

"They prophesy that this decline will be vastly accelerated in the next generation, that Christianity is slowly but surely losing grip.

"Curiously enough, a great number of those who take this doleful view are themselves professing Christians.

"For my own part I am perfectly certain that the profession of Christianity excludes any possibility of pessimism. Those who have any lurking doubt as to the ultimate triumph of the Christian ideal are self-convicted of a lack of genuine belief in the reality and truth of that which they profess.

"It is easy to point out all that Christianity has not yet done, but if we cast our glance backwards instead of forwards, and enumerate some of its accomplished triumphs, we shall find ample ground for optimism as to the future.

"As the Bishop of London said recently, 'The wonder is, not that Christianity has done so little, but that it has done so much.'

"I am convinced that the effect of Christianity upon the world must be tested, less by the number of those who are at present definitely allied with any of our religious organizations than by the prevailing standard of public opinion.

"And I say without hesitation that in this, the foremost Christian nation, you find a progressively sound public opinion on all essential points—a public opinion in advance of what it was fifty or a hundred years ago—and this advance I trace to the working of the Gospel.

"Further, I find throughout history that the Christian nations have been consistently the progressive ones. Every great nation of to-day had the foundation of its greatness laid in an age when the Christian religion was acknowledged to be the best and highest ideal.

"The Eastern nations, with the exception of Japan (which, since its renaissance, has absorbed a large amount of the Christian ethics), have remained backward and unprogressive.

"The whole conception of modern democracy is coloured, to an extent that we often fail to recognize, by the ideals of the Sermon on the Mount. The Gospel works silently and unnoticed, as leaven in the mass of human society.

"Progress comes through failure. We are beginning to see that only by a common fusing of interests can our individual interests be conserved."

The writer in his eagerness for pleading the cause of Christianity has not taken the trouble to be accurate in his statements. He says that the civilization of the modern times owes much to Christianity; and in support of it he refers to the Sermon on the Mount. But any one who has studied the Gospel and the movements of the present times
with a critical eye can hardly be able to follow the force of his contentions.

Our modern democratic Governments have but recently emerged from a victorious war which engaged their whole-hearted attention for about five years. The same democratic Governments have drawn up several drafts of treaties, and in fact the terms of one treaty are still under contemplation. Does the writer of the above-quoted passage think that these Governments have followed the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount in (1) their waging the war and (2) in offering the peace terms to the vanquished foes? In the Sermon on the Mount we have:

(1) “But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

(2) “And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.”

Had the Christian Governments acted according to the teachings of Christianity, there would have been no war nor the new inventions which owe their existence to the war. Perhaps we would have taken another fifty years to attain to that perfection of aircraft which we have attained in these five years. According to the tenets of Christianity we should not have only tolerated the possession of Belgium by the German troops, but would have gladly welcomed them to France, and thence eventually to the coast of England. The Archbishop of York spoke of war as signifying the “miserable breakdown of Christianity,” and Mr. Rowntree said that was the sign of bankruptcy of religion.

And again, the British Government is now bent upon to punish the defeated foes. The Premier has plainly said so, in his reply to the representation by the Khilafat Delegation. Is this policy, in the opinion of the correspondent, actuated by the teachings of Christianity? The fact is that the dispensation of the Church is quite inadequate to govern the new forces of the modern times. The European nations are making progress because they have abandoned Christianity so far as their practical life is concerned. Thus civilization owes nothing to Christianity; but Christianity owes its existence to the State, because, fortunately, it has become the State-religion.

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EID-UL-FITR
OR THE FEAST OF RAMAZAN

The great Muslim Festival of Eid-ul-Fitr or the Feast of Ramazan came off on Thursday, June 17, 1920, and was celebrated with great éclat at the Mosque, Woking. There
Eid-ul-Prayers:—Prostration.
were, roughly speaking, about three hundred people of various nationalities, including the press representatives and photographers, who came to take down the proceedings and photos of the festival for the various periodicals. There were Indian Muslims in turbans of different colours, there were Muslims from Egypt and Arabia in red turbouches, there were Muslims from the heart of Africa in long-flowing robes, and above all, there were British Muslims in their English dresses. And yet, as it was a working day, quite a large number of Muslims, specially those living in distant parts of the country, and the students at the Universities, could not find it possible to join the festival. The most important guests were: the Hon. Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, member of India Council; Mr. Mohammad Ali, Head of the Indian Khilafat Delegation, with his colleagues; the Paramount Chief of Lagos (Africa), with his devoted son who held the gorgeous umbrella over his father's head; Nawab Sarwar Ali Khan, Chief of Kurwai, with his nephew Faiz Mohammad Khan, Chief of Maler Kotla; Dr. H. M. Léon, M.A., Ph.D.; Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall; Mr. Habib-Ullah Lovegrove; Mr. Abdul Karim Lofts, Magnetic Healer; Dr. Charles Garnett, M.A., D.D.; and other British Muslim brothers and sisters.

The congregation stood up for the Eid prayer a little before noon, "the prince and the peasant" standing shoulder to shoulder in the right Muslim way. The accommodation in the Mosque being inadequate to hold such a large gathering, the prayers were held on the lawn, and the congregation consisted of several long rows. The prayer was followed by a sermon from Mr. Mustapha Khan, B.A., the Imam of the Mosque. The cosmopolitan character of the congregation could not but suggest the idea of universal brotherhood of man brought about by Islam. The speaker, therefore, dwelt upon this subject, and pointed out that in ancient days humanity was divided into different groups and families. But as civilization advanced and different peoples came into contact with one another, the conception of Divinity was accordingly broadened, and if the Holy Prophet Jesus Christ represented God as Father, implying that just as a father cannot be partial to any of his sons, similarly God as Universal Father could not be partial to any member of His great family. The Holy Prophet Muhammad went a step forward in establishing the universal conception of God by declaring that God is the "Lord of all the nations." "Thus Islam," he said, "has come to unite the different peoples of the world into one universal brotherhood." "People make leagues of nations," he continued, "to bring about eternal peace among the nations of the world, but no peace can be brought about by treaties and leagues, as real peace springs out from hearts, and unless the hearts are united, there can be no genuine peace in the world."
The speaker then explained how the common basis of a universal religion could be arrived at by picking up the common element of all the religions of the world, and illustrated this principle by applying it to the three important articles of faith, i.e. (1) existence of God, (2) Unity of God, and (3) Revelation.

The address was followed by the customary Eid greetings. Muslims embraced one another with servidness and ardour of brotherly feeling. Persons, absolutely unacquainted with one another, speaking different languages, forgot for the time their local characters. They were brethren in faith and that was enough.

Mr. Mohammad Ali of the Khilafat Delegation then delivered a short informal address in keeping with the subject of the sermon. The feelings of Muslim brotherhood, he said, were deeply ingrained in our nature. A Muslim cannot but feel for and sympathize with his Muslim brother whether they be coming from the ends of the earth. A message of prayer and devotion was then decided upon to be sent to the Sultan of Turkey as Khalifa of Islam, and a telegram to be sent to the King-Emperor praying His Majesty that in the revised treaty of Turkey no dismemberment of Turkish Empire and Jazirat-ul-Arab may be allowed. Collections were also made on this occasion for the relief of sufferers from floods at Louth, for which our British Muslim sisters deserve warmest thanks.

Luncheon was then served up in the lawn, consisting of Indian dishes. The special Eid-ul-Fitr dish of India called the Savayyan was a remarkable feature of the feast. The gathering then resolved themselves into social groups and enjoyed the day as they pleased. Just after afternoon tea, an informal meeting was held at which Dr. Charles Garnett, M.A., D.D., moved a resolution to the effect that the Government should be moved to see that war relief was distributed equitably between the sufferers from the war, whether they were Christians, Muslims, or Jews. For, he explained in the brief remarks that he made in moving the resolution, it was a shame and a disgrace to see that in the administration of war-relief, distinctions were being made between the Christian and the non-Christian, while, as a matter of fellow feeling and common humanity, our charities should not be determined by the distinctions of creeds or races. The resolution was supported in a short speech by Lady Katharine Stuart, an ardent apostle of Esperanto, and was carried. Another resolution was moved by Maulvi Mustapha Khan, Head of the Mosque, and was passed in silence, that “This meeting of Muslims from all parts of the world places on record its deep regret at the untimely death of Khan Bahadur Khalifa Syed Hamid Hosain, B.A., late Financial Secretary to the Patiala State (India), and a Member of the Jail Reform
Eid-ul-Fitr Feast:—Muslims at Lunch.
THE PROPHET IN WAR-TIME

Committee, and expresses sympathy with the bereaved family."

The day proved an unexpectedly splendid success, and
the festival was enjoyed thoroughly by all. A large number
of the guests had left after lunch; the rest took their leave
after afternoon tea, and a few stayed to dinner. I cannot
close this account of the great festival without making a
grateful mention of the voluntary work done by our British
Muslim sisters, who worked untiringly from morning to
evening, and whose labour of love cannot be adequately
thanked for. The members of the Mosque also feel thankful
to the Muslim brethren who worked in this connection.

Fazal Karim Khan, B.A.

THE PROPHET IN WAR-TIME

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JIHAD—
THE "GREAT JIHAD" AT MECCA

By Maulvi Mustafakhan, B.A.

Islam has been invariably misrepresented by the European
writers under the mask of Jihad. The hostile criticism that
has been levelled against the pure and simple teachings of
the Holy Prophet of Arabia has always culminated in the
accusation that Islam was spread by the sword, and that
Muhammad (may peace and blessing of God be upon him)
had the sword in one hand and the Qur-án in the other.
Western writers have, however, never taken the trouble to
inquire into the circumstances that led the Holy Prophet
to take up the sword. Their case, in fact, is based upon
their lack of knowledge of those circumstances. But to
judge the matter fairly it is necessary to study in some
detail the events which made Arabia once the scene of
bloodshed.

It has been universally admitted that for a period of
thirteen years, at Mecca, the Holy Prophet was subjected
to most bitter persecution. He was mocked, ridiculed, and
stoned. His path was sometimes strewn with thorns, which
made his feet bleed. When praying, filth and dirt were
thrown upon him. In short, he was the butt of every
torment and indignity. But he endured all these afflictions
with remarkable fortitude, and went on preaching the divine
message with which he was charged. His companions,
too, were treated ruthlessly, and were, in fact, put to such
fearful suffering that in compassion he advised them to
betake themselves to the coast of Abyssinia—a migration
which is known as "the First Flight" in the history of
Islam. The animosity of the Quraish was, however, increas-
ing every day, and when they saw that the Holy Prophet
could not, in any way, be dissuaded from teaching his new
faith, they resolved to settle the question for ever by putting him to death. They made plot after plot against his life; and eventually convened a large gathering consisting of a representative from every clan. At this meeting, Abu Jahl, the great enemy of the Prophet, proposed that a detachment consisting of a member of each tribe should fall upon the Holy Prophet and kill him with their numerous swords, so that his blood might not be ascribed to a particular family. This resolution was unanimously adopted, and the day for the murder was fixed. The Holy Prophet, however, received timely information of the plot and managed to escape in the night. A number of Muslims had already migrated to Medina by his order.

It was under these circumstances that the Holy Prophet fled to Medina.¹ He said good-bye to his dear home at dead of night, leaving his devoted cousin and disciple, Ali, in his bed, and escaped in company of Abu Bekr, his staunch friend. The fury of the enemy did not abate when they discovered that he had escaped. The Quraišh dispatched an expedition in pursuit to murder him. The price of one hundred camels was offered for his head, and this tempted many a horseman to pursue the fugitive. Sirqa-bin-Khashm, a great warrior, actually overtook the Prophet. But, by the mercy of God, he could not gather courage to attack him; rather, struck with awe, he entreated the forgiveness of the man whom he had hunted; which was given in writing by Abu Bekr.²

The enemy was unsuccessful in his dark designs, and the Prophet and Abu Bekr reached Medina in safety, where the people of Medina, often called the Ansar (Helpers), on account of the timely help they rendered to Islam, received them with great hospitality.

This marks the termination of the Holy Prophet’s mission at Mecca, and up to this time he had never thought of resorting to the sword in order to propagate Islam. The word *Jihad* has always been a source of terror to Europe, and that groundless terror is the base on which the bigoted Christian missionaries have built up the false theory that Islam was spread by the sword. But the fact remains that the Holy Prophet had received the Divine command for *Jihad* in one of the earliest revelations at Mecca; and he had been obeying that command since then by peaceful means. The misunderstanding under which the opponents of Islam have been labouring is simply this: They in their ignorance imagine that *Jihad* means wielding of the sword to spread Islam, which is not only literally incorrect, but

¹ This is the Hijra or the Flight, from which the era of Islam is dated.

² This indicates that the pen and inkpot were always kept with the Holy Prophet with a view to take down the divine words when revealed; and hence the authenticity of the text of the Holy Qur’án.
THE PROPHET IN WAR-TIME

historically too. Literally, *Jihad* means "to strive," i.e. for the spread of Islam, or in more general terms the effort for good against evil, and in the same sense the word has been used in this verse of the Holy Qur-án:—

"And strive against them a mighty striving with it,"
i.e. the Holy Qur-án.

This verse was revealed at Mecca, and it was in compliance with this Divine injunction that the Holy Prophet went on preaching his gospel of truth under most trying circumstances. In this verse the Holy Prophet was ordered to do *Jihad* by means of the Holy Qur-án, and it was solely due to this message of truth that he got men like Abu Bekr and Umar, who afterwards proved to be a source of great strength to the cause of Islam. Undoubtedly the Holy Prophet was doing *Jihad* when he was preaching the eternal truth to the people of Mecca, and this was indeed a "great *Jihad,*" in the words of the Holy Qur-án. Thus historically, too, the word *Jihad* has no direct connection with the battles that the Holy Prophet has to fight against his foes. The warfare of Islam begins after the Flight to Medina, while the Divine injunction of *Jihad* was revealed and carried out in practice, long before, at Mecca.

It will not be out of place here to mention that to use force in matters religious is against the fundamental teaching of the Holy Qur-án. The idea of peace is a very dominant idea in Islam. A Muslim is supposed to greet another Muslim with the words "Peace be with you." Heaven, as represented in the Islamic gospel, is the abode where peace and tranquillity will reign supreme. A Muslim, again, according to the Holy Qur-án, is one who has made peace with God and man. The Holy Prophet was repeatedly enjoined to preach his gospel in a peaceful manner. The Holy Qur-án says:—

"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation" (ch. xvi. 125).

And elsewhere it clearly lays down that:—

"There is no compulsion in religion."

THE SELF-SACRIFICE OF THE PROPHET.

It is sometimes said by hostile critics that the Holy Prophet was helpless at Mecca, and, therefore, was forced by circumstances to remain peaceful; but at Medina he was supported by the Ansar (the Muslim converts of that city), and thus for the first time had opportunity to wield the sword with some slight prospect of success, and to make conquests for his own aggrandizement. People, who think so, can have but little knowledge of human nature. Human nature is always the same. If a man is greedy by nature, he will be greedy under all circumstances. His native character will show itself in whatever circumstances
he may be placed: if the Holy Prophet had been an ambitious personality, desiring means for personal aggrandizement, that defect in his character should have shown itself on some occasion of his early life, for youth is the period in which men are led by their passions. But, on the contrary, we find him always evincing self-control, and modesty and patience. At the age of twenty-five he marries a widow named Khadijah, who is senior to him by fifteen years; and, in spite of the fact that the whole of Arabia was given up to polygamy, the Holy Prophet never thinks of taking another wife until Khadijah dies, when he is fifty-five. He thus spends the best part of his life with an old lady, who has lost all her personal charm, but to whom he is devotedly attached throughout. This is a sufficient testimony to the Prophet's self-control. But here is another example. In the early years of his prophethood, when he was about forty years of age, an assembly of the chiefs of Mecca tried to turn him from his mission by offering him strong worldly temptations. They sent Utba as their envoy. Utba came to the Prophet and said: "O son of my brother, you are distinguished by good qualities and your descent. You have sown division among our people, and cast dissension among our families, you denounce our gods, and tax our ancestors with impiety. We have a proposition to make to you; think well if it can suit you to accept it." "Speak, O father of Walîd," said the Prophet, "I listen." "O son of my brother," said Utba, "if you wish to acquire riches by this affair, we will collect a fortune larger than is possessed by any of us; if you desire honour and dignity we shall make you our chief, and if you want to marry a beautiful girl we are ready to give you the hand of any maid you choose. If you desire dominion, we will make you our king." In reply to all this the Holy Prophet simply recited these verses of the Holy Qur-ân:

"Praised, glorious God! This is a revelation from the Beneficent, the Merciful God: a book of which the verses are made plain, an Arabic Qur-ân for a people who know: herald of good news and a warner, but most of them turn aside so they hear not; and they say: Our hearts are under covering from that which you call us to, and there is heaviness in our ears, and a veil hangs between us and you; we, too, are working. Say, I am only a mortal like you, it is revealed to me that your God is one God, follow the right way to Him, and ask His forgiveness; and woe to the polytheists, to those who do not give alms, and they are unbelievers in the Hereafter, and for those who believe and do good, they shall surely have a reward never to be cut off" (ch. xii).

Hearing this, Utba went back in despair. This is a brilliant illustration of the Holy Prophet's self-denial; and
THE PROPHET IN WAR-TIME

establishes the righteousness of his cause, and his intense sincerity. He would not yield to any sort of temptation. His character is far above those base selfish and carnal desires which cause men to forsake high principles of life. He would not give up his faith, even to save his life.

Once a body of the Quraish came to Abu Talib, the uncle of the Prophet, and said to him: "We respect your age and rank, but our respect for you after all has some limits. Certainly we can have no further patience with your nephew's denunciations of our gods and his disparaging words against the beliefs of our ancestors. Therefore, you should either prevent him from doing so, or you, too, should take part with him, so that we may settle the matter with our weapons until one of the parties is exterminated." Having given this ultimatum, they departed, and Abu Talib began to think over the matter. He was not willing to separate himself from his people, nor did his profound affection for his nephew allow him to abandon the Holy Prophet and hand him over to the tender mercy of the idolators of Mecca. He, however, sent for the Holy Prophet, informed him of the challenge of the Quraish, and begged him to give up the task he had undertaken. The Holy Prophet thought that his uncle was going to get rid of him and wished to withdraw his protection; but his high determination never flinched, though the thought of his beloved uncle's desertion made him weep. He replied firmly: "O, my dear uncle, if they placed the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left to force me to renounce my work, certainly I would not desist therefrom till Allah made manifest His cause, or I perished in the effort." Hearing these words from the lips of his dear nephew, the heart of Abu Talib was touched, and he said: "Say whatever you like, for, by the Lord, I shall not abandon you." Thus, neither temptation of power and wealth nor threat of death could prevail upon the Holy Prophet to abandon his task. It is, therefore, quite inconsistent and illogical to conclude that he was led to wage wars at Medina with a view to acquire dominions or wealth. Had he been greedy for temporal power, he could have achieved it at Mecca very easily by acceding to the ardent request of the Quraish. But neither power nor wealth was his object, his single aim was to propagate the truth which he had brought with him. He was prepared to lay down his life in defence of truth.

PERMISSION TO FIGHT.

But the question remains: If the Prophet did not take up the sword for the propagation of Islam, nor for personal aggrandizement, what was the object of the battles which were fought by him? The reply to this question is simple enough. The Quraish of Mecca, as we have seen, were
determined to annihilate Islam; and the Muslims were permitted to resort to the sword simply in self-defence. Thus we have in the Holy Qur-án:—

"Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war is made; because they are oppressed" (ch. xvii. 39). According to the IMAM ZAHRI this verse forms the basis of permission to the Muslims to unsheathe the sword against the heathens of Mecca, who were already in a state of war against them. IBNI JARIR, however, thinks that the permission for fighting to the Muslims was given in the following verse:—

"And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you; and do not exceed the limits" (ch. ii. 190).

Personally, I am inclined to agree with the IMAM ZAHRI, because in the former verse the words "permission is granted" appear to indicate a new commandment. However that may be, the texts of both the above verses—and of how many others in the Holy Qur-án!—speak for themselves, and hardly need any comment. Permission for fighting is granted to the Muslims; but they are to fight only against those who are already at war with them. This clearly shows that the Muslims never took the initiative in fighting, but were obliged to fight in self-defence. The particular point, however, to which I should like to draw the reader's attention is, that the word used in these verses is not "Jihad," but "Qital" (fighting). The subtle difference between the meanings of these two expressions becomes clear when we observe two points: (1) The first of the two verses above quoted, which according to the Imam Zahri, grants, for the first time, the permission to fight, evidently contains a new commandment; as the words "permission is given" clearly show. Therefore, it cannot be a repetition of a previous injunction, while the commandment of JIHAD, as we have seen, was clearly given at Mecca, and the Holy Prophet put it into practice there. (2) The measure suggested in the verse is a tentative one, and subject to a certain condition, as the words—"because they are oppressed"—indicate, whereas the order for JIHAD is quite imperative, subject to no conditions whatsoever. As is clear from the words of the Holy Qur-án:—

"And strive against them a mighty striving with it," i.e. the Holy Qur-án. It follows, then, that the significance of JIHAD is quite different from that of QITAL (fighting). "JIHAD" is compulsory for Muslims, and should be carried out in all times and under all circumstances. It is just like other religious injunctions, such as prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, etc., while QITAL, or fighting, is conditional and permissible only in self-defence.

The Muslims are then supposed to do "Jihad" in all times and under all circumstances, that is to say, they
THE PROPHET IN WAR-TIME

should invariably strive to spread Islam, as it is the last eternal truth taught to mankind, and the Muslims as true believers are required to communicate this eternal truth to all the people of the world. This is in the words of the Holy Qur-án the “great Jihad,” and the Holy Prophet continued to do this Jihad for thirteen long years at Mecca. This significance of Jihad is clear from other verses of the Holy Qur-án as well. In the opening verses of section 10, chapter ix, we have:

“O Prophet! strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and be unyielding to them.”

In this verse the Holy Prophet was required to do Jihad not against the unbelievers only, but against the hypocrites as well, and it is a historical fact that he never used the sword against the latter. Had “Jihad” meant to wield the sword, the Muslim arms would have been directed against hypocrites too, because the divine injunction clearly lays down that Jihad should be done against them along with the unbelievers, but it was not so.

Imam Razi, a great authority in Islam, commenting on this verse, says:

“The correct rendering is that ‘Jihad’ signifies striving, or exerting oneself, and there is nothing in the world to indicate that the striving is to be effected by the sword, or by the tongue, or by any other method.”

So much for the literal meaning of the word. But we have seen that the Holy Prophet was explicitly required to do Jihad with the Holy Qur-án, he was also required to do Jihad against hypocrites, but he never took up arms against them, which clearly shows that the primary significance of Jihad is simply to strive by means of exhortation in the spread of Islam, and in this very sense the word has been repeatedly used in the Holy Qur-án.

But why did the Muslims take up the sword at all? For the propagation of Islam? No; the verse giving permission for fighting gives the reason. It clearly says that fighting is allowed simply because Muslims are being attacked and oppressed. How they were attacked and oppressed is an historical question, and let us go to history for the verification of the fact which is clearly stated in the Holy Qur-án in the form of a religious commandment.

THE HOSTILE ATTITUDE OF THE QURAISH.

The Quraish of Mecca, as we have seen, were the relentless enemies of the Holy Prophet. It was owing to their wicked designs to exterminate his religion that he and his followers were obliged to take flight to Medina. Here, too, they would not allow him to pass his days quietly. They began to instigate the people of Medina, and to threaten them for giving shelter to the Holy Prophet. Thus we find that
after his arrival at Medina, the Quraish wrote a letter to Abdulla Bin Ubayy, the Chief of Medina, to this effect:

"You have given refuge to our man and we swear by Allah that either you shall kill him or expel him, otherwise we will attack you, annihilate you and will take possession of your women."

This was a sufficiently strong threat for the people of Medina to loosen their allegiance to the Holy Prophet, and to create troubles for Islam at its new centre. Yet as a large number of people of Medina had embraced Islam, Abdullah could not comply with the request of the Quraish at once. Nevertheless, the machinations of Quraish had a very bad moral effect upon the people of Medina, and in fact the internal troubles which Islam had to face at Medina with Jews and hypocrites were to a large extent due to the intrigues of Quraish at Mecca, who were always plotting the destruction of Islam. As the demand of Quraish was not complied with promptly, they were exceedingly enraged, and began to make preparations for a great attack on Medina. The Muslims of Medina heard of this with great anxiety, and were expecting the attack at every moment. The Holy Prophet and his companions used to pass restless nights keeping watch from evening to morning. Thus we have in the Sahi Nisai:

"When the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) came to Medina he used to keep vigil in the nights."

Similarly in the Sahi Bukhari we have another authentic report to this effect:

"When the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) came to Medina and the Ansar (helpers) gave him shelter, the whole of Arabia turned against the Muslims, and they used to sleep in harness."

The hostile attitude of Quraish was not only evinced in their threatening epistle and in the terrifying news which came from Mecca, but they had already given a tangible proof of their warlike designs by a raid, which one of their noted chiefs, Kurz-ibn-Jabr, made upon the territory of Medina, ravaging almost up to the walls of the city and taking away a big herd of camels belonging to the Holy Prophet. The Muslims pursued him, but the looter escaped to the boundaries of Mecca with his booty.

Such was the state of affairs when, in the month of Rajjab of the second year of the Hijra (November, A.D. 623) reliable news was received at Medina that the people of Mecca were making preparations on a very large scale, for an assault upon Medina. Guided by the instinct of self-defence, the Muslims were bound to take precautionary measures. Accordingly a reconnoitring expedition was sent immediately, consisting of twelve men under Abdullah-
THE PROPHET IN WAR-TIME

Ibn-Jahoh. The orders verbally given to him by the Holy Prophet were simply to proceed towards the territory of Mecca, the remaining instructions being contained in a sealed letter, which was not to be opened by him until he was two days on his way. Abdullah proceeded with this sealed despatch, and opened it when the city was left far behind. The epistle contained direction for him to the effect that he should lead his party to Nakhla, midway between Tayaf and Mecca, and there should watch the movements of the enemy carefully with a view to obtain some accurate knowledge of his intentions. In obedience to this order Abdullah went to Nakhla, and while he was lying concealed there, a small caravan happened to pass by. Abdullah was an impulsive soldier, and had inherited the impetuosity of Arabs. He attacked the caravan, killed one man named Khizrami, and made two prisoners, whom he carried to Medina with the spoils. When the report of this action was made to the Holy Prophet he was much grieved. He refused to take the spoils and said to Abdullah: "I did not order you to fight, why did you do this?" The companions of the Holy Prophet also expressed their disapproval of Abdullah's action, and reproached him for acting against the wishes of the Holy Prophet.

The Quraysh of Mecca meanwhile continued busily to gather men and money for a decisive attack on Medina. They had already invested an enormous capital in the trade with Syria, in order to obtain the wherewithal to purchase arms and munitions. Their caravans were already on their way home with the riches of Syria, and the chief one under Abu Safyan was soon expected at Mecca with a large supply of war munitions.

BATTLE OF BADAR.

In the meanwhile a false rumour flew to Mecca that Muslims were going to attack the caravan of Abu Safyan, which, in pre-Islamic Arab warfare, was the natural thing for them to do. The people of Mecca were already prepared to fight, they were afire with rage for the destruction of the Muslims. The rumour furnished a sufficient pretext. They at once set out with a large army to attack Medina, and the lives of all the Muslims were again in danger.

The Holy Prophet was not simply a teacher, but he was also the guardian of the lives and liberties of his people. His destruction meant their destruction, and their destruction the destruction of the eternal truth which he had brought. It was, therefore, his sacred duty to defend the lives of his people, not simply for their sake but for the sake of the truth of which they were the first repositories. Inspired by the instinct of self-preservation in the cause of righteousness, and in conformity with the divine revelation, which per-
mitted him to take up the sword in self-defence, the Holy Prophet made up his mind to meet the army of Quraish. He convened a meeting of his companions and put the case before them. Abu Bekr and others delivered fiery speeches and expressed their whole-hearted devotion to the cause of Islam. The Ansar did likewise, promising that they would fight to the right and to the left, in the front and at the back of the Holy Prophet.

It was an hour of severe trial for the followers of the Holy Prophet, and their sincerity to the cause of Islam was put to a crucial test. But they proved true. They had unflinching faith in the truth of the Holy Prophet, and the force of his personal character, illumined as it was by inspiration, had wrought such a wonderful change in them, that they at once became ready to sacrifice their lives for the cause of truth. Muir, in his annals of the early Caliphate, remarks of Abu Bekr: “His belief in the Prophet is itself a strong evidence of the sincerity of Mohammed himself. Had Mohammed been from the first a conscious impostor, he never could have won the faith and friendship of a man who was not only sagacious and brave, but simple and sincere.” If the belief of Abu Bekr is a strong evidence of the sincerity of the Prophet, I think this evidence can be infinitely strengthened by the strong faith of hundreds of the Muslims, who gladly sacrificed their lives at his behest.

A few words about the followers of Jesus Christ (may peace and blessings of God be upon him), would not be out of place by way of comparison. His most devoted disciples turned out to be faithless. One of them betrayed his master for thirty pieces of silver. Others even would not pray for him in that hour when his soul was exceedingly sorrowful, but would go on sleeping, despite of the master’s repeated request to them to pray for him in that dark hour.

In short, on 12th Ramadan of the second year of the Hijra, the Holy Prophet came out with his handful of men, some of them armed only with sticks. One mile away from the city, the army was paraded and reviewed. Boys under age were ordered to go back. Amir-bin-Abi Qas, who was of tender age, hearing this command burst into tears and implored to be allowed to join the army. In the end his request was granted, and the boy warrior was equipped with a sword. The army was now numbered and it came up to 313 men, of whom sixty were muhajirs (emigrants) and the remainder Ansar (helpers).

In the meanwhile, Abu Sufian and his caravan reached Mecca in safety. He thence despatched a messenger to Abu Jahl, who commanded the forces of Mecca, to inform him that the caravan was out of danger and advise him to return. A party of the Quraish were disposed to listen to this advice, but Abu Jahl, the great enemy of Islam, would
THE PROPHET IN WAR-TIME

not hear of a retreat until he had destroyed Muhammad and his followers, and thus earned lasting fame. "Let us go forward," said he in the height of his vanity, "to Badr, and there, by the fountain, spend three days eating and drinking. The whole of Arabia will hear of it, and will ever after stand in awe of us."

Thus, sure of his victory, he proceeded to Badr with much pomp at the head of a large army which consisted of one thousand veteran warriors, including one hundred horsemen. The Muslim army had but one horseman. The arrangements for the supply of food rested with the chiefs of Quraish, who turn by turn gave sumptuous feasts to the soldiers at their own expense and slaughtered ten camels every day.

As Quraish arrived upon the battlefield before the Muslims they occupied the best positions, while the Muslim army was obliged to camp at first on sandy slippery soil without a fountain to get water. On this Hubab ibn Munsaz asked the Prophet if the spot was occupied in accordance with some divine revelation, and on receiving a reply in the negative suggested that the Muslim army should go further, should take possession of the fountain and destroy the wells. This proposal won approval and was carried out eventually, but first came the divine assistance, and a shower of rain gave water and made the soil firm. The Muslim soldiers made small pools to keep the water which was used both for bath and ablution. A reference to this divine help is made in these words of the Holy Qur-án:—

"When He sent down the water from the cloud, that He might thereby purify you" (ch. viii).

Although the water was in the possession of the Muslim army, the Holy Prophet was too generous to withhold its use from the enemy, who was given a general permission to take water whenever needed.

In short, both the armies were encamped side by side under the blue star-lit sky. The companions of the Holy Prophet enjoyed a sound sleep, but the Prophet himself spent the whole night praying. In the morning he awakened the people for prayer, after which he delivered a sermon to the army. Quraish, conceited of their power and certain of success, were eager for the fray, though some there were of gentler disposition, who did not like the thought of bloodshed, and advised retreat. But Abu Jahl, who exercised the chief command, refused to listen to them, and so the armies had to fight.

The Holy Prophet went apart from the scene of action under a shelter made of thatch, and began to pray for the victory of his little band. His words are handed down to prosperity, and they clearly show that the Muslims were compelled to take up arms against aggression.
"O Lord!" the Prophet prayed, "forget not Thy promise of assistance. O Lord! if this little band were to perish there will be none to offer unto Thee pure worship." After the prayer, he was seized with violent trembling. Then suddenly he turned to Abu Bekr, who was beside him, and said, "Be of good cheer, O Abu Bekr, for God's help has come." Then he ran out of the shelter and picked up dust and flung it towards Quraish and said: "May their countenances be confused," and to his followers he said, "Press them hard." While the Prophet was praying in a state of devotional trance the battle had begun; three of the Quraish warriors stepped forward into the open space, according to the Arab fashion, and challenged three champions from the Muslim ranks, Hamza, Ali and Obaidah, who accepted challenge; their individual victories brought on the general attack by the enemy. The Muslim army fought bravely, and Abu Jahl, on whose shoulders rested the whole responsibility of this battle, was killed in action along with his brave general Utba. This created a panic in the Quraish army. It was a strong winter day and a piercing blast swept across the valley. The Quraish could not rally their forces, which were driven back in disorder and chaos. Many of their chiefs were killed, and a large number of war prisoners fell into the hands of the Muslims.

The European writers often wonder how a handful of Muslims, poorly fed and inadequately equipped, could manage to inflict severe defeat upon a comparatively large army, which was lavishly rationed and properly armed. There should be no wonder about it, as many things are wrought by prayer in this world. The prayer of the Holy Prophet at such a critical moment was effective. The divine hand was working for the righteous cause of Islam, and the very elements of nature warred against the cruel enemy who was bent upon the destruction of the helpless Muslims.

TREATMENT OF WAR PRISONERS.

Of the large number of war prisoners, only two were executed on account of previous crimes against the Muslims. The rest of the prisoners were treated with great kindness. They were distributed among the Muslims, who were responsible for their subsistence. The Holy Prophet gave strict injunctions with regard to their kind treatment, which were carried out faithfully by his companions. Abu Uzair, who was one of the captives, narrating the story of his captivity, says:—"The family to which I was entrusted, treated me very kindly, they gave me bread (the best of the Arab repast) while they contented themselves with dates alone. I felt ashamed and returned the loaf in modesty, but they

1 Abul Feda.

238
would not take it and insisted upon my eating it.” This was, of course, due to the fact that the Prophet had hidden them to treat the prisoners politely.

The wealthy were soon ransomed, while the poor were released after promising that they would never again fight against the Muslims. Some of the educated prisoners ransomed themselves by teaching the youths of Medina.

Thus the battle of Badr ended in complete victory for Islam. The fact which should never be lost sight of is that the Holy Prophet never took up arms in offence. The people of Mecca made a decisive attack on Medina in order to exterminate the Muslims and to punish the people of Medina for having dared to harbour them. The Prophet was thus forced to wield the sword in self-defence for the preservation of Islam. The Quraish of Mecca did not want to wrest any temporal power from the Prophet. What they wanted was that the Muslims and the Holy Prophet should be put to death, and Islam extinguished. It was to this wicked object of the enemy that the words of the Holy Prophet referred when he said, praying to the Almighty:—

"If this little band were to perish there will be none to offer unto Thee pure worship."

In a word, the enemy aimed at the destruction of Islam in the abstract, but a divine messenger like the Holy Prophet Muhammad could not let the truth expire, even though in defence of it he had to draw the sword.

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TABLE TALK

Given by Khwaja Kamaluddin to a select gathering of ladies and gentlemen, consisting of Hindus, Christians and Muslims, at the residence of Miss Mrunaline Chatsbadaya, Beach, Madras.

Object of Religion.

I have been requested to say something on the object of Religion, a subject which has caused such a diversity of opinion and confusion of ideas. It has created different theologies and diverse codes of morality in different parts of the world. Some say that the object of Religion is fulfilled when we give up all worldly affairs in pursuit of godly life. With them Religion came for renunciation. Others think that the function of Religion consists in reclaiming life in mundane affairs. With some, Religion, in its best form, came to redeem humanity from eternal perdition by showing us ways to appease an angered Diety and to create a sort of reconciliation between the Creator and the creature, as if we had incurred Divine wrath even before our birth without any action on our part. In short, the object of Religion has been formulated in different accents and stresses
in various quarters. But the last Book of God, I mean
the Qur-áín, epitomizes it in one word. It makes “falah”
as the object for which Religion came to humanity from
its Maker. I have purposely given here the original word
from the text as I fail to find its proper equivalent in any
other language. In ordinary meaning the word “falah”
in Arabic means “success,” but literally it means furrowing
out of what is hidden in anything. In fact true success
consists in working out qualities latent in anything. You
cannot succeed in doing a thing you are not capable of.
Where there is a want of capacity there is a want of success.
Success, therefore, consists in working out of your latent
faculties to your best ability. I am not concerned with
what others say on the subject, but I have given you
what the Qur-áín describes to be the object of Divine
Revelation to humanity. Whatever noble and good is
hidden in you must come out; whatever is in the form
of potentiality in human minds must be converted into
actuality. Some think that to please God can be the
only valid object of Religion. It is true, but one fails
to understand in what consists the pleasure of God. If
He created man for a certain purpose, do we not incur
His wrath, if through our actions we bring that purpose
to nothing? Divine glorification does not mean singing of
hymns; it is but a lip-gratitude which cannot please even
an average man. What about God? Divine glorification
from the Qur-ánic point of view consists in human edification,
and in order to please God we cannot do better than to
help Him in the accomplishment of that grand object for
which man was created. Therefore, to please God is really
to work out our own evolution and to bring to realization
what our Creator placed in us. In this lies our whole success.
The Qur-áín says the same elsewhere: “He who purifies himself
and through that purification reaches his full-fledged is
successful, but he who has stunted his faculties meets failure.”
Again the Book says, when it defines man’s religion: “Turn
your face strictly to the right Faith—Nature, given by God,
on which He has created man; there cannot be change in
the Make of God, it is the Religion.” In these words we
have been given our Religion. My religion is my own nature
and to live religion is to work it out. Study your own
Nature, try to find out what inestimable treasures lie in it;
discover means whereby you may bring your Nature to
fruition and you have found your religion. Revelation
from God, according to the Qur-áín, therefore, came to
elighten us as to our own capacities and to provide us
with means to work them out to their perfection. To study
your own Nature is, therefore, to study your own religion.
“One who has known his own self,” so says the noble
Prophet, “has known his own God.” See what wonderful
TABLE TALK

capabilities you possess, bring them to their full fructification, and you have glorified your own Maker and lived the best religion you can possibly have, and this is Islam.

Heaven and Hell.

In this connection I think I must give you the Muslim conception of Heaven and Hell. With many, and I should say with almost all adherents of faiths and creeds, to secure entry into heaven and to keep away from the other place has been believed, and in a way legitimately too, to be the main object of Religion. In this connection, I may again draw your attention to the very words which the Qur-án has chosen to convey the idea of Heaven and Hell. "Jannat" is the word used in the Qur-án for heaven. The word is very eloquent to connote the Qur-ánic conception of heaven. On one side it means something hidden and concealed from the naked eye; the other meaning of "Jannat" is luxuriant and rank growth. May I draw your attention to every clod of clay you have come across to-day on your way to this place. It is a dark thing and without any attraction for you, but it has got something very beautiful and very variegated in nature in it; furrow it out; bring these clods of clay under some process of cultivation, and this dirty earth is at once transformed into a beautiful garden. This phenomenon you observe in your everyday experience; everything that comes in your way contains something hidden in it, which when evolved makes it valuable. So everything in Nature is heaven and hell. They are in hellish condition as long as their inherent faculties remain hidden and unworked out, but they become heaven when these qualities receive full fructification. Man's mind is a microcosm—a miniature of the whole Universe. It is of goodliest fibre and possesses highest capabilities as the Qur-án says, and can make unlimited progress. Think of various works of human pursuit, and God knows what inexhaustible stores we still possess which remain still to be worked out. One who has attained perfect self-realization has created his own heaven, and one who has stunted his faculties is condemned to that fire of God which will come out of human heart (the Qur-án). Don't you experience some sort of heart-burnings when you see a fellow-man who began his life with you with equal opportunities like yourself and who became successful by working out his faculties while you remain in the "lurch" simply because you did not make proper use of your time and opportunity. This heart-burning of our present life may give you a very hazy idea of one of the several aspects of hell given in the Qur-án. I am not concerned here with what other religions say about heaven and hell. There may be a lake of fire with burning brimstone in it and with gnashing of teeth; similarly something is said of Heaven in Christian
ISLAMIC REVIEW

Theology. Those who care to ride clouds with golden crowns on their heads while singing hymns of God, day and night, may please themselves with such description of heaven; but I don't care for a stationary life, I must have something to develop, some sort of elevation; everything around me is on its move to progress; destruction in Nature is only a name for change of form; nay, destruction in some cases means a new life, a new course of progress. Man being the best product in Nature and the finest handiwork of God, cannot go otherwise. This seventy or eighty years of life are too short for our full-fledged. Innumerable faculties in us remain undeveloped in many of us when we die; if in hundreds they receive their sublimation, in millions they remain dormant when death comes; and if everything in every atom comes to actuality, what about those things in men which remain hidden in them in this lease of life, which under Islamic teaching is only a life of preparation, while the time of fruition begins on the other side of the grave. If I have put my faculties into working order my death simply means an entrance to a life of further progress and this is "Jannat" (heaven) of the Qur-án.

Life of Preparation.

You make your heaven and hell yourself. Your heart supplies you with the bed-rock for further construction. Just as you break the earth and till the ground and prepare the land, then a small thing like a seed with the help of water from above, enables the earth to pour its innumerable and inestimable treasures before you—and we have not as yet been able to exhaust its resources—the same earth, in miniature, you have got again in a most evolved form, in the shape of your own heart in your body. It contains every ingredient of the earth in extracted condition. "Verily we have created man as an extract from the earth" (The Qur-án). The earth, with all its ingredients, going through various processes of refinement, has assumed the shape of human heart and retains all its forces on sublimated scale; and like the earth we have been unable to exhaust its resources as well. As the earth produces beautiful things physical in nature, human heart creates things moral and spiritual. Both do need water from heaven to bring their forces into operation. Matter in the earth needs rain in material form, and it comes from clouds; but the human heart is the repository of moral and spiritual things: the rain necessary for its fertility could not assume physical shape. It should bear affinity to the matter it has to work upon. Animal heart gives birth to consciousness, which in human frame needs further refinement. It consists of emotions and passions. They are to be converted into morality, ethics and philosophy; morality again in its turn

242
TABLE TALK

is to be evolved into spirituality. This sublimation of animal emotions on the plane of human heart could not be effected by material rain from the clouds. It did need rain in conscious form, something in articulate shape; something which had to do more with mentality than with our physical nature. The rain did come, and it came in the suitable form. It took the form of words revealed from the lips of God. It helped man to dig the mine of his own heart and produced a healthy crop. The Qur-án opens this truth to us in the following words: "Know that Allah gives life to the earth after death; indeed, We have made the communications clear to you that you may understand" (chap. lvi. 17).

Is it now difficult for you to appreciate the teachings of the Qur-án as to the real object of religion and revelation from God? The Book of Islam teaches us that we have been given highest capabilities and that the progress in store for us knows no bounds (chap. xcv). We have to work out our resources and bring them to a certain amount of development in this our sojourn on the earth, and then to be translated to higher regions for further growth; we cannot proceed an inch further in our journey beyond the grave, unless and until we have attained certain amount of perfection to be made in this life. In other words, we have to achieve certain qualifications before we enter into the kingdom of heaven for further progress. If we lack the required qualifications or we have corrupted or stunted our progressive nature given to us at our birth here, this diseased condition of soul at our death will need purification for a fresh start. We have to attain some kind of perfection before leaving this earthly frame; but if we fail to do it when the soul leaves the body we will need some time and place when and where to make up our short-comings and prepare ourselves for heavenly life.

Muslim Conception of Hell.

Hell, as the Qur-án teaches, comes to provide us with the place needed. We do not believe in the eternity of the hell. Muslim hell, more or less, is of purgatorial, and consequently of a temporary, nature. It helps us to cleanse the soul from all the blemishes that disqualify it from soaring higher and higher in regions Divine. If a healthy physique is needed for a perfect growth on this earth, healthy soul is essential for spiritual upliftment in Ethereal Kingdom. If the doors of hospitals and infirmaries have been opened by benevolence of man to treat us physically and remove defects of body, hell, under divine policy, opens its arms to receive every soul leaving the earth in a diseased condition for the necessary cure. It purges it of all its evils and enables it to enter into the land of felicity and health. It is not the
wrath but the merciful Providence of God which creates hell. Just like a mother who out of affectionate heart brings her baby under surgical operation in order to relieve him of the diseased organ, you will find the hell not less affectionate in restoring you to your spiritual health which you have lost in this earth through your folly and wickedness. Like a kind mother, hell has also got able surgeons at her disposal in the person of “angels of hell,” who will bring your moral ulcers and spiritual gangrenes under their sharp knife; the operation must cause excruciating pains and unbearable agonies with “crying and gnashing of teeth”; you shall have to take bitter and burning purgatives, but this all comes from the affections of the mother—hell—in whose arms you have been given for the restoration of your health. It is to this effect that the Book of God says the following: “Wa ummuhoo haviyah”—and the hell is his mother.

Transmigration of Soul.

I think I should say a few words on the theory of “Transmigration of soul,” which plays a great part in Hindu theology. It is also taking fancy in Europe. One may not accept the theory; but he cannot deprecate its logic. More or less the theory received its genesis from the same causes which brought hell into existence in Muslim theology. If the life on the earth is a life of preparation where we have to attain certain qualifications essential for our entry into regions Divine—“Braham loka” in the words of Krishna; if certain conditions exclusively belonging to the earth are necessary for the said preparation, will it not be necessary, so argues a Hindu divine, to return to earthly life again if we have left it without acquiring necessary perfection. We had to attain certain experiences, not available in the next world, we left this world without doing so, we do need coming back to it again. The logic is not bad and the reasoning is very plausible on its face. But it does not consist with what I find in the course of evolution observable in the universe around. From ethereal specks and electronic collocations up to human form all manifestations and specializations of nature are constantly on their move to progress. They do not retrograde nor retrace steps they have taken once towards progress. Things pass from regions to regions; they receive translations from one order to the other in their course of progress, sometimes in perfect and sometimes in imperfect condition. But they are not allowed to return to the order left by them to make up the deficiency. If a thing passes a stage of growth before it could reach perfection meant to be attained in the said stage, new means are forthcoming in the region it has been translated to, necessary to rectify its defect. A seed may leave the tree in a defective condition. It need not go back into the trunk
of the tree it came from to make up its deficiencies; you, have only to plant it in a land with better climate and to manure it properly and this very defective seed will sprout into a healthy tree far better in fruition than the mother tree. What is true in the vegetable kingdom is true in other kingdoms. A child before his birth has to receive certain amount of growth on embryonic plane, but if he is born with some physical defects, he need not and does not go to mother’s womb for the needed perfection. Surgical help comes forward for the cure. These ways of rectifications are no doubt ultra-natural and more painful, but they are the only means for amendment. If the child has never been allowed to retrace his footsteps to the womb for amendment, why a person who has passed his course of earthly life, in any condition whatsoever, should come to this place again? If this order obtains everywhere in nature that things wanting in perfection to be made in one order are passed into next higher order where efficacious means are present for the cure of the defect, and this system is more expedient and economic to accelerate progress, I hardly find any cogent reason to subscribe to the theory of the transmigration of soul. The same phenomenon is observable in all the stages which matter has to pass before it assumed human shape. The food we take every day in the long run takes the shape of genital superma which converts itself one day into the form of a child. The food has to pass through various stages before it reaches that stage. Things not properly cooked are sometimes taken in; they cause pains in the stomach, but the trouble is removed by some treatment. The food is not sent back from stomach to the kitchen to be cooked again. We take some medicine to help digestion, and enable the food to pass through the regions of blood. Sometimes, for some defects whether they occurred in stomach or through the function of a diseased liver, we produce poor blood, we seek remedy in medicine, but no drop of blood is allowed to be sent back to liver or to stomach for the necessary perfection, simply for the reason that the means and the circumstances necessary for the formation of the blood exist only in stomach and liver and not in heart and the arteries of the blood. Poor blood may germinate unhealthy seed, but new means are adopted to restore it to its proper condition. Superma never transmigrates to blood-regions for the necessary growth. If this observation can be a good datum for the basis of our belief in matters I have been speaking of, I am constrained to reject the theory of transmigration of soul and accept the theory of Hell as propounded in the Qur-án.

Theory of Karma.

Kindred to “Transmigration of Soul” is the doctrine of Karma (actions). The two are one and the same theory,
representing different aspects of the doctrine; the one is substantive, the other adjective. The doctrine of Karma takes for its genesis the diversity of circumstances in which people find themselves at their birth for causes beyond their control, which comes as an accident of birth. If some are born in affluence, poverty and indigence attend the birth of others. Some come to this world with defective organs, while others are blessed with the best of them. This disparity, which brings in variety of comfort and respectively causes happiness and misery, seems to be a blot on the impartiality of Divine Providence, if we in some way are not responsible for it. The theory of Karma, in Hindu theology, however, comes to explain this seeming incongruity in Divine dispensation. All that we get at our birth, in the form of happiness or misery, and all the differences in our social status at the time, the Karmaist says, are the outcome of our deeds in the life before the present. We take birth after birth, to complete our course on this earth, and what we sow in the one, we must reap in the other.

No one would question the logic that human society works on the Law of Actions. That actions must bear their fruit is the basic principle of every other religion, excepting Paulinism. Difference in social grade, in many cases undoubtedly, arises from our actions. We are the creators of our comfort and misery. But if inferiority in social scale, in which every person finds himself at his birth in relation to the other, must find its cause in something wrong in one bygone life, evil will become essential for the working of human society, according to this doctrine. Differences of occupation and variety of engagement move the social machinery. We must serve each other, in different capacities, in order to contribute to our respective comforts. Progress means differentiation, and generates out of diversity. But if the said difference takes its birth from some past wrongs, comfort and progress must demand the existence of evil. Let members of one generation commit wrong in order to be reborn in another in the lower strata of society to contribute to the happiness of the upper one.

Superiority of A means inferiority of B, and happiness of one person does demand sacrifice from the other. And if these are essential for the proper working of society, evil and wrong which are supposed to be the cause of it under the said theory, become also essential for human progress. A doctrine which makes evil a necessary item in the Providence, is a gross insult to a Muslim's conception of God. And if difference in this life arises from past actions, how to explain the necessary difference which must exist even at the very beginning of our species. Its procreation must demand difference of sex. You may ascribe your present
difference to some causes in previous life, but where were
the actions which caused difference of sex in the first pair,
when our species got its emanation? Difference in sonship
and fatherhood is another diversity which must exist even
at the beginning of life. How to explain these differences,
when there was no previous life and consequently no action?

Happiness a Beneficence and not Fruit of Action.

If all the means of our happiness are given to us as a
reward for past actions, how to explain the happiness which
comes to us providentially? Almost all our happiness is
due to various manifestations of nature: the sun, the moon,
the earth, etc. A little amount of happiness which we get
through our actions depends also upon our working out
the sources of nature which did exist long before man came
on the earth. How can all this be the reward of our past
actions? We cannot live without the pre-existence of
millions of things in the universe; they all add to our
happiness; and this all as a beneficence of God, and not
in reward of actions. Divine Providence as exhibited in
Nature makes Divine blessing, which is the main store
of our happiness, a pre-existing thing; while the theory
of Karma makes our actions to pre-exist Divine blessings,
which is absurd on the very face of it. If all our happiness
had to arise from our actions, our felicity would have been
next to nothing. What comes out of our actions in the
shape of happiness sinks into insignificance when compared
with what we get as Divine Blessings. The Qur-án
lays special stress on this point, as well as the difference
of sex, which it says is to be found in everything coming
out of the earth, when dealing with the theory of trans-
migration of the soul, in the following words:

"And a sign to them is the dead earth: We give life
to it and bring forth from it grain, so they eat of it. And
we make therein gardens of palms and grape-vines, and
We make springs to flow forth in it, that they may eat of
the fruit thereof, and their hands did not make it; will
they not then be grateful? Glory be to Him Who created
pairs of all things, of what the earth grows, and of their
kind and of what they do not know."

The Theory Weakens Sense of Responsibility.

If our actions receive their birth and mould from our
beliefs, we should not entertain any tenet or doctrine which
ruins our sense of responsibility, and creates in us moral
or mental imbecility. Fatalism, in the received sense of
the word, was condemned by Islam for this very reason.
Atonement is another condemnable belief. If another has
to bear my burden, incentive for action is lost. Similarly,
we exert to alleviate our misery, because we believe in its
remedy; but all our zeal becomes damped when our trouble is found to be irremediable. Our misery, under the theory of Karma, has come to us as a fruit of some past actions. It cannot be undone and all our efforts to do so will be in vain. I committed some wrong in a previous life, I must suffer its consequences in the present life, and all my efforts to be free from it are simply to give the lie to the said theory. If A is down with cholera, which he got on account of some past wrong, it hardly befits him to seek medical help if he subscribes to the principle of Karma. The theory thus makes man a fatalist, and impedes human progress.

Pain in this life, they say, is penalty of past actions. If persecution and want of comfort may come within the category of pain, no progress in human society has, till now, been achieved without them. The world saw its best benefactors in the persons of prophets, reformers, and philosophers, but unfortunately they are the persons who have always been subjected to every kind of persecution. Similarly all scientific discoveries, to which we owe so much of our comfort and happiness, are fruits of pain and hardship. Should we believe that all these great teachers and inventors were wicked and sinners of the first dye in the past life, because they have been mostly persecuted people, and led the most painful lives? No one gets happiness without some pain, and pain is the penalty of sin. Evil becomes essential for enjoying happiness in subsequent life.

The theory in question cannot give birth to high character in many ways. If A receives some injury from B, it is, as a Hindu would say, in compensation of some injury received by B from A. Thus, offence becomes a justification in the eye of a culprit if he believes in Karma. I need not be thankful to my benefactors because I receive back from them in this life what I gave to them in charity in the life past. The more I think upon the subject, keeping in view all the sequences which such beliefs must logically lead to, the more I become firm in my belief that the theory in dispute is a belief most unfavourable to our moral growth.

The explanation given by our Holy Qur-án of the misery and difference we have been discussing is more appealing to me, as it strengthens my sense of responsibility.

I am told in the Qur-án that I am not only the engineer of my own life, but I am also responsible for the happiness and misery of my own descendants. Our interest in our children in most cases is stronger than our interest in our own selves. The welfare of the family in many cases keeps its members away from such misdeeds as are sometimes unscrupulously committed by those who lead single lives. Let the consequences of every action I do be shared by my
own children. I will make my actions more steady and righteous. But if I alone have to reap what I sow, despair or temptation may, sometimes, lead me to extremes. Belief that children born with defective organs owe their misery to paternity which sometimes may come to them from three or four generations removed, will decidedly prove a more efficacious check to intemperate actions than the belief that the children were themselves responsible for their physical deficiencies. A person may not care much for the evil consequences of his actions if they are to be confined to him; but his care to see his family happy may reform him.

Here are the two explanations of our present misery, one given by the theory of Karma and the other advanced by the Qur-án. No one can vouchsafe the truth of either on the strength of personal experience. We come out of oblivion and go to the same. No one with a sensible head on his shoulders can refer to what he had been doing in the previous life, though one is constrained to give audience to certain silly stories out of courtesy to certain "blue-stockings," whose fancy has been claimed by the theory I have been speaking of. No doubt, one cannot say with certainty on the subject; but out of the two theories the one expounded by the Qur-án seems to me more salubrious in its effect on human character. The Hindu theory creates fatalism and weakens sense of responsibility, and the most hideous part of it is that it makes sin an essential for happiness and civilization.

Revelation of the Qur-án a Necessity.

If Word from God came from time to time for human guidance in olden days, Divine providence for our spiritual growth would be wanting in consistency and universality if the same reached us in adulterated condition. That almost all the books, passed as revealed, excepting the Qur-án, are not free from human interpolation is a truth admitted even by the adherents of the said books. The books of Old and New Testaments have now been declared to be un-authentic in many places, even under ecclesiastical verdict. Solomon did never write books known after his name, nor was Moses the author of the Pentateuch. Same is the condition, more or less, of every other book in the Bible. But it is said that these holy books are partially genuine. How to sift right from wrong is another difficulty. We possess no efficacious means to do it; all ingenuity and labour till now has been a mere waste. We believe the Bible a partial fabrication, yet millions of people accept it as word of God, in its entirety.

How inconsistent the human mind has occurred in its various ways. We prefer to have things in their natural
form, as far as other eatables and drinks are concerned. We will not quench our thirst with the water taken of a jar in which some one has put his hand by mistake. Articles of food prepared under a process, dispensing with touch of human hands, always commands a market. We are so scrupulous in physical diet, but we lack the same prudence in matters affecting our spiritual sustenance. If a document partially admitted to be forged is not acceptable in evidence in any court of justice, why should the Bible command our respect as word from God, if considerable part of it is unauthenticated?

Again, Divine providence becomes also defective if God close the door of revelation to humanity after a certain period in human history. If Divine economy deemed revelation necessary for human elevation, the need has not come to an end. We are the same people as our ancestors were, with the same deficiencies and limitations. Our forefathers had no superior claims on His providential dispensation. We are as much His children as those who lived in ages gone by. If the revelation of His Will was a necessity to mould spiritual fabric in ancient days, the need is the same in our days. A just and impartial God should only do one of two things: either He should preserve His word in its entirety and bring it in its original purity to our hands, or He should replace it with a new Revelation in case the former became polluted by human hand. Do we not observe the same phenomenon in the whole nature around us, as far as His physical dispensation is concerned? There are certain things in nature which are above all human interference, and therefore free from pollution. The sun, the moon, and other members of the solar system, and very many other things in space which, being free from human possession, have always remained in their required shape and need no substitution in their service to humanity. But things that lose their purity and become impaired in their utility are replaced from time to time by a fresh supply. We cannot live without water, if fresh water means life to us. It loses its utility when spoiled with earthly matter. We cannot use seawater for irrigation purposes. Fresh stock of water comes every year from heavens to vivify the whole earth. Thus argues the Qur-án, when it shows the necessity of its revelation to this world: "And we have sent this Book to you in order to remove the differences into which these people have fallen, and it is a blessing and guidance for those who believe; and Allah sends down rains from heavens and gives life by it to the dead earth" (The Qur-án, chapter "The Bee"). Want of rain even for one year kills all vital forces from the earth. Drought means death. Any amount of water in the ocean or in lakes becomes of little use to us if water does not come from heavens. If water is the vivifying principle
TABLE TALK

for the physical nature, revelation is decidedly life to our soul. If Providence never fails to send water from heaven when its former supply becomes vitiated, how can He afford to sit silent when the word that came from Him in days by-gone becomes corrupt—logic so clear to average mind, but not appreciable to the luminaries of the Church in the West, who on one hand are conscientious enough to admit the unauthenticated nature of the Bible but, on the other hand, do not see their way to accept the necessity of any other revelation subsequent to the ministry of Jesus. However, they find their satisfaction in the theory of new dispensation—the grace of “the blood.” It has relieved them of the necessity of Divine guidance. They do need guidance of conduct in every line of human activity, but in matters religious and spiritual they believe in some sort of miraculous transformation which they think is worked out by our very belief in the Blood of Jesus. Man was given the law, so is argued by the Church in the footsteps of Saint Paul, but he could not obey it, the law thus became curse to humanity; the Old Covenant of “law and obedience” did not work well, so argues the Church, God failed in the trial, and then after some four thousand years He was pleased to grant us a new Dispensation which got its revelation at the Cross, and man was relieved from his obligation to observe the law—a principle so absurd and ridiculous at the very face of it, especially in the light of daily experience.

We cannot afford to dispense with the observance of law in any phase of our life. Our very existence depends upon the working of certain laws. But for the law, our very life and property cannot be safe from danger. The very existence of the whole universe depends upon law being strictly observed by every component of the universe. Propriety of conduct means consistence with the law, and misbehaviour means its disrespect. Disease is only a corollary to some breach of hygienic laws, and immorality a violation of the laws of society. In short, regard for law is the lever on which machinery of all civilization and progress is working. One fails to appreciate that psychology of mind in certain people which bows down to the law in everything excepting religion.

The theory of New Dispensation of Blood is, again, an unjustifiable stigma on the universality of Divine Providence. If belief in the blood was the efficacious means of human salvation, why the foregone generations before Jesus were not given the benefit of this blessing? If the religion of law and obedience was only a curse to humanity, as Saint Paul says, why was the ancestry of Jesus, and with it the whole world, saddled with that evil? Again, a larger part of the world remained ignorant of this new epiphany for centuries. It was only in the last century when most of
the world came to know of the Gospel which has wrongly been fathered on Jesus. The New Dispensation ought to have been universal, if it came from the universal Father. Again, one fails to understand the reason of choosing some particular time in the history of man for this revelation. To say that God wanted to give a trial to the Old Covenant is only a gross insult to His omniscience. He must know from the very beginning that His machinery of the law for human betterment would be a failure, and if the pious Carpenter from Galilee had to make and bear the cross for the salvation of humanity, the event of crucifixion should take place either immediately after the commission of sin by our first parents, or on the last Day of Judgment. That God created man under certain covenant which the latter violated, whereupon God repented and saw the solution in atonement, are theories meant for children in the nurseries, but to present them to cultured minds is simply an insult to intelligence.

The book of Islam, in justification of its revelation, comes with a logic so simple and so true. It refers to the universal laws of Providence which have been working since the creation of the Universe. Whatever is needed for the existence of man, and the creation of which is not within his reach, comes directly from God; and if the old stock becomes extinct, or is rendered unworthy of use through corruption, fresh supply comes from above to meet the need. Divine Revelation came to guide humanity in every time and clime, and if man lost it or polluted it, Providence came to supply it with the new. We Moslems do believe that every nation was blessed with the message of guidance from God, every class of human race had its prophet and every country its guide; they left words of God with their followers, who through various causes could not keep their sacred books in their original purity, and so God was pleased to send the revelation of the Qur-án, the genuineness of which has universally been admitted on all hands. Friends and foes accept the Qur-ánic text as pure as it came from the sacred lips of the Prophet Muhammad. Almost all other revelations have lost their genuineness. The Qur-án came at a time when all those natural or artificial barriers became removed, which separated one nation from the other some two thousand years before. Besides, efficient means of communication have made the whole world as one nation for intellectual and spiritual culture. The necessity of giving a separate revelation to each nation is not existing. One Book may act as a light to the whole world.

Few words are needed to say something as to the Vedas—the sacred Book in India. Under the teaching of the Qur-án, a Muslim cannot afford to disbelieve in its Divine origin. "Every nation was given a Prophet," and "There is no race
which had not its Warner from God"—this is the teaching of the Qur-án. And a Muslim must believe that India had its own prophets in the person of Vedic Rishis; Rama Chandra, Buddha and Krishna belonging to the same category. But the question is as to the genuineness and universal utility of the holy writs that came from these sages in India. Very little has been said against the genuineness of the Vedas, excepting what Valmiki is supposed to have said, that the book is not complete and is missing in many "sutras." The remark seems to be correct. Keeping all human needs in view, the Vedas in their present form are not a sufficient guide, and even what we have in our hands is not of much importance as far as its utility to humanity in general goes. It possibly contains inestimable treasures, but they are sealed to man. The book is written in a language which has ceased to be our popular tongue from thousands of years. People differ in its interpretation. Various schools of thought, absolutely contrary in their tenets and doctrine, claim to receive their inspiration from the same book. They cherish beliefs poles apart from each other, and yet they can manage to fortify these contradictions by verses from the Vedas. How it is possible is simply a mystery. The only possible explanation lies in the difficulty which stands in our way to appreciate the true meanings of the Vedas—a difficulty which is unsurmounted; no help of grammar or lexicon is efficacious. The water that came from heavens thousands of years ago on the Himalayan plains for the fertility of human mind possibly remained unpolluted from earthly matter, but went into the recesses of the Himalayas too deep for human reach. Should the descendants of the Rishis spend their ingenuity and time in removing mountains after mountains to avail of that elixir, or should they believe in the divine universal Providence and accept the water of life in the shape of the Qur-án, which was given to humanity at a time when past revelations had become either corrupt or of little use, like the Vedas, for the purpose they have been sent for? The Qur-án does not claim to bring new religion. It gives the same pristine religion of law and obedience, revealed to every nation from above. It contains all those truths which were given in olden books. "Scriptures purified containing mighty truths." In this pithy sentence, Qur-án claims to contain all the truths given in former days but adulterated through human hands. The last book of God came to restore them to their original position, and in some cases to explain Divine truths which became unintelligible through the antiquity of the language, as in the case of the Vedas.
THE BIRTH OF ISLAM

THE PREACHING AND THE PERSECUTION

IV

The grief and anxiety caused to the Holy Prophet by the sufferings and persecutions of his followers was, however, far greater than that caused by his own sufferings which he bore willingly and patiently, because he knew that the regeneration of the world could only be brought about by his sufferings. But the sufferings of his followers, especially of those belonging to the middle and lower ranks of society, were unbearable. They were subjected to all sorts of cruelties, and the most excruciating tortures were inflicted on them. The persecutions of women were simply horrible. One woman was put to death by her two legs being tied to the legs of two camels, which were then made to run in opposite directions. Slaves were made to lie naked on burning stones under the scorching heat of a tropical sun, and to this was added the further cruelty of whipping them. Even a stranger's heart would have melted at these sights, to say nothing of the Holy Prophet, who loved them as if they were his own children. It was on account of these cruel persecutions that he advised them twice to leave their homes and seek shelter in a foreign country or in some distant place, and chose to remain alone or with but very few followers in the midst of his enemies to carry on the work with which God had entrusted him. Thus he tried to lessen their sufferings, never caring for his own, which were enhanced by the whole force of persecution being turned against him in the absence of his followers. What a noble heart and what a sympathetic soul! History fails to present to us another such man.

I have not yet mentioned the great grief which gnawed the Holy Prophet's soul, in comparison with which sufferings and persecutions were nothing. It was the hardness and stubbornness of the people which grieved him most. His great concern for the unbelievers is several times referred to in the Holy Qur-án in pathetic words. Thus in the chapter entitled "Poets," revealed at Mecca, it is said: "Perhaps you will kill yourself with grief because they do not believe. If We please We should send down upon them a sign from the heavens so that their necks should stoop to it" (xxvi. 3, 4). He was so eager for the conversion of the unbelievers that when they refused to forsake their evil ways and superstitions and to walk in the path of righteousness pointed out to them by him, his grief knew no bounds, and so great was it that it could have brought about the death of the Holy Prophet had it not been for the living assurance given to him by Almighty

254
THE BIRTH OF ISLAM

God that the time was coming when they would all humbly bow before Islam. This assurance is contained in the very next verse, where Almighty God tells the Holy Prophet that it has been the Divine law from the beginning that His messengers have been first treated as liars and then He has sent the powerful sign of punishment which has made the unbelievers bow their necks before the heavenly sign. Thus, the Holy Prophet is assured, it would be in the case of the unbelievers and, therefore, he should not feel despondent that his mission would be a failure, for the time must come when they would humbly accept him as their master. This was what happened about some 15 years later when the whole of the Qurash, in true humility, joined the ranks of Islam. Elsewhere the Holy Qur-án says, and this, too, when the Holy Prophet was at Mecca, when all circumstances still pointed to a failure of the Prophet’s mission: “Then maybe you will kill yourself with grief, sorrowing after them if they do not believe in this announcement” (xviii. 6).

Not only various other verses in the Holy Qur-án show the Holy Prophet’s extreme sorrow and grieving for the unbelievers, but his whole conduct throughout his ministry shows the same. Being very severely persecuted, he prayed to God: “O, my Lord! pardon my people, for they are ignorant.” It is a well-known fact that the Holy Prophet used to pray after midnight till morning. In these prayers he used to lie prostrate for hours. Often would he go out in the dark of midnight to solitary places and there cry aloud before his Master. In one of the earliest revelations, the Holy Qur-án thus refers to it: “O you who have wrapped up yourself! Rise to pray in the night except a little” (lxxiii. 1, 2). And further on in the same chapter: “Surely your Lord knows that you pass in prayer nearly two-thirds of the night, and sometimes half of it and sometimes a third of it” (v. 20). This praying in the night was, as stated in these verses, in connection with the regeneration of mankind.

The deep yearning of the Holy Prophet’s soul was to bring about a transformation in Arabia in the first place and in the whole of the world then, and it was this thirst of the soul which kept him waking for whole nights down on his knees before Almighty God, praying in words which came from the inmost of his heart that the prevailing ignorance and evils may give place to light and righteousness. These heartfelt prayers took him to solitary places in the silent darkness of night and made him brave every danger. This deep thirst of his soul to raise mankind to a better moral and spiritual condition, began to show its effect before he received the Divine revelation which imposed upon him the duty of messengership. He used to go, before he was
called upon to warn people, to Hira, a cave about three miles from Mecca, and there passed days and weeks in prayers to God. Thither he bore some bread and water for his sustenance for the time that he was to remain there. It was a dreary cave where no human being was by, and there, in utter solitude, he opened his heart before God, praying for the regeneration of his people. Great was his anxiety for the betterment of his people, many the cries which he uttered for their sake in the solitude of midnight while they sat revelling in orgies, and hence great were the consequences which he brought about. Hence he is called in the Holy Qur-án " a mercy for the whole mankind." In the life of Jesus, the only record of long night prayers is that immediately prior to his arrest, and so far as the record goes, this prayer was only for his own safety, for the passing away of the cup. But in the case of the Holy Prophet there is a record of long night prayers for at least twenty-three years, and all these not for his own safety, but for the welfare of mankind. Hence the great difference between the transformations brought about by these two prophets. Who can fathom the deep sympathetic affection of the noble soul praying to God for hours and hours for the welfare of his own ungrateful persecutors! This is what none but a prophet can do. Greater persecutors of the Holy Prophet than the unbelievers of Mecca are the Christians of our own times, for they most ungratefully slight his valuable services in the cause of truth and humanity and heap all sorts of abusive names upon him.

The steadfastness and patience and the marvel of faith displayed by the Holy Prophet during the long struggle which began and ended only with his ministry, is not only unparalleled in profane history, as Muir admits, but even sacred history fails to afford an instance of it. Perseverance and faithfulness are no doubt admirable qualities in a man, but in the Prophet of God there is something besides which transcends the mere suffering of persecutions. He not only suffered the severest persecutions and trials with true apostolic patience, but what is nobler still, his hope and faith in the final triumph of his cause remained as firm and as unwavering as ever. Rejected by all but a few who were themselves driven from their homes, meeting failures and reverses on all sides, subjected to persecutions, threatened with death and destruction, laden with grief for the evil ways and anxiety for the reform of his people, surrounded by enemies on all sides, he still had the same sublime trust in the future, the same high confidence in his ultimate success. The torch of hope kept burning within him, notwithstanding the mighty tempests of trials, persecutions and hardships. Elijah too, whose faith and perseverance are considered by Muir to be equal to the faith and perseverance shown by
RELIGION OF NATURE

the Holy Prophet, suffered persecutions; and he is no doubt a type of the suffering prophets of Israel, but the lofty trust in God which we witness in the life of the Holy Prophet is wanting in the case of Elijah. Unable to bear persecutions and meet failures, he "went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers" (I Kings xix. 4). Contrast with Elijah under the juniper tree in a wilderness praying for death because he could not bear the persecutions of his enemies, the Holy Prophet under the palm tree in the wilderness when rejected by the Saqif and bleeding with wounds, he poured forth his complaint to God. After ten years of cruel persecution and rejection, he did not, like Elijah, request that he might be brought to an end, but still showed his willingness to bear persecutions so long as it pleased God, and his confidence that he would not die in hopelessness and that his cause would ultimately be a success. Even Jesus Christ gave way to despair, so the Gospels would have us believe, when he cried out, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani," but never did such an idea cross the Holy Prophet's mind, though he passed through harder trials and witnessed more critical moments in his life.

RELIGION OF NATURE.

Lecture by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, at University Institute, Calcutta; Hon. Justice Chaudhri, Judge of Calcutta High Court, in the Chair.

If progress and upliftment from the lower to the higher order may rightly be called as the main object for which religion was given to man, there seems to exist hardly anything in Nature which is without the same. Look to the open book of Nature, the same story of progress and unfoldment is written on its every page in bold letters. Everything in the universe is on its way to sublimation. "From the seedling to the mighty oak, from a sea-shell to a cathedral," and from a genital seed to a full-grown man, progress and development is the order in the universe with no retrogression, no retracement of steps once taken, and no transmigration to lower stages.

The same phenomenon is observable in the whole course of evolution. From ethereal specks to the highest evolution of the matter in human frame, everything, no matter how insignificant in its position in the world, contains certain potentialities which by gradual development come to their full actualization. Everything seems to know the shape
it has to assume, the material, its quality and measure it has to use, and the way it has to pursue in order to reach its goal. The course in fact has already been chalked out by some mighty Intelligence, and the various elements that have to convert themselves in the long run into different manifestations simply follow it with implicit obedience. The phenomenon has so beautifully been referred to in the following verses of the Holy Qur-án:

"Rabbonallazi a'atá kullá shai-in khalqáhóo summa hadá"; — "Our Lord and Creator is He, Who granted everything its shape and measure, and then guided it on its way to perfection."

Is this progress and the course of evolution, pursued by elements, only an accident and a freak of empiric Nature? The whole working of Nature gives the lie to such a conclusion. Every atom in Nature seems to have been en- chained by the Law. The course which it pursues, the shape it assumes, and the matter which it uses in its build, are all pre-arranged and pre-ordained. We once believed in elements as the first entity, but they were discovered to be a subsequent collocation of atoms, which in their turn were traced to electrons, and now we have gone to ethereal specks as the first discovered cause of the whole universe. Even there, in the ethereal world, the govern- ment of the law has been discovered to move the whole machinery of evolution. All kinds of specialization in any order, electronic, atomic or elemental, follow the dictates of the law. Innumerable laws have recently come within scientific ken, which play their respective parts in Nature in her different kingdoms. One may sum them up into three main classes. Things become created, they receive their nourishment for their maintenance, they go on unfolding various qualities inherent in them until they reach their perfection. The law of creation, the law of nourish- ment and maintenance, and the law of evolution hold their absolute control everywhere, and receive unqualified and complete allegiance from the matter in all its shapes. This establishes precedence of the law over the matter. And if the law existed before the matter, pre-existence of Intelli- gence over, as well as its existence apart from, the matter becomes an undeniable truth. Matter, therefore, is neither self-created nor a self-existent entity, but a docile and submissive child of the Intelligence who as the Author of the said three laws, can rightly be styled Creator, Nourisher, Maintainer and Evolver. These four attributes of the First Intelligent Cause come within the meanings of an Arabic word "Rabb." To this truth the Qur-án refers in the following words: "Ela Rabbe-kal-muntahá" (wherever you may go) "you will find your Rabb at the termination." Our researches may reach any side of evolution, we will
RELIGION OF NATURE

find everything under the government of Rabb—the Creator, the Maintainer and the Evolver.

Now to my subject. If everything in Nature possesses certain inherent qualities and its whole course of existence is to work out its nature, which it accomplishes through strict observance of pre-existing laws, it is not difficult to read and formulate "Religion of Nature." It is "Religion of Obedience" which every manifestation of Nature follows to work out its very nature. Islam literally means obedience, and whoever obeys Divine laws has been styled Muslim in the Qur-án: "And they seek religion besides religion of Allah, while everything in heavens and on earth, willingly or unwillingly, is Muslim, i.e. obedient to Him." In these words the Holy Qur-án brings home to its readers the truth and necessity of Islam to mankind. "Religion of commandment and obedience" is the religion of Nature, which governs everything coming out of Nature. Look to the whole solar system; how obedient and Muslim to the laws of God is its each and every member. The sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, each and every one in the system have their prescribed spheres. They never exhibit inclination to trespass:

"And a sign to them is the night: We draw forth from it the day, then lo! they are in the dark; and the sun runs on to a term appointed for it; that is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knowing. And (as for) the moon, We have ordained for it stages till it becomes again as an old dry palm branch. Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day; and all float on in a sphere" (the Holy Qur-án, xxxvi. 37-40).

So empiric and inexorable is the government of the Law in the whole universe that even an intelligent being like man cannot utilize anything in it without paying full respect to the said régime. A simple thing like the raising of a crop needs observance of certain prescribed courses. We have to break the earth, to till the ground, to put in the seed, to manure the land, and to get it irrigated—everything in obedience to prescribed ways—transgression from which, no matter of howsoever the least magnitude, is not acceptable and would entail loss. "And they wish to pursue a course other than Islam—obedience to the Law—it will not be accepted and they will be the losers in the long run" (the Qur-án). Name any branch of your activities, think of any action on your part where you can dispense with the truth so lucidly enunciated in the Book of Islam, without suffering any loss. No, you cannot pursue any course but that of Islam in your doings. Has not Nature given you unchangeable rules and regulations even for such a simple thing like eating and drinking? Will
you satisfy hunger by putting morsels into your ears? Can you see me by closing your eyes and opening your mouth? Please, put your fingers into your ears and keep your mouth ajar, will you be able to give audience to my utterances? Your action would be un-Muslim-like, something unwarranted under the dictates of Nature; it will not be acceptable, as the Qur’anic words quoted above said, and you will be the loser in the long run.

All our progress and civilization, so much contributing to our comfort, are only fruits of our discoveries in the scientific realm. It was an impossibility if Islam were not the course pursued by Nature. Everything is bound by the law. They follow it and exhibit their various properties in obedience to it. Scientific researches simply go to discover such laws as govern components of Nature when exhibiting their inherent properties. Our different “ologies” are our various discoveries of the Law receiving submission from various things in heaven and earth.

Is it now difficult for you to discover your own Religion; are you not part and parcel of Nature? Does not every atom in Nature find its exhibition in your very body? Man has rightly been called the microcosm of the whole world by Muslim divines. All the members of the solar system and every product of the earth have found their room in your frame, as expounded by the Qur-án, some thirteen hundred years ago, and now established by science. If you possess such universally representative character of the cosmos, how can you afford to follow a religion other than what is observed by everything in you? And it is Islam. Like every other thing in the universe, the object of your religion ought to be to work out your own nature. As the Qur-án puts it—“And put your face to the straight religion—nature of Allah, the very nature on which man has been created by Him, no change in the creation of Allah, this is the right Religion.” In these sacred words you have been given the object of your religion. Study your own nature, find out its capabilities, and follow such laws as may bring them to actuality, and you have discovered your religion. “Islam (obedience to Divine Laws) is the religion with God” (the Qur-án). Revelation comes to provide us with laws from the One who has created our nature. He only knows the ways and circumstances under which our nature has to evolve to its perfection. Muslim-like, we have to give complete submission to Divine Will, and we have fulfilled our religion.

But here we meet a new line of argument, a theology quite distinct from what has been taught by every other religious teacher, including Jesus, in the world; I mean the one emanating from the Church that got its structure from St. Paul. We are told that human nature became corrupt
at the very outset on account of something that occurred in the garden of Eden. Our first parents violated the very first law given to them by the Creator. Human nature became tainted and sin came to us in heritage. We come with sin into this world and are therefore incapable of observing the law. We cannot by nature, therefore, the Church says, follow Islam—the Religion of obedience and commandment. What a degraded view of humanity and low estimate of ourselves! We believe every dumb and inanimate thing besides us to be perfect in its very nature, we believe everything in lower orders to be capable of observing the law, but when these different things find their place in human frame, the best handiwork of God, then we are told to believe, they lose their otherwise unchangeable character—a thing so absurd on its very face. If elements remain unchangeable in their nature and the accident of transformation and shape cannot affect it, they certainly cannot lose this quality when sublimated to the human body.

(To be continued.)

THE EXCELLENT NAME OF ALLAH

By Professor H. M. Léon, M.A., LL.D., F.S.P.

(Continued from April number.)

II

Amongst primitive peoples there exists a firmly-seated conviction that the name of a person is an integral part of such individual, and that to reveal it is to place the owner thereof in the power of the person who has thus obtained knowledge of his name.

"The aversion which the savage has to telling his own name, or uttering that of any person (especially of the dead) or thing feared by him is concerned, the reason is not far to seek. It lies in that confusion between names and things which marks all primitive thinking. The savage who shrinks from having his likeness taken in the fear that a part of himself is being carried away thereby, regards his name as something through which he may be harmed, so he will use all sorts of round-about phrases to avoid saying it, and even change it that he may elude his foes, and puzzle or cheat Death when he comes to look at him."1

It is this confusion between the objective and the subjective, between things and the symbols thereof, that gives rise to the idea that the name of a man is an integral part of himself, and that to reveal it is to put the owner in the

1 Edmund Cлedd, Myths and Dreams, p. 104.
power of the one who has learned his secret. A North American Indian asked Kane whether his desire to ascertain his name arose from a wish to purloin it; the Araucanians would not permit their names to be told to strangers, lest they should be used in sorcery and enchantments. So with the Indians of British Colombia; and among the Ojibways husbands and wives never told each other’s names, the children being expressly warned against repeating their own names lest they should cease growing. The Abipones of Paraguay had a similar superstition.¹ They would knock at the door of Dobrizhoffer’s house at night and when asked who was there, would not reply for fear that if they uttered their own name some dreadful calamity would ensue to them.

The Indians of British Guiana, according to Mr. im Thurn, have an intricate system of names, but it is “of little use, in that owners have a very strong objection to telling or using them, apparent’y on the ground that the name is part of the man, and that he who knows it has part of the owner of that name in his power.” In Borneo the name of a sickly child is changed, to deceive the malignant and evil spirits that have tormented it; the Laplanders change the baptismal name of a child for the same reason, and among the Fuegians, the Lenguas of Brazil, the Abipones, the Indians of the north-west of America, and other tribes of a corresponding level of intelligence, when any member died the relatives would change their names in order to elude Death when he should come to look for them, and they also were in the habit of giving their children horrible names in order to frighten away the evil spirits. Throughout the entire barbaric world we find a great dread of uttering the name of a dead person, lest by mentioning such name the owner thereof should think he was summoned to return to the earth, and his ghost would appear to the person who had uttered his name; some peoples add that when the ghost of the departed person thus appeared, on finding that there was no pressing necessity for his return from the land of shades, and that his name had been uttered carelessly, he would become exceedingly angry at being thus disturbed in his rest and brought back to the earth, and would revenge himself by doing some injury to the individual who had, by his utterance of his name, occasioned the ghost to perform a useless journey. An aged Indian of the Lake Michigan district explained why tales of the spirits were only told during the winter, by saying that when the deep snow lay on the ground the voices of those repeating their names are muffled; whereas in summer the slightest mention of them must be carefully avoided, lest the spirits be offended. Can it be that the custom in England of telling ghost stories only at winter time arises originally from the same cause?

¹ Dobrizhoffer.
THE EXCELLENT NAME OF ALLAH

Among the native tribes of California the name of the departed when spoken inadvertently caused a shudder to pass over all those present. Among the Iroquis the name of a deceased person could not be used again in the lifetime of his eldest surviving son without the consent of the latter, and the Australian aborigines believe that a dead man's ghost creeps into the liver of the impious wretch who has had the temerity to utter his name. Dr. Lang relates how he endeavoured to obtain the name of a relative who had been killed, from an Australian. "He told me who the lad's father was, who was his brother, what he was like, how he walked, how he held his tomahawk in his left hand instead of his right, and who were his companions, but the dreaded name never escaped his lips, and I believe no promises or threats could have induced him to utter it." Dorman gives a touching and pathetic illustration of this belief in the quaint story of Yellow Sky, in Shawnee Folk-lore. "She was a daughter of the Shawnee tribe, and had dreams wherein she was told that she was created for an unheard-of mission. There was a mystery about her being, and none could comprehend the meaning of her evening songs. The paths leading to her father's lodge were more beaten than those to any other. On one condition alone, at last, she consented to become a wife, namely that he who wedded her should never mention her name. If he did she warned him that a sad calamity would befall him, and he would for ever thereafter regret his thoughtlessness. After a time Yellow Sky sickened and died, and her last words were that her husband might never breathe her name. For five summers he lived in solitude, but, alas, one day as he was by the grave of his dead wife an Indian asked him whose it was, and in forgetfulness he uttered the forbidden name. He at once fell to the earth in great pain, and as darkness settled round about him a change came over him. Next morning, near the grave of Yellow Sky a large buck was quietly feeding. It was the unhappy husband."

This idea of a calamity happening through the mention of a name existed among races possessing a high degree of civilization.

The ancient Greeks had a belief in the existence of beings known as the Erinyes or "Furies," whom they euphemistically termed the Eumenides or "gracious ones," thus using a delicate word or expression for one which was harsh or offensive to delicate ears. In Greek mythology, they were female divinities who were the avengers of iniquity. According to Hesiod they were the daughters of Gaea (earth), sprung from the blood of the murdered Uranus; according to Aeschylus and other classical writers they were the offspring of Night and Darkness. They were termed by

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1 Eumenides (Greek) from eu, well, and menos, mind.
the Romans, Furiæ or Diræ. Mentioned by the earliest Greek poets, they play a prominent part in the writings of the tragedians. They are representatives of the mighty powers who punish those who offend against the unwritten laws of conduct. Their home is in the lower world, but their power extends into this life, and they hunt the sinner to his ruin. Some of the Greek epic poems describe them as the punishers of perjury, homicide, and such sins in the household as neglect of parents and ill-treatment of guests, and in particular they guarded the rights of the first-born. In the tragedies there are indications of a more general conception of them as guardians of the universal laws. They either take vengeance on the living or carry off the sinner to the lower world, where others can punish him. They are also the torturers of sinners in the other world. As pursuers of criminals, they are represented in the short tunic and boots of the huntress or accompanied by hounds; as avengers, they bear whips or burning torches; while the snake of chthonic divinities appears in their hair or is carried in their hands. At first their number is not mentioned by the classical writers; Homer once uses the singular, and a Demeter Erinys was worshipped at Thelpusa, in Arcadia. In his lyrico-dramatic spectacle of Eumenides, Æschylus (525–455 B.C.), the first of the three great Athenian poets, brings fifteen of these creatures upon the stage, but Euripides (480–406 B.C.), the latest of the three great Greek tragic poets, reduces the number to three, and later learning bestowed upon them the names of Alecto ("the unresting"), Megæra ("the jealous"), and Tisiphone ("the avenger").

The Eumenides are generally regarded as the impersonations of an evil conscience, the incarnated scourges of self-reproach. Such dread deities, however, are terrible only to the sinner; to the honourable and the pure they are the bringers of blessing and protection. According to ancient Greek legends they pursued Orestes for the murder of his mother, Clytemnestra, even though this was vengeance prescribed by the Delphic Apollo. Professor Blackie says of them: "There is something volcanic in their indignation, whose eruption is too terrible to be common. They chiefly frequent the paths that are dabbled with blood. A murdered father or a murdered mother especially were never known to appeal to them in vain, even though Jove's own prophet, Apollo, add his sanction to the deed. An Orestes may not hope to escape the bloody chase, which the 'winged hounds,' invoked by a murdered Clytemnestra, are eager to prepare—the sacred precincts of an oracular Delphi may not repel

1 Homer, Odyssey, xiv. 57; Iliad, xv. 204.
2 The three great Greek tragic poets are Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.
their intrusion—the scent of blood ‘laughs in their nostrils,’ and they will not be cheated of their game. Only one greatest goddess, in whose hands are the keys of her father’s armoury of thunder, may withstand the full rush of these vindictive powers. Only Pallas Athena, with her panoply of Olympian strength, and her divine wisdom of reconciliation, can bid them be pacified.”

Æschylus, in his play, pertinently shows how “a soft answer may turn away wrath”:

“So the mild accents of the soothing tongue,
Attuned by wisdom, win their easy way.”

The Eumenides were honoured at Sicyon, Argos, and elsewhere, but we are best informed about Athens, where they had a sanctuary near a cave on the east side of the Areopagus, and a sacred enclosure at Colonus. The ancient Greeks were careful not to mention the name of the Erinyes (“Furies”) in ordinarily speaking of them, for fear that even the mention of such name might bring them forth from their subterranean caverns, and in their fury they might wreak vengeance on the utterer of their name, they, therefore, “spoke them fair,” made votive offerings at the shrine dedicated to them, and, when they thus paid adoration, called them by the euphemistic names of the Eumenides (“Kindly,” “Well-minded”), Semnai (“Revered”), or Potnai (“Queenly”), thinking by such flattery and “soft speech” and “aptly added titles, to compose that rage, whose swelling tide o’erflows all bounds,” and thus turn the Erinyes from furious fiends into beautiful powers of blessing.

This same notion of offering verbal bribes to the creature sought to be appeased is still in existence amongst certain peoples, for example, the Finnish hunters called the bear “the apple of the forest,” “the beautiful honey-claw,” “the pride of the thicket”; the Laplander speaks of the same creature as “the old man with the fur coat”; in Annam the natives call the tiger “grandfather,” or “lord”; and the Dyaks of Borneo speak of that dread disease, the small-pox, as “the chief,” or “jungle-leaves.”

This change of name and a mystic signification thereof is not confined to savage or heathen people; both the Jewish and Christian scriptures record instances of the same. The name of Abram was changed into Abraham (Genesis xvii. 5), Sarai to Sarah (Genesis xvii. 15), Jacob to Israel (Genesis xxxii. 28), Gideon to Jerubbaal ( Judges vi. 32; vii. 1; viii. 29, 35), and Saul to Paul (Acts xiii. 9).

The incidents surrounding these changes of names are, in connection with our subject, worthy of consideration.

In the case of the patriarch (Ibrahim = Abraham),

1 Blackie, The Lyrical Dramas of Æschylus: Introductory remarks to Eumenides, p. 178.

265
Khalid-Ullah, "the Friend of God" (James ii. 23), we learn from the Book of Genesis that "when Abram was ninety years old and nine," that is to say thirteen years after the birth of his son, Ishmael (Heb. Ishmael, "He whom God hears"), "the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, 'I am El-Shaddai, the All-Powerful God,\(^1\) walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.' And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for Me, behold My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee."

In the same chapter we read (verse 15), "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be." The popular explanation of this change in the patriarch's name is that his original cognomen, Ab-ram, signified "high-father," or "exalted father," and that it was altered to Ab'raham—"father of a multitude" or "father of many nations," to remind the recipient of the new name of the covenant made with him by El-Shaddai, the All-Powerful One. Bishop Wordsworth, in commenting upon this passage, says: "Abraham, literally a father of a multitude of nations; from the Arabic root, raham, a multitude, especially when in commotion (Gesenius, pp. 9, 759; Delitzsch, 382; Fuerst, p. 17). The word for multitude, raham, from raham, to make a noise (to hum like a swarm; Gesenius, pp. 9, 759), signifies a tumultuous sound, as of heavy rain (1 Kings xviii. 41). It is properly applied to a multitude in motion (Isaiah xiii. 4), and to a plentiful abundance of water (Jeremiah x. 13; li. 16).

"Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram." Abram, father of exaltation—Ram is from rum, to be lofty; whence Ramah (1 Samuel xxii. 6) and Jehorum, etc., "but thy name shall be Abraham" =Father of a multitude. Raham is an unused root, still existing in Arabic (ruham), and has the same meaning as Hebrew, hamon. (Vide verse 4, "a multitude," and Gesenius, pp. 5, 759; and Delitzsch, 382.)\(^2\)

In Dr. Ellicott's Old Testament Commentary, the learned commentator makes the following observation upon verse 5 of Genesis xvii: "Abraham =Father of a multitude, 'raham' being an Arabic word, perhaps current in Hebrew in ancient times. Another interpretation of Abram is that it is equivalent to Abi-aram, or Syria. This, too, is an Arabic form, like Abimael in chapter x. 28. By some com-

\(^1\) In the Authorized Version this title of the Deity is rendered "the Almighty God." The words I have used are, however, in my humble opinion, a better translation of the Hebrew word.

\(^2\) The Holy Bible, in the Authorized Version, with Notes and Introductions, by Chr. Wordsworth, D.D., Bishop of Lincoln.
mentators the stress is thrown upon the insertion of the letter "h" as being the representative of the name Yahvah or Yehveh (compare the change of Oshea into Jehoshua (Numbers xiii. 16))."

Professor Crawford Howell Toy, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Hebrew in Harvard University, Camb., Mass., the author of The Religion of Israel, Judaism and Christianity, etc., in an article upon "Abraham," in the Jewish Encyclopedia, says: "The original and proper form of this name seems to be either 'Abram' or 'Abiram' (Kings xvi. 34; Deuteronomy xi. 6) with the meaning 'my father' (or 'my God') 'is exalted.' The form 'Abraham' yields no sense in Hebrew, and is probably only a graphic variation of 'Abram,' the h being simply a letter, indicating a preceeding vowel a; but popular tradition explains it 'father of a multitude' (ab hamon) given as a new name on the occasion of a turning-point in the patriarch's career (Genesis xvii. 5). The name is personal, not tribal: it appears as a personal name in Babylonia in the time of Apil-Sin (about 2320 B.C.; Meissner, Beiträge zum Altbabylonischen Privatrecht, No. III), and is not employed in the Old Testament in an ethnical sense (for example, it is not so employed in Micah vii. 20, nor in Isaiah xii. 8)."

It is worthy of observation that both Abu-Ramu and Sarai or Saraia (Sa-ra-a-a) occur as names of individuals on Babylonian tablets. A German Orientalist, Hugo Winckler, 1863–1913, regards both Abraham and Sarah as originally lunar deities, and that the twofold relation of Abraham to Sarah as husband and brother is undoubtedly of mythological origin.¹

Dr. Thomas Inman in discussing the name of the Assyrian, or Chaldee, who emigrated from Ur of the Chaldees into Palestine, in company with his father and his family, in his interesting work, Ancient Faiths Embodied in Ancient Names, says: "As the name must be assumed to be Chaldaic, it shows us that the faith which was current in Mesopotamia at the time of the patriarch's birth did not essentially differ from that held in Canaan. The word is compounded of two syllables, the first of which, ab, signifies "the father"; respecting the second, viz., ram, we have either to select one signification out of many, or we must consider that a second syllable has been selected to qualify the first, of so very ambiguous a meaning that nothing but a double entendre was designed.

Ram="he is high," "he lifts himself on high," "he is prominent," "he cries," "he rages," "he roars," "he is red," like coral.

Rem or raim="a buffalo, or wild bull."

¹ Vol. i, p. 90.
² Winckler, Geschichte Israels in einzeldarstellungen, 2, pp. 23, 72.
Rum—"he is grown high," "he is exalted," "he is mighty," "he exalts himself."
Rom—"a height."
Rum—"a height."
Ram—"high, prominent."
Ram—a proper name (Genesis xxii. 21).

In further commenting upon this subject, Dr. Inman points out that the second syllable of the word Abram may signify an idea analogous to the notion of a heaven in the sky above, or one which is intended to convey a hidden phallic meaning. Dr. Inman is of opinion that the latter is the true meaning of the word, and that the name was subsequently changed by later writers to a name, which although it also contained a double entendre, was less conspicuous, as such, than the original cognomen. Dr. Inman is also of opinion that the name Abiram, mentioned in the Book of Numbers (xvi. 1) is the same as Abram, with the addition of yod, so as to prevent any man, other than the patriarch, using his distinctive cognomen.

Another theory is that Abram was a pagan name bestowed upon the owner thereof by his father, who was an idolater, and that the final syllable thereof is associated with Sun-worship, and is akin to the Egyptian "Ram'eses;" some even trace a likeness between it and the Indian Rama, and carry the theory so far as to suggest that the story of Abram and Sarai is simply another version of the legend of Rama and his devoted wife Sita. This, however, appears to me untenable.

A more feasible theory is that of my friend Sheikh Abdullah, Effendi, of the Mevlevi Dervish, whose view was that when Khalid-Ullah rejected idolatry and embraced Islam, his name was changed from Ab-Ram, which the Sheikh interpreted as "the servant of Ram," one of the names of a solar deity, or a burning orb (from the Semitic root, ramida, to be burning hot), or possibly the servant of Ramih (the Arabian name for a large star situate between the "legs" in the constellation of Boötes) to Abdur-Rahim (servant of the Merciful), and that in process of time this name was "bitten down," by the Jews to Abraham, and

1 Inman, Ancient Faiths Embodied in Ancient Names (published 1868), vol. i, pp. 191, 192.
2 Ibid, p. 188.
3 In Exodus i. 11, Raamses is one of the cities built by the Israelites as Egyptian serfs; in Exodus xii. 37 they march from Raamses eastwards to Succoth (compare also Numbers xxxiii. 3–5). In Genesis xlvi. 11, the family of Jacob received from Joseph "a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded." The "land of Rameses" is probably synonymous with Goschen.
4 The story of Abraham's conversion to Islam is given in Sura 6 ("Cattle") of the Quran-shareef.
THE EXCELLENT NAME OF ALLAH

by the Arabs to Ibrahim. If instead of rendering the first syllable ab, as abdul (servant), we retain it as Ab (father), the original name might then mean "My father (or my protector) is Ramih," and when the patriarch renounced the worship of the heavenly bodies, this was changed to Ab-Rahim (my Protector is the Merciful One)—the theory is one worthy of consideration.

In connection with this subject it should be mentioned that so late as the period of the advent of Mahomed, the last and greatest of the prophets (on whom be peace!), Magiism and Sabæism had also their votaries among the Arabs, this being especially the case among the Himyarites: the Banû-Asad worshipped the planet Mercury, whom they styled Ulârid; the Jodham adored Al-Mustari (Jupiter); the Banû-Tay, Canopus; the descendants of Kays-Aylan, Shirâ (Sirius, the greater "Dog-star"), as we learn from the 49th ayat of An-Najm, the 53rd sinu of the Koran. A portion of the tribe of the Koreish worshipped the three moon-goddesses—El-Lat, the bright moon, Manât, the dark, and Al-Uzza, the union of the two—who were regarded as the daughters of a high god (Benâl-ullah). The Kinana, closely allied to the Koreish, both by ties of blood and political influence, paid adoration to Aldebaran, sometimes called "the Bull's eye," a star of the first magnitude in the constellation of Taurus.

I have heard another theory advanced, and that is that the substituted name of the patriarch was bestowed upon him, because his eldest son, Ismail (Ishmael) had become very proficient in the use of the bow, and was an expert archer, and hence he was styled Abu-rami, "the father of the archer." In support of this theory it is pointed out that the patriarch's name was changed when his son Ismail was thirteen years of age, and might, by that time, have exhibited considerable skill in archery.

Another suggestion is that ram is a curtailing of ramm, an Arabic word signifying a nod, wink, sign, signal, intimation, hint, an enigmatical discourse or writing, a cypher, a subtle

1 In the account of Stephen's Apologia given in Acts vii, in rebuking the house of Israel, he says (v. 43): "Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them." This god Remphan, Raphan, or Raqphan, as it is variously written, is the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Chiu in Amos v. 26. The best explanation of this appears to be that Raqphan was the Coptic or Egyptian name of the planet Saturn, well known, of course, to the Septuagint, and that Chiu is the Hebrew and Arabic name of the same luminary, which they therefore translated Raqphan. The value of this reference is that it shows that the Israelites had from time to time lapsed into Sabianism and that the association of the name given to Abraham by his pagan father might contain a reference to star-worship.

* Sirius is also known by the following names in Arabic: Shira al-yamānī, al Kalb (the Dog), and Kalb-al-jabbar.
ISLAMIC REVIEW

distinction or mark, a secret, etc., while yet another theory
is that the word *ram* is derived from and is a curtailment of
*rilm*, "sand."
I have heard a most ingenious and interesting
discourse given, in true Qabbalistic style, in which the names
of the great ancestor of the prophet Muhammad were claimed
to contain a *ramz* or subtle mark, and to prove that he was
to be the ancestor of many prophets, one of whom, Moosa
(Moses), was to lead the children of Israel out of the *raml*
(sand) of Egypt, over the *raml-al-bahr* (sand of the sea)
of the Red Sea, into the sahra (wilderness), where all is
*raml* (sand); that another descendant of his, Isa (Jesus)
should fast for forty days and nights in the sandy desert, and
that finally, the last and greatest of his *asl* (lineage) should
be born in Mecca, and bring the whole of *ramli* (sandy)
Arabia to Islam, so that the inhabitants thereof became
worshippers of Ar-Rahman, Ar-Rahim, the Most Merciful and
Compassionate God, and that, as millions of persons
have accepted Islam, the promise of God to the patriarch
has been fulfilled, and he has in truth become the "father
of a multitude."

In this same ingenious discourse much stress was laid
on the Qabbalistic value of numbers in the various names
of persons and places mentioned, *Alif*=1, *Ba*, 2, *Ra*, 200,
*Ha*, 5, and *Meem*, 40, and so on.

As Bishop Wordsworth refers the origin of the names
of the patriarch to certain Arabic roots, it may be useful
to here give a number of words in Arabic, with their meanings
in English, in order that the English reader not acquainted
with either the Hebrew or Arabic languages may judge for
himself the reliability or otherwise of the theory enunciated
by the learned Christian ecclesiastic.

The root word *Rahm* signifies in Arabic the womb, uterus,
matrix. From it are derived the following words: *rahm*=
compassion, mercy, pity; *Rahman* = God, the Merciful, the
Compassionate; *rahmat* = pity, compassion. God’s mercy in a
future state; *Rahmat* = the quality of being the God of Mercy;
*rāhim* = pitying, pardoning; *Rahim* = God the Merciful.

The words generally used in Arabic for "a multitude"
are *jam*, *jamā’at*, *jam’iyat*; "a great multitude"—*jām*,
*katr*; multitude—*katr*; many (a great many)—*kasīr*.

A "tumult" in Arabic is generally expressed by the
words *fiinan* or *sajas*.

"Progeny" by the words *nasl* (plural, *ansāl*), *awlād* (son=*wālād*), *nasab* (plural, *ansāb*), *asl* (plural *usūl*), *zurrīyat*,
*durriyat* (plural *durriyāt*), *fār*.

It will be observed that the above Arabic words for "a
multitude," "a tumult," and "progeny," are all derived
from quite different roots than those akin to *rahm*.

The following Arabic words may be compared, but should
not be confused, with those derived from *rahm*: *Rannat*—
GOD SPEAKS TO MAN (REVELATION)

sound of metals, glass, etc. when struck; ranam—sounding, singing, modulating, cooing (as a dove); ranin—twanging (as a bow-string), groaning, vociferating, crying out, making any noise with the voice, listening to an afflicted woman, groaning and lamenting.

The following Hebrew personal and place names may be considered in connection with this subject:—
RAHAM (also written REKEM)—son of Shema b. Hebron (I Chron. ii. 43). Rekem, Rakem, Raham, Jorkeam and Carmel are all probably corruptions of Jerahmeel.
RAM—The name of a Judahite family (I Chron. ii. 9).
RAMA; RAMAH—"the height." A city of the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 25; Nehemiah xi. 33).
RAMATH-MIZPEH—a place on the northern border of the Gadites (Josh. xiii. 26).
RAMATH OF THE SOUTH—apparently the most remote of the Simeonite towns (Josh. xix. 8).
RAMATHAIM-ZOPHIM—the name of the city of Elkanah in the hill-country of Ephraim.
RAMATHEM, or RAMATHAIM—the seat of one of the governments formerly belonging to Samaria, which were transferred to Judea under Jonathan by King Demetrius (I Maccabees xi. 34).
RAMIAH—"Yahwe is high," name of a layman who joined in the league against foreign marriages (Ezra x. 25).
RAMOTH-GILEAD—"Heights of Gilead" (Josh. xx. 8), also mentioned in the Talmud.

(To be continued.)

GOD SPEAKS TO MAN (REVELATION)

By M. Muhammad Yaqub, B.A.

If the West is boastful of its achievements in the domain of dead matter, the East has the prouder claim of having wrought wonders in the world of spirit. Since the dawn of life the East has been the nursery of philosophy and the cradle of religions. To the one matter is all in all, but to the other the reality of life consists in the things of spirit. The occidental discards spiritual truths as idle fancies; the oriental, however, may regard his material products as worthless dolls, and wonder that so many grown-up men and women should be absorbed in playing therewith. Let not therefore Western scepticism be in haste to view with discredit the spiritual phenomenon that God speaks to man nor regard it as a figment of a perverted state of mentality, as it is wont to do, without hearing out the plea, attempted in the following lines.

271
I would first of all invite attention to the book of Nature, which is the work of God in common with the mind of man; in other words, this vast universe and the human mind are both the handicraft of the same God. The Creator of the two realms, the physical and the spiritual, being one and the same, it is but logical to conclude that unity of purpose and unity of principle must pervade both of them. If we observe, for instance, a process of development in the outer world of matter, we notice the same process in the sphere of mind. The physical and the spiritual are, so to say, two streams running parallel to each other, subject to the same set of laws. This being admitted, I would next invite attention to a particular law in nature, which is as undeniable as universal. All through nature we observe that where there is a demand there is a supply, where there is a craving there is an object of satisfaction. That excessive heat is a forerunner of rain, is a matter of everyday observation. Exactly the same is the case with man, who is part and parcel of the same universe and hence subject to the same set of laws. Human nature is endowed with a number of passions corresponding to which there are objects in nature to satisfy the same. Craving for thirst on the one hand and existence of water on the other reveal the divine plan that every human craving presupposes an object for the gratification thereof. This is a law as clear as broad daylight, and cannot be gainsaid in any reasonable quarters. This leads to the quite logical conclusion that wherever there is a need, a craving, there must also be something to meet it—a corresponding remedy. This is the law at work in the physical side of man. The same must hold good in the intellectual and the spiritual spheres. Let us take the intellectual side first. We notice that we are born with a spirit of inquisitiveness. We always hanker after the how and why of things. But Providence has so arranged that for every such "why" there is a corresponding cause to gratify that natural prompting of the brain—a cause for every phenomenon. This universe is, so to say, nothing but a field for the realization of the inner promptings of the whole of human nature.

Nothing, in short, is amiss in the machinery of human nature. Every screw, small or great, has got its proper place to fit in, in the nature he has to live in. There is not a necessity felt within him but there is something in the outer nature to respond thereto. If he has eyes to see with, there must be light to enable him to answer to this call of nature; if ears, there must be air to enable him to hear. To me a mouth is the guarantee of the supply of food. Such is the beneficence of Almighty God. He has been so gracious as to look to our physical wants with so minute a care. In the intellectual and every other sphere as well, He has been pleased to bestow the best of His attention on man.
GOD SPEAKS TO MAN (REVELATION)

Would it not mean a slur on His consistency if such a Providence should at all be indifferent to the wants of our spirit, which is the best and the only abiding part of our self? Surely not. He must have provided means to gratify the promptings of our spiritual nature too.

Let us now turn a glance inward within ourselves, and we discover that there is a keen-felt longing in the human nature for immortality, for an eternal life. This incites to the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of the Divine being and of the life hereafter. Now this desire has so strongly asserted itself in some cases, that steps were actually taken to put an end to this life in order to satisfy the curiosity as to the life after death. Acquisition of perfect knowledge of God is the very essence of man's nature. Now in harmony with the rest of human nature, the spiritual part too must be under the effect of the same principle. When the desire is so persistently there, there must be means to satisfy the same. But unfortunately there is no stretch of human reasoning that could possibly convince us of the existence of God. The flight of the wings of reason being restricted to the four walls of human experience, it is not possible that we should thereby enable ourselves to arrive at a state of thorough confidence in the existence of God. The greatest height intellect can elevate us to, is that there ought to be a God. But whether He is actually there, is a question that surpasses the region of our stereotyped intellect. No amount of argumentation can bring home to the blind that light is there. What he can perceive is only this much, that there ought to be something called light, as there are so many reports to show its existence. But the law of nature, where there is a demand there is a supply, compels us to believe that there must be some solution or other of the problem. So far as man's capacity for the acquisition of knowledge is concerned, he has two instruments, sense-organs and intellect. But both of these are ineffective to take us beyond the quagmire of doubt and suspicion so far as the existence of God is concerned. The craving for first-hand sure knowledge is there. Law of nature requires the possibility of means to satisfy the craving. Sense-perception and intellect, the two sources of knowledge, are not potent enough to help us out of the difficulty. Therefore, there must be some other channel of ascertaining truth, to accept which we must not be reluctant. History of Religion has been an antique record to show that God does speak to man. We have it on the authority of men of the most unimpeachable integrity. They are unanimous on the point that God impresses His speech upon the mind of man with indelible depth. The experience, they say, is accompanied by as much of conviction as any sense-perception causes. Is it then in the fitness of things that we should venture to discredit the report from the most reliable quarters
regarding a matter, need for which is so keenly felt? We are by no means justified in attributing it to perversion of mentality; otherwise, we shall be compelled to look upon the entire perceptible nature as no more than a dream or hallucination. What, after all, is the maximum degree of the certainty of a piece of knowledge? Why visible, audible and tangible objects drive home into our hearts the reality of their existence? We cannot resist conviction in the reality of such objects, constituted as we are. Exactly the same amount of conviction is carried by the experience under discussion. It would therefore be grossly unjust and illogical to believe in the reality of the one and discredit the other.

Furthermore, the words thus communicated are of supernatural character, inasmuch as they relate to the occurrence of certain unimaginable events in the future that turn out true to the very letter or contain pure moral and deep philosophic lessons, that uplift a whole nation. The Gita, the Buddhistic philosophy, the Bible, and the Qur-án, are to this day standing monuments of the sublimity of the message thus imparted by God to man. The recipients have one and all been the leaders, the reformers, the philosophers and what not, for the respective nationalities among whom they were raised. Each has left an ineffaceable stamp on millions of people. Is it then consistent with common sense that such communications should be discarded as mad utterances and their recipients drowsy monomaniacs? If so, then blessed is such mania, such perversion of brain. It leads to a sure knowledge of the existence of God, and thus explains this enigmatic problem of “being.” The universe, which is otherwise a bewildering confusion and chaos, is reduced to a perfect system with God as the pervading and over-ruling principle. It elevates man from a self-centred brute to cosmopolitan heights, where he loses himself in the service of humanity at large. The word of God is a never-failing solace to him in thick and thin. When confronted by overwhelming odds and insurmountable obstacles to which the greatest of moralists may yield, the courage, perseverance and optimism of such a man are found indomitable. When hiding for life in a cave on his way to Medina, with Abu Bakr in his company, the Holy Prophet is as confident of his safety and ultimate triumph as ever, even when the talk of the pursuers at the mouth of the suspicious cave is heard within. God’s words came down as gentle dew to cheer them up in this critical hour of trial, and the Holy Prophet thus consoles his companion therewith: “Do not have any anxiety; for God is with us” (the Holy Qur-án, ix. 40). Even to-day, there are men amongst us who stand firm like a rock in the midst of the highest storms of opposition. Their tranquillity of mind is never perturbed,
GOD SPEAKS TO MAN (REVELATION)

for they have anchored in the haven of Divine protection, beyond the reach of hostile hands. Such is the practical utility of revelation.

In view of what has been said as to the necessity, the certainty, the utility and the sublimity of the phenomenon that goes by the name of revelation, there is not the slightest room left for the faintest shadow of doubt that the experience is the outcome of an abnormal state of mind. There is no doubt of the fact that the activities of the physical sense-organs are suspended for the time being, and one grows perfectly oblivious of his immediate physical environments. His attention is absorbed by the charming magnetism of the Divine, and he becomes all eyes and ears to receive the sweet impression. Nevertheless his mental powers are wide awake, and all sorts of physical impressions are barred out to avoid interruption. He is thus transported beyond the limits of space and time and, wrapped up in celestial glory, becomes one with God.

No charm, no sweetness, no pleasant sensation whatsoever, they say, can illustrate even approximately the flavour of what they taste. Surely all this cannot be "Maya," illusion, epileptic fit or any other frenzied mood of mind.

A brief reference to another view of revelation, professedly favourable, but in fact no less derogatory to the dignity there-of than outright discredit, would not be out of place. There is a school of thinkers, and an influential one, who admit the validity and genuineness of the experience, but put thereon an interpretation which reduces its worth to little more than self-deception. They hold it to be a feat of the mind, an internal process, a function of the mind itself. The content of the revelation corresponds no doubt to facts and truths; but the process is all from within. The mind, they argue, is endowed with all sorts of truths, which lie hidden underneath heaps of earthly dross. When this base element is removed therefrom, the mind is polished and the truths embedded therein gush up like spouts of a water-spring. However plausible the explanation, it is no less far from reality. There is nothing in the inter-relation between man and universe to bear testimony to its truth. In nature, we observe that every heavenly good that we receive is the resultant of interaction between the innate power of man and an external stimulus. Our eyes are possessed of the capacity of receiving light, but cannot give birth to light of itself. Light must come from without through some extraneous medium. Sound is not the product of the ear itself, but the consequence of the internal capability of auditory nerves and the external vibrations in the air. Similar is the process of transmission in every other form of beneficence that God may shower on us. Interaction is the indispensable element. Why then an exception in the
ISLAMIC REVIEW

case of revelation? We cannot afford to make a departure from the fixed and immutable laws of nature.

Revelation must also spring from two forces meeting each other: internal capacity and external stimulus. As a matter of fact, when the mind gets purified of all earthly alloy, it becomes transparent and as such constitutes a receptacle fit enough for the reflection of truth. But truth must come from outside, as the binding law of nature requires. And it does come from without through mediums known as angles in religious terminology, from the luminous Source of Truth just as light emanates from the sun and is brought by ether to the eyes of man. Shorn of this characteristic, revelation loses much of its worth and is brought down to the level of what may be likened to a poet's inspiration, which cannot claim to be free from the tinge of doubt and untruth.

To sum up, there is an irresistible longing in the nature of man to obtain knowledge of God. Law of nature requires that the longing cannot but have some means or other to satisfy it. Reason is not adequate enough to help us out of the perplexity. At best it lifts us to the misty plane of ought and not the sure light of is. We must therefore have some source other than sense-impression or reason to satisfy this natural craving of ours. In quest of such a source we come across the fact that from times of hoary antiquity we have had amongst us men standing for the truth that God actually spoke to them. These men have been the greatest and most successful of their race, and have left a lasting impression on posterity and bequeathed to them a rich legacy of morals. Even to-day we claim the existence of men among us, bearing living testimony, on the score of personal experience, to the fact that this spiritual phenomenon is a hard reality and no imaginary fiction. Have we, consistent with reason, any alternative left but to believe that God does speak to men?

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ISLAM AND PROGRESS

By Mr. Khalid Sheldrake

It is a common error in the West to assume that whereas on the adoption of Christianity by a race all possible encouragement was given to literature, science and arts, the advance of Islam caused stagnation or retrogression. Naturally, it is very difficult to persuade one who is brought up with this idea, inculcated so religiously for centuries, to read impartially to discover the real truth. So, often in these busy days, the individual is content to assume a position without verification, and shrinks with repugnance at any
suggestion that it is just possible that an error has been perpetuated. In Pagan Greece and Rome we have the spectacle of highly civilized communities; art, literature and trade were flourishing to a great extent, and the laws of Rome were a pattern for succeeding empires and states. It is not the object of the present article to go into the details whether the advent of Christianity proved a blessing or otherwise when adopted by European nations, but a very interesting booklet entitled "Christianity and Progress," by Mr. Chapman Cohen, is worthy of perusal by every honest thinker; it also deals with the question of woman and her status in Rome prior to Christianity, and after it had been adopted as the state religion. It is necessary, first of all, to deal with the reforms inaugurated by the holy Prophet amongst the Arabs, as the subsequent actions of the Islamic states have been governed by the code given to mankind in the pages of the Holy Qur-án, and by the example and sayings of the last and greatest of the Prophets. It will suffice if we ask the reader to obtain an account of the life and teachings of our Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and the blessings of Allah), of which there are many, and so read the many benefits which we to-day derive from following the laws of Allah, revealed to mankind by the sacred lips of Muhammad Al-Amin.

At the time of the Holy Prophet's mission the custom of burying alive female children prevailed. This he immediately suppressed. Drunken feasts and drunkards were common, and he abolished all this. Gambling was an obsession carried to extremes, and this was also finished by the revelations which came to the Holy Prophet. Vice was, indeed, rampant in its wildest forms, but at the command of the Great Unitarian it slunk away to other lands and reared its head no more in Dar-ul-Islam. To-day, in the twentieth century, the Western nations are attempting by legislation to bring about reforms which Islam brought into the Eastern world thirteen hundred years ago. Slavery existed in the world at the time of Jesus, but we find nothing in the Bible which condemns slavery, no word of Jesus which tends to better the condition of the slave, but rather, in the Bible, we find verses undeniably supporting the institution of slavery. Let us not forget that slave-owners of all countries appealed to the pages of the Bible to support their traffic, and quoted text after text as Divine authority. Do Englishmen remember the names of the slave-ships of Admiral Sir John Hawkins in the reign of Queen Elizabeth? Their names were the "Jesus" and "John the Baptist." To come to later times, a slave-ship referred to in a Royal Commission in 1837 was called "Jehovah." How recently it is that the abolition of slavery came about in the West! I wish here to ask a question: When Islam makes the slave
a brother, and no Muslim can hold another Muslim as a slave, was not the spread of Islam the most powerful agent in suppressing the slave trade? It remained for the Prophet of Arabia to lift up his voice for the freedom of the captive, and one of the most meritorious actions in Islam was to give a slave his freedom. It was also a token of repentance for a fault committed. Alms must be given for ransoming the captives. Let us remember that in the Churches of Christendom slaves were sold as property when an abbey or church changed hands. In trade, the caravans of the Arabs went far afield, the obligations of the Muslim were to be honest in dealings and to give just measure. The holy Prophet was a trader, and so is a splendid example to the merchant of to-day. With regard to knowledge, Muslims are charged always to learn and impart their wisdom to others. “Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave”; “The acquisition of knowledge is a duty incumbent on every Muslim, male and female”; “Excessive knowledge is better than excessive praying, and the support of religion is abstinence. It is better to teach knowledge one hour in the night, than to pray the whole night”; “Philosophy is the stray camel of a believer; take hold of it wherever ye shall find it”; “The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr”; “Acquire knowledge. It enableth its possessor to distinguish right from wrong; it lighteth the way to heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when friendless; it guideth us to happiness; it sustaineth us in misery; it is an ornament amongst friends and an armour against enemies.”

These few sayings of our Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) will show how necessary it always has been that the faithful should investigate the sciences, and develop their faculties to the fullest extent. How, then, can any person, who is not either blinded to facts or ignorant of them, charge Islam with being inimical to progress?

I should prefer, rather than use my own words, to quote from the pages of “The History of Mohammedanism,” by W. Cooke Taylor, LL.D., as to the progress of the Muslims in the realms of law, art, science, architecture, trade, etc. In the chapter entitled “Effects of the Mohammedan Religion,” he writes: “In the Byzantine and Persian empires, justice was openly bought and sold; corruption was not merely tolerated, but avowed; bribes were offered and accepted in public. On the contrary, the Saracens established a rigid administration of law, and so strict was their system of criminal justice, that the sovereign, for many years, had not the power of pardoning a man whom the judges had condemned. Moâwiyah was the first who exercised the prerogative of mercy, being prevailed upon
to arrest the course of justice by the beauty of the verses in which the culprit solicited pardon. The feudal system, which so long was the disgrace and bane of Europe, had no place among the Saracens; whilst throughout Christendom honest industry was regarded as the sign of subjection, and trade esteemed disgraceful, the Arabs gave every encouragement to labour and commerce. The countries that they subdued were long free from the fatal influence of feudalism; it has never penetrated into Corsica; it was unknown in Sardinia, Sicily, and Lower Italy, until after the expulsion of the Moors. In consequence of the protection and patronage granted to industry by the Saracenic monarchs, especially in Spain, agriculture and manufactures flourished, and commercial communications were formed, which extended from the extreme east of Asia to the extreme west of Europe. The few manufactories which still exist in Spain are those that the Moors established. Perhaps it would not be too much to say that it is to the example of the Saracens we are indebted for the progress of maritime discovery; since Spain and Portugal, whence the expeditions sailed that discovered America and the Cape of Good Hope, had learned the art of navigation from their Saracenic masters. Scarcely had the Arabians permanently established themselves in Western Asia, than they began to cultivate the sciences possessed by the vanquished, with a zeal and earnestness to which history furnishes no parallel.

"Al Mansûr, after having vanquished the forces of the Greek Emperor, Michael III, was entreated to grant peace on any terms; all he demanded from the conqueror was copies of the works of the best Greek authors, and these he brought to Baghdad in triumphal procession, as the noblest trophies of victory. Before the close of his reign, the Arabians had become well acquainted with the medicine, philosophy, mathematics and natural history of the Greeks; and possessed good translations of the works of Hippocrates, Galen, Theophrastus, Ptolemy, Euclid and Aristotle. The astronomical works of Al Fargani, written during this reign, were translated into Latin by Goliers, and still possess considerable repute among the learned.

"The cultivation of literature among the Saracens produced more immediate effects on the general condition of the people, than the revival of learning did on the nations of Christendom. The Arabs had no learned language, all the knowledge acquired was published in the vulgar tongue and was freely open to all who sought information. Such an advantage they long possessed exclusively; notwithstanding the noble example of making knowledge easy of access, exhibited by the Moors in Spain, the vulgar tongues

1 About a century after the death of Muhammad, the Saracens established a factory at Canton.
throughout the greater part of Europe were used only in discourse. All writing—literary, scientific, or political—was in Latin.

"Architecture was the art in which the Spanish Saracens displayed most strength. Their mosques, palaces and public halls were erected on a scale of magnificence beyond those displayed by Greece or Rome in their proudest days. To enumerate the remains of their splendid buildings would require several volumes; we need only mention the Alhambra, to show how great a share the Saracens had in reviving the architectural art in modern Europe. To them, also, we owe the science of chemistry, which was, in fact, the first branch of experimental philosophy, as it is still one of the most important. For it must be remembered that those who led the way to the cultivation of experimental science, Gerbert and Adelhard, had both studied in the Moorish universities. The obligations of mathematical science to the Arabians are universally acknowledged, the very name of Algebra proves its Oriental origin."

He goes on to say: "It is not necessary to extend this subject further; those who wish to know more of the benefits conferred on modern Europe by the scientific and literary exertions of the Saracens will find ample information in the words of the Rev. Dr. Forster and Mr. Sharon Turner; enough has been said to show that the charge, commonly urged against the Mohammedan religion, of being adverse to knowledge and civilization is a groundless calumny."

A further paragraph is worth noting in this book which will readily appeal to all who pride themselves on the fact that the world is gradually becoming more democratic, and will repudiate a further libel on the Faith of Islam which is often repeated even to-day, that is that Islamic rule is tyrannical and despotic. On Page 263 we read as follows:—

"It has been commonly supposed that the government of the Khaliphs was an absolute despotism; no supposition can be more erroneous, there never was a more perfect democracy than that which existed under the four first successors of Mohammed. The monarch was elective, his power was limited, not only by the laws of the Qur-án but by the unwritten traditions of the prophet; public opinion controlled every important action, and the meanest soldier possessed a liberty of remonstrance, which would scarcely have been permitted even in a republican army."

It is unnecessary to say anything further on this subject, as the reader will have read the injunctions of our holy Prophet (on whom be peace and eternal felicity) and later the words of a Christian writer which testifies to the progress and civilization of the Muslims. The holy Prophet said, "Who are the learned? Those who practise what they know." It is for modern Muslims, who are the inheritors
ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF SACRIFICE

of such a glorious past, to emulate the example of their ancestors and revive the glories of the Muslim civilization which is our own, not slavishly follow the West, whilst accepting all that is good from whatever quarter of the world it comes, and to teach the world the glorious truths revealed in the pages of the Holy Qur-án.

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF SACRIFICE

By D. M. SADIQ

SACRIFICE is as old as religion, because it has always been regarded as an act of religious worship. It is an acknowledgment by man of the kingship of the God he worships, a thanksgiving for blessings received, and, in course of time, it became also an act of supplication for new blessings.

The form and nature of sacrifice depend upon the definition of religion given by the individual, as well as the view he has formed of the God he worships.

Bishop Wilkinson gives as a definition of religion:

"That general habit of reverence towards the divine nature whereby we are enabled and inclined to worship and serve God after such a manner as we can conceive most agreeable to His divine will."

Dr. Watts is somewhat broader in his definition:

"Religion or virtue in a large sense includes duty to God and our neighbour;"

—while Sir James Frazer defines religion as

"A propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life."

In the early days of the period known as Paganism, sacrifice was extremely simple. Not even incense or perfumes were offered, simply the green herbs as they were gathered. These were offered to the Supreme Being in an act of thankfulness. Such were the offerings of the Egyptians, the earliest sacrifices of which there are any records. Afterwards they offered frankincense and libations, accompanied with suitable thanks and praises. They shed no blood in their temples, nor did they bring any victims to their altars. "Every shepherd," we are told in Genesis xlvi. 34, "was an abomination to the Egyptians." Not because of their occupation, for the Egyptians had shepherds and flocks of their own, but because, in the course of time, it became the custom of shepherds to offer the firstlings of their flocks in sacrifice. Pausanias, speaking of the Greeks, says that although they had an altar consecrated
ISLAMIC REVIEW

to Jupiter, the Most High, no living thing was offered there, but only simple offerings.

So, among nations and tribes regarded as less civilized—for example, among the Fuegians—there are no traces of propitiation by food or sacrifice. With them it was conduct that was of all importance. It was the same with the aboriginal Australians, the most primitive savage race. They offered no propitiatory sacrifices of food. They regarded the Supreme Being as too sacred to be named and too sacred to be represented by images.

The idea of sacrifice developed, and we find among other races that in course of time animals were not killed for food, except under the pretext of sacrifice. The savage idea came, in course of time, to keep the gods they worshipped in a good humour towards them by offering them board wages and propitiating them by offerings of flesh.

From sacrifices of animals to the sacrifices of human beings was but a short step. At first, as among the Druids, the sacrifices consisted in the offering up of criminals and prisoners taken in battle, and this barbarous custom spread over the face of the earth. The Moabites (Leviticus xx.) sacrificed their children to Moloch and burned them in the cavity of the statue of that god. Men were offered in sacrifice to Saturn, even in Greece and Italy.

The form of sacrifice depended in a large degree, if not entirely, upon the aspect from which man viewed the Supreme Being. The Slavs, according to Procopius, believed that there was a god who forged thunderbolts and was the sole maker of the universe. When they found themselves in danger of death they made a vow that if they escaped they would offer a sacrifice of oxen and all kinds of beasts, believing they could ransom themselves by those means. The same or a similar principle is current among many Roman Catholics of the present day. Men sacrificed to the gods to thank them for favours received, to render them propitious, and to appease their anger.

In Japan, human sacrifices formed part of the funeral rites in ancient times and the servants and horses of warriors were immolated; but after the first century these practices died out and clay statuettes were substituted. A similar practice prevailed among the Dahomeys and the Ashantis, where horrible human hecatombs were offered to the spirits of deceased chiefs.

In the myth of Osiris there is implied the sacrifice of a sacred bull, which, however, was cut up into fourteen pieces and eaten in communion by the faithful.

The sacrifice *par excellence* among the Hindus was that of the horse, which was regarded as an auxiliary of celestial fire, but there are no traces of human sacrifice.

*(To be continued.)*

282