ISLAM'S CONTRIBUTION
TO THE
PEACE OF THE WORLD

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A few months ago I was talking to a non-Muslim friend of mine who, besides having had the benefit of a most catholic education, is supposed to be of very liberal views. As is natural, the conversation extended over a variety of subjects during the course of which I was astonished to hear my friend say, "Islam is the most militant religion." Ordinarily it is not considered decent to enter into religious discussions with friends, but in this case I decided to disregard the supposed ban as I felt that for my friend's ignorance I was partly responsible. I told him that his remark was an index to his deep-rooted ignorance about Islam. Smart came the retort, "But I have studied enough literature on the subject." When questioned further the gentleman confessed that his knowledge about Islam was confined to what the Christian missionaries have written about this religion and its adherents. This explanation satisfied me because I felt that such literature could lead its reader to no other conclusion. I tried to explain to my friend that the whole literature was a part of a gigantic propaganda engineered to give a set-back to the spread of Islam and that Islam was anything but militant both in its teachings and practices. My friend was partly satisfied that he had seen only one side of the picture and that too had been distorted and he asked
me to write out an essay on the subject for his benefit. I gladly agreed to undertake the task and it gave me pleasure to find that a perusal of a few brief notes written by me made my friend change his views. Since the question is very important I have thought it expedient to present my views at length at the suggestion of that very friend because I think that in doing so I am rendering a service to humanity.

I may state at the outset that this paper is intended mainly for the benefit of non-Muslim friends and as such it may not add much to the knowledge of my Muslim brethren except the manner of putting the whole thing. For them it is, really speaking, the same old wine in a new goblet.

As stated above, an average educated man cannot find enough time to study religion and since under the circumstances that prevail in this country an educated Indian is by force of habit inclined to prefer books written in English on all subjects, for his study of religion he has to depend necessarily on books written by the stalwarts of the Christian missions operating in India. These people have a knack of giving very attractive names to their publications and an average man is unconsciously drawn to a study of the same. Unfortunately these books which have been written with a set purpose contain facts which besides being entirely incorrect have been presented in a manner to suit their own purpose. The result is that the reader draws the irresistible conclusion and since the Muslim world has so far done very little to combat this evil, the views formed by a study of this literature are allowed to develop unimpeded and the result is what we find to-day—every man blackmailing Islam as a creed advocating *gundaism*. This state of affairs is so lamentable that a Muslim cannot but feel ashamed
for his indifference.

The chief aim of all true religions should be to make life on earth more useful on the whole and to make every individual a better citizen of the world. It would, therefore, be quite justifiable for the adherents of all such creeds to invite others to share the blessings of their faith and in doing so they would be well within their rights to emphasise all those points that further their cause. But this does not in any way entitle them to distort history and to present facts in a manner different from their natural happenings. The introduction of propagandist tactics into the realm of religion was the greatest curse of humanity and the present discord and antagonism between the followers of different religions can be attributed to no other cause. Worst falsehoods have been invented in the name of religion and where the glare of historical clarity was too strong to admit of such things, entirely wild interpretations were sought to be placed on facts which could not be denied. While in this connection lead was taken by only a few religions, others were not too slow to fall into the snare with the result that to-day we find every religion being reviled. The difference is only of degree. It would be unfair to leave this phase of the question without appreciating the spirit exhibited by those thoughtful luminaries who have done their utmost to relieve humanity of this curse and I take pleasure and pride in asserting that Muslim divines and other public men have been the foremost in this direction.

Islam came to befriend all religions. In fact its teachings give an idea that Islam holds a brief for all the religions that went before and that its founder endeavoured his best to reinstate the founders of all religions in their positions. But the pity is that it has been badly repaid. There is no other religion
that has so grossly been misrepresented and misunderstood and no other founder so wantonly abused. Nothing could be more lamentable. In order to give you an idea of the extent to which these propagandists allow their fertile brains to invent dogmas in the name of Islam and to distort facts I give a few quotations:—

(a) In his monumental work *The History of the Roman Empire* (Vol. V, p. 494) Gibbon says:

"The captive churches of the East have been afflicted in every age by the avarice or bigotry of their rulers and the ordinary and legal restraints must be offensive to the pride or the zeal of the Christians. About 200 years after Mohamet they were separated from their fellow subjects by a turban or girdle of a less honourable colour; instead of horses or mules, they were condemned to ride on asses in the attitude of women. Their public and private buildings were measured by a diminutive standard; in the streets or the baths it was their duty to give way or bow down before the meanest of the people; and their testimony is rejected if it may tend to prejudice a true believer. The pomp of processions, the sound of bells or psalmody is interdicted in their worship; a decent reverence for the national faith is imposed on their sermons and conversations; and the sacrilegious attempt to enter a mosque or to seduce a Mussalman will not be suffered to escape with impunity. In a time, however, of tranquillity and justice, the Christians have never been compelled to renounce the Gospel or to embrace the Quran; but the punishment of death is inflicted upon the apostates who have professed and deserted the law of Mahomet."

(b) In a book named *Etudes Orientales et Religieuses*, by Edward Montet (Geneve, 1917, pp. 205-228), we find: “In connection with all the above facts it must be kept in mind that religious assassination has been freely practised since the beginning of Islam and that the Prophet Muhammad gave it the sanction of his example on numerous occasions.”

(c) Some clever brains fabricated a set of terms and named them “The Ordinances of Umar” which
even a Western writer of the position of Sir William Muir could not accept as genuine. The constitutional rights allowed by Umar to non-Muslim minorities according to these apostles of truth (those that coined these terms) were contained in a treaty which ran as under:

"In the name of God, the Merciful, Compassionate. This is the writing of the Christians (of such and such a city) to 'Omar-ibnul-Khattab. When you marched against us, we asked for protection for ourselves, our families, our possessions and our co-religionists; and we made this stipulation with you, that we will not erect in our city or the suburbs any new monastery, church, cell or hermitage; that we will not repair any of such buildings that may fall into ruins, or renew those that may be situated in the Muslim quarters of the town; that we will not refuse the Muslims entry into our churches either by night or by day; that we will open the gates wide to passengers and travellers, that we will receive any Muslim traveller into our homes and give him food and lodging for three nights, that we will not harbour any spy in our churches or houses, or conceal any enemy of the Muslims; that we will not teach our children the Koran; that we will not make a show of the Christian religion nor invite any one to embrace it; that we will not prevent any of our kinsmen from embracing Islam, if they so desire; that we will honour the Muslims and rise up in our assemblies when they wish to take their seats; that we will not imitate them in our dress, either in the cap, turban, sandals, or parting of the hair; that we will not make use of their expressions of speech, nor adopt their surnames; that we will not ride on saddles, nor gird on swords, nor take to ourselves arms nor wear them, nor engrave Arabic inscriptions on our rings; that we will not sell wine; that we will shave the front of our heads; that we will keep to our own style of dress wherever we may be; that we will wear girdles round our waists; that we will not display the cross upon our churches nor display our crosses or our sacred books in the streets of the Muslims or in their market places; that we will not take any slaves that have already been in the possession of Muslims, nor spy into their houses; and that we will not strike any Muslim. All this we promise to observe, on behalf of ourselves and our co-religionists, and receive protection from you in exchange;
and if we violate any of the conditions of this agreement, then we forfeit your protection and you are at liberty to treat us as enemies and rebels."

(d) Rev. C. G. Pfander, in his book the *Mizan-ul-Haq* (p. 366), quotes a story alleged to have been told by a Persian to Dr. St. Clair Tidsal who was a Christian missionary in Persia. The story goes:

"When I was a little boy some 50 years ago my parents and I and all the people of our village were Zoroastrians. One day the chief Mujtahid of the city of Isfahan issued a decree commanding us all to embrace Islam. We petitioned the Prince Governor of the province. We refused to change our religion. We offered bribes to leading Muslims and Ulamas. They took our money but did not help us at all. The Mujtahid gave us until midday of the following Friday to be converted declaring that we should be put to death if we did not at that time at least become Muslims. That morning all the lowest ruffians from the city surrounded our village each with some deadly weapon in his hands awaiting the appointed hour to permit him to begin the work of plunder and murder. We waited in vain until it was almost midday hoping that our enemy would relent. As he did not, just before noon we all accepted Islam and thus saved our lives."

(e) Even when appreciating toleration as preached and practised by Islam these champions of the cause of truth see a black spot everywhere. William Ambrose Shedd in his book *Islam and Oriental Churches* (pp. 136-37), while dealing with this subject, says:

"It must also be remembered that what was an advance in the 7th century is a hopeless barrier in the 20th, and that active persecution in its very nature must run its course and cease while toleration is capable of permanency and is for that reason far more dangerous. The strong argument is the true argument and Islam is condemned most conclusively by the fairest judgment."

(f) Lest an honest seeker after truth should find out by a study of the Quran that these accusations
were false, these people forestalled the arguments by saying that the verses that enjoin toleration and fair dealings between man and man were abrogated by subsequent commandments. For instance, in his book *Apostasy in Islam*, Zwemer says on pages 95-6: “The verse often quoted to prove the toler-ance of Islam, ‘Let there be no compulsion in religion’ preceded and was abrogated by the verse of the sword. And the command in II, 186-87 to fight against those who fight but not to transgress by attacking first was (according to Zamakhshari and others) abrogated by the command ‘fight against all idolaters.’”

(g) That these writers succeeded in their object, namely, to make people believe that Islam stands for bloodshed, persecution, intolerance and debauchery of the worst type is clear from what an English writer wrote as late as February 1930. A gentleman who signed himself as “A. G. C.” opened an article on “The Pilgrimage to Mecca” appearing in the *Illustrated Times of India* dated February 2, 1930, with the following sentences:

“To an average Westerner the word Mecca conjures up perhaps an extravagant imagery of houris, music, dancing, and all the multifarious pleasures for the senses. He little realizes what it is to be in the forbidden city.”

Another gentleman Mr. Ch. Van Beetem alias Mohammad Ali, a retired Lieutenant who accepted Islam, says:

“..........My footsteps took me to Java in the Far East to observe with my own eyes how dearly and faithfully Muslims held their faith. This was an eye-opener to me, for I learnt that Muslims as dinned by Christian priestcraft into our ears are anything but heathens and Islam which they misrepresented so much is not a religion with hateful practices.

I could go on giving these details but it will be a waste of time as I think that the few quotations
given by me are enough to show the extent of the propaganda and the lines on which it has been carried on.

Every religion claims to be an apostle of peace and goodwill. I, however, make bold to assert that no religion has striven so hard as Islam to establish the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man on this earth. A reference to the teachings of Islam and the practices of its founder and his followers establish beyond any shadow of doubt, that this is not a vain boast. Before I deal with the articles of faith in Islam in support of my theory it would be advisable to digress a little. Prior to the advent of Islam the many religions that appealed to the different sections of humanity were, and are still, known mainly after the names of their founders. For instance, Buddhism and Christianity are nothing but terms to denote the gospels preached by Buddha and Christ. There are others which owe their nomenclature to the country of their birth, for instance, Hinduism after Hindustan or Arya Samaj after Arya Warta. Then again there are others which have a reference to time, for instance, Sanatan Dharma, meaning the old religion. As opposed to all these the name Islam which denotes peace was suggested by God Himself, for we read in the Quran رضيت لك بلاء الإسلام دينا “I have chosen for you Islam as a religion” (5:3), and “Verily the religion of Allah is Islam” (3:18). Now the term Islam in Arabic means peace and all commentators both Muslims and others are agreed that it means peace both with God and with man. In fact the Quran defined a Muslim as one بلي من اسلم وجيله الله و هو مأكسن “who submits himself entirely to Allah and is the doer of good to others.” (2:112.) Then again while in the case of other religions and
cultures one accosts the other with words denoting their attachment to an incarnation of the Lord or other similar phrases, a Muslim when meeting another Muslim wishes him peace, which is returned by the other with equal force.

Before I proceed any further it would be apposite to set out concisely the traits of character that are essential for a man of peace. These are:—

(1) He must feel the existence of a link between himself and the rest of the race.
(2) He must have faith in the doctrine of the accountability of action.
(3) He must not injure the feelings of others.
(4) He must not usurp the rights of others, or try to retain ill-gotten gains.
(5) He must be ready to help the needy and the oppressed.
(6) He must stand by the cause of truth.
(7) His actions must not be swayed by popular applause or condemnation.

Now we have to see which of the many religions that are believed in by man has done most to regulate the conduct of its followers on lines conducive to these results.

ONENESS OF GOD

An architect makes the foundation of a structure strong in proportion to the weight that is to be sustained and since the ideal of the whole world’s peace was very lofty, its foundation was laid on the loftiest of beliefs, namely, the oneness of God. Before the advent of Islam numberless gods were believed in and worshipped by different people. This state of affairs had the sanction of religion. The multiplicity of gods was bound to create factions and history chronicles the events of that age by depicting the
abject states of society. Every clan had a god of its own and a belief in his power was a negation of the truth of the rival deities. The result was a life-long struggle. People believing in different gods had different standards of morality and naturally enough what one considered virtuous was an unalloyed vice to the other. This was a fruitful cause of wars, and the meanest of tricks could be justified under one belief or the other. With one stroke Islam banished all these bones of contention by declaring “There is no God but one” and then by calling Him “the God of the universe” (1:1) the universality of His fatherhood was established. Just as the sons of one father feel attached to one another by a common bond, similarly the sons of one God are linked together by a common tie. All those feuds that were the outcome of the plurality of gods came to an end and the chief source of strife was nipped. The God of Islam is as much the protector of the negroes of Africa as of the beauties of the Alps. Just as human agencies are supposed to have patronising aptitudes, similarly gods were reported to have their favourites and very often the parties claiming exclusive influence with the ruling deity were turned into warring tribes. With the establishment of the unity of God Islam eradicated this evil and by laying down “With God he is the favourite who is most mindful of his duties to man” (49:13). Islam created in man a healthy rivalry for the service of humanity.

THE ADVENT OF PROPHETS

Closely connected with the oneness of God is the question of the advent of prophets, seers, and apostles at different periods of the world’s history. These prophets played their part but their mission was
misunderstood since each was sent for a particular nation only. Accordingly the teachings of each of these benefactors of humanity were claimed exclusively by the people among whom he lived and preached. This gave rise to an antagonism between the followers of different creeds and each nation reviled and abused the prophets of the others. So much so that while each of these nations claimed to have been favoured with the advent of a prophet to elevate it, the same privilege was denied to others. The result was that the prophets of all other nations were called impostors and liars. No man can tolerate disrespectful language towards his preceptor and the use of such language which was not unoften resorted to by the advocates of rival faiths was the cause of blood feuds. The recent happenings in India have shown how the acts of a few individuals with a perverted mentality can lead to create and perpetuate differences between different communities. All these troubles were once for all banished by Islam by making a belief in the truth of all missions as a part of faith. All prophets that appeared at different periods were placed on one level and in order to establish an equal treatment from the Lord to all nations and peoples it was laid down that all nations had prophets. The Quran says:

قولو آمنا بابن اسحاق و مع اسماعيل و ابراهيم وما ارسلت انزل الى اليهود و المسيح و من بعدهم من نوين من كل دين اتبعه من ذهن و ادّعون له مسلتون

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

Not only that, it went further and laid down:

ان الذين يكفرون بالله و رسوله و يريدون ان يغرقوا بين اخر
و رسوله ويقولون نؤمن بعض ونكر بعض ويريدون ان يتخذوا بين
ذلك سبيلاً - أولئك هم الكفرون حقةً و اعدنا للكفرين هذا باً مهيناً.
والذين آمنوا بالله ورسله ولم يغرقوا بين احد منهم او أولئك سوف
يؤتىهم اجورهم - وكان الله غفوراً رحيماً.

“Surely those who disbelieve in Allah and His apostles and (those who) desire to make a distinction between Allah and His apostles and say: We believe in some and disbelieve in others; and desire to take a course between (this and) that, these it is that are truly unbelievers, and We have prepared for the unbelievers a disgraceful chastisement. And those who believe in Allah and His apostles and do not make a distinction between any of them, Allah will grant them their rewards; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful” (4:150, 151, 152).

Then a strict injunction was issued against showing the slightest disrespect towards any of these prophets. So much so that even idols were not to be abused in spite of the fact that Islam came to eradicate idol-worship. Says the Quran:

ولا تسبوا الذين يدعون من دون الله فيسبو الله عدواً بغير عام

“And do not abuse those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest exceeding the limits they should abuse Allah out of ignorance” (6:109). The argument advanced in this connection is to the effect that if Musalmans abused idols, the idol-worshippers would naturally retaliate and this would lead to bloodshed. How hard have Musalmans striven to act up to this command is proved by a reference to the pages of
history. The other day I came across a writing of the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib of Qadian on this question. He wished a covenant to be entered into by the followers of all the religions with a view to abstain from using disrespectful language towards the prophets of other religions. He said, "If the Hindus and Aryas be ready for this sort of a clear understanding and if they agree to recognise the truth of the mission of our Prophet and promise to abstain from using any disrespectful language in future, I shall be the first man to sign an agreement that we the Ahmadedes will always testify to the truth of the Vedas and will always revere and respect the Rishis of the Hindus, and in case there is a lapse on our part we shall pay to the Hindus a sum of rupees three lakhs as penalty, and if the Hindu friends wish to conclude a lasting peace with us they should also sign a similar agreement undertaking to believe in the mission of the Prophet Muhammad and never to use any disrespectful language towards him and his mission, or in default to pay rupees three lakhs to the Head of Ahmadiyya community." How efficacious was the remedy suggested is proved by the amity that exists between the Brahmos and Muslims in spite of the fact that there exists a vital difference in several matters pertaining to faith. I have for a long time been closely connected with certain Brahmo friends and I have always gone to them as if I was going to one with whom I had not the slightest difference on any matter. Besides, whenever I have attended a meeting of the Brahmo Samaj I have returned satisfied that there is at least one other class which as a matter of belief and practice acknowledges the work done by all prophets. How grand would it be if the followers of all creeds adopt the same attitude towards the founders of other religions as is done by the Brahmos. This
was the second achievement on the part of Islam, in the way of establishing peace on this earth.

DEMOCRACY

Islam is admittedly the most democratic of religions and humanity has not so far done proper homage to this cardinal principle of Islamic faith. If we look carefully into the history of nations in the past and the present we find that the man in power has not been found wanting in a desire to claim on some pretext a superior position for himself as against those around him. There were different criterions for asserting this claim. The distinctions of race, colour, class or worldly opulence were put forward by different nations as the hallmarks of their own superiority and in many cases a justification for this arbitrary division was sought from the dictates of religion. In fact all religions in a way countenanced class hatred if not actually fomenting it, and in this respect Hinduism—the religion of Arya Warta—was unfortunately the greatest sinner. The division of humanity into four classes, Brahmans, Kshatris, Vaishyas and Shudras, was the first seed sown in the field of class hatred and the whole trouble due to the present tension between capital and labour can be attributed to a rigid observance of this rule. That a Brahman should, in spite of his depravity, be always superior to a Shudra, however noble, was the greatest curse levelled against humanity in the name of religion. How desperately did the unfortunate Shudras war against this forced slavery and degradation and how cunningly they were denied the mere right to live by the resourceful twice-born people is the greatest shame of the Indian culture of old. A study of the well-known Brahmanical age amply reveals the injustices that the poor
Shudras had to bear and even now in spite of so much enlightenment and in spite of the healthy influence that Islam has wielded on this baneful practice, those that have so long denied to others the bare right of living are exerting themselves to the utmost in trying to retain the privilege so cunningly usurped by them.

Dr. Ambedkar, in spite of his distinctions on the ground of rare scholarship, high morals and vast influence among the untouchables, is not to be treated alike with a man of Pandit Malviya’s community, however degraded, depraved and illiterate he may be. Pandit Malviya will prefer to have his meals cooked and served by a dirty Brahman but will not suffer a man of Dr. Ambedkar’s position to cast his shadow in the Chauka. Nay, if he happens to shake hands with his colleague at the Round Table Conference—the representative of the untouchables—he must have a wash and a change of clothes before entering his Chauka. Can there be a spirit of fellow-feeling between these two highly enlightened leaders in spite of the Pandit’s high-sounding credentials as an apostle of goodwill? If human nature has any meaning, the very mention of Pandit Malviya’s name, not to talk of his presence, must be most disgusting to Dr. Ambedkar. In fact this is how the untouchables themselves feel in this connection. An untouchable leader expressed himself some time ago by saying:

“It is indeed a wonder that those who do not see any defilement in the vicinity of a dog living on the excreta of a Panchama, have the audacity to regard him as low and unequal and feel polluted at his approach. It is high time for the Thiyas to shake off a creed which is nothing less than an impediment to their welfare, freedom and convenience as a self-respecting community and to join the folds of another. Indeed, we are on the threshold of a crisis when we are to shun the Hindu religion as we would a cruel Satan and to run
away from it as if it were a place of malignant epidemic, 
aye to shun this creed of Hinduism which owing to the 
hideous customs resulting from the existence of a thousand 
and one classes and castes within its fold, has become the 
hotbed of all that is absurd, mean, odious, nasty, loathsome 
and good for nothing. A Panchama who has a grain of 
self-respect in him must not remain in its fold.”

But we cannot blame the Pandit for his attitude 
because his religion enjoins on him such a course of 
action. Contrast this with the spirit which pulsates 
through the Muslim world. Bilal—that jet black 
negro slave who dared not present himself before the 
meanest of the Quraish merely because of his low 
parentage and dark complexion (circumstances over 
which he had no control)—was, immediately on 
accepting Islam and establishing his merit, placed in 
the foremost rank of the faithful. His dark skin or 
his low position in life could not be pleaded by the 
stalwarts of the Quraish prestige and honour. Not 
only that, the Quraish who on account of false 
notions of superiority could not tolerate the mere 
idea of being responsible for the birth of a daughter 
lest they should be placed in an ignominious position 
of having a son-in-law, vied one with the other in 
offering to have Bilal as their son-in-law the moment 
the slave Muslim evinced a desire of entering into a 
matrimonial relationship. What brought about such 
great change in the views of the Quraish in such a 
short time and what forced them to allow the slaves a 
position of Equality? It were the teachings of 
Islam—that boon of Providence for the entire world. 
According to a strict interpretation of the tenets of 
Hindu Law a man is sent to this world as a Brahman, 
a Kshatri, a Vaishya or even as a Pariah as a reward 
or punishment for his conduct in the previous life, 
and any attempt to interfere with this arrangement 
ordained by Providence would be nothing short of an 
impeachment of God’s decree. But history testifies
to the fact that these principles could be accepted only so long as human intellect was denied the right to regulate human conduct.

The case of other religions has been in no way different. So far as mere catchwords and phrases are concerned Christianity has contributed not a little to the vocabulary of the religious world. The teachings of Christ “Love thy enemy,” “Love thy neighbour as thyself,” “When you are smitten on the right cheek, turn your left and hand over your cloak to the man who takes away your coat,” are mottoes that would decorate any wall. But when we look into the practical side we are sadly disillusioned. In the first place Lord Christ did not claim to lay down anything for the whole world, for he came only to reclaim the lost children of Israel and secondly the span of life allowed to him was too short to demonstrate his teachings practically and the saying that Christianity died with Christ on the Cross is not a very fantastic one. International history exposes to human gaze the massacres of St. Bartholomew and the Crusades, not to talk of the life-long struggle between the Protestants and the Roman Catholics, the Puritans and the Non-Conformists. It was the culture that developed from these tenets that was responsible for the Western muse’s saying:

“West is West and the East is East
And the twain shall never meet”

which bears a sharp contrast to what was sung by the Islamic poet under inspiration of Islamic teachings مسلم هیں هم، وطن هی سارا جهان هم آرا (We are Muslims and claim the entire world as our home.)

In India we find that in spite of the advancement that the Indian Christians have secured under the
influence of the different missions operating in the country, they are not allowed to enter the churches of their white co-religionists. Persons having different shades of complexion must have separate places for worshipping the same God and the same prophet. In the West and in America the colour prejudice is so great that the management of a public hotel or restaurant dare not serve a coloured customer in the hall used by the whites. Not long ago, a hotel in America, if I remember aright, was boycotted by the white race on the ground that the management had the audacity of extending the same treatment to the coloured races. Some Indian students were asked by the apologetic manager to be content with being served their meals in the kitchen or the servants’ quarter. This is the case of a country which is foremost in proclaiming complete democracy all over the world. In Africa and in Australia as also in New Zealand every piece of legislation that is placed on the statute book aims at reducing the coloured races to a position of servitude and slavery. As a matter of fact Hinduism, Christianity or other similar religions cannot be blamed for their failings in this respect, since they never claimed to lay down a universal brotherhood of man. Hindu Law was meant for the Hindus and Hindustan only. Not long ago an effort was made to define the word Hindu, but no definite solution could be arrived at and ultimately it was arbitrarily agreed that all persons who believed in religions that had their origin in India should be classed as Hindus.

Culture and civilisation are always the outcome of religious propaganda and no one can deny the fact that all well-known nations of the world have cut a very sorry figure so far as the question of the brotherhood of man is concerned. Each nation was obsessed with the idea of its superiority not for any intrinsic
merit but simply because of some geographical location. Athens contributed so much towards the advancement of Philosophy; but the Athenians could never, in spite of this, place non-Athenians on a footing of equality with themselves. One of the topmost philosophers that Athens produced, namely, Aristotle who is to this day celebrated for his philosophy could not include non-Athenians into the brotherhood advocated by him. He created two divisions, free men and slaves, the latter being the property of the former. This class hatred knew no bounds. So much so that he laid down in so many words that an Athenian could never be a slave. Roman Law, that nucleus of all Western systems of jurisprudence revels in creating and perpetuating the distinction between a free man and a slave. The modern nationalism of Europe which is creating an unbridgeable gulf between the East and West is the ripe fruit of Roman Law. Every country in the West professes to have been actuated by humanitarian motives in all dealings between man and man. But underneath all these professions one can discern a passion for power and a greed for wealth which bring about an interminable series of wars and intermittent feuds for supremacy. This artificial distinction which is the outcome of human vanity has serious setbacks at different periods of the world’s history. The French revolution, the American War of Independence and the recent campaign against the Czarist supremacy in Russia culminating in the much dreaded Moscow creeds are some links in the limitless chain of undercurrents against class distinction. But all these though serving a momentary purpose had to face a hard fate because of their being godless movements. What these bloody movements failed to achieve was accomplished by Islam by proclaiming:

" يا ابيها الناس انا خلقتم من ذكر و انتهى وجعلتم شعوباً وقبائل لتعارفوا"
"O men, We have created you all of a male and a female and then made you tribes and families that you may know each other." (49, 13). The hollow distinctions of race and colour or worldly possession were given a death-knell by proclaiming, "Surely the noblest among you in the eye of God is he who is most careful of his duty," which established only one distinction, namely, that of actions. With no greater lucidity could this *magna charta* of the equality of man be expounded than was done by the Prophet on the occasion of his last Haj. He said:

"Remember you are all brothers. All men are equal in the eye of God, and your honours, your lives and your properties are all sacred and in no case should you attack each other's life and property. To-day I trample under my feet all distinctions of caste, colour and nationality. All men are sons of Adam and Adam was of dust."

What the guillotine of France failed to establish was an accomplished fact by virtue of this verbal order shorn of all brutal force, and we find the wealthiest and the mightiest who once had separate places of worship, prostrating themselves shoulder to shoulder with the poorest and the weakest. If a sunburnt and half-naked day-labourer of Madras took his seat in the front row in a mosque, the Khalifa of Turkey, the Amir of Afghanistan or the Nizam of Deccan could not ask him to make room for him because they were before their Lord in whose eyes all men are equal. Says Doctor G. W. Laner in his book *Religious Systems of the World*: "The demonstration of equality furnished on the occasion of Haj is so complete that it is well-nigh impossible to distinguish a servant from his master." To quote again from the article contributed by an Englishman to *The Times of India*, dated 2nd February, 1930:

"As soon as a pilgrim leaves home he (the pilgrim) is supposed to cut himself off from all worldly connections
and think only of God and the house of God. When he reaches a certain point about sixty miles from Mecca, he must take off his usual clothes and don the garb of a Sanyasi or a Bhikkhu—one white unsewn sheet to serve as a langot and another to cover the upper half of the body. No matter how very intense the heat of the desert sun, the head must be left uncovered. When he has changed into these clothes he must say, ‘I am coming, O Thou One without a second, I am coming.’ He is supposed to address this to God, for it is believed that unless there is a call from God none can go for Haj. It is a sight to see a big Nawab from Upper India or a merchant prince from Bombay or Calcutta in the same garb as a beggar from the streets of Baghdad. A sugar king from far off Java, an Effendi from Cairo or Constantinople is no better in the sight of Allah than a cobbler from Kabul.”

The benefactor of humanity never claimed a higher position for himself. All he claimed was that besides being a servant of the Lord like all others he was a messenger from Him. With our dwarfed vision and twisted mentality we attach so much importance to the slightest gesture on the part of aristocracy to climb down to be classed among mortals. Mahatma Gandhi—that apostle of the doctrine of Ahinsa—appeals to us as an incarnation of God when in spite of his high position he milks his goat for satisfying his appetite, and when a Nehru or a Mazhar-ul-Haque appears in a khaddar costume we behold nothing short of God on earth. But how wonderful was the example set by that Lord spiritual and temporal of the Arabian Peninsula who mended his own shoes and stitched his garments and whose wife and daughter attended to the cookery and the grinding mill unaided by a servant. Only a few years ago when the tank at the Darbar Sahib of Amritsar was being cleaned, people used to come from far and near to witness notable Sikhs working as labourers of love in removing the mud and silt from the bottom of the tank and it was depicted to me as a heavenly sight
by a friend whose curiosity drove him from Gurdaspur to Amritsar. All this, however, failed to impress me because my mind’s eye was witnessing the Prophet of Arabia—that beloved of God and man—carrying on his head bricks and mud with other labourers for building a mosque.

The democracy preached and established by Islam could not recognise any distinction between the highest and the lowest in the country. The person, for the time being, holding the reins of the country could not claim a high position for himself in the eye of Law. How scrupulously this equality was established remains to this day the wonder of the world. The slogan, “The king can do no wrong” had no meaning in Muslim lands and there were no separate laws for the rich and the poor. As early as the time of Khalifà Umar this was demonstrated by the Khalifà himself. The son of Khalifà Umar was found guilty of an offence and the father meted out the same punishment to the son as he would have done in the case of another man. The boy died while receiving the stripes on his person and the father ordered the unexecuted portion to be inflicted on the dead body. Then again the Khalifà had once to appear before the Qazi as a suitor in a case and when he entered the court room, the Qazi out of respect rose a little from his seat. When the Khalifà returned to his office, the first thing he did was to dismiss the Qazi on the ground that by showing preferential treatment to a suitor he had forfeited his claim to be a Qazi.

It may perhaps be said that during the period of the first few Khalifàs the zeal was certainly more catching but that in subsequent times the law was relaxed. History, however, falsifies such an argument. The story is told of King Murad of Khujand who had to confess his guilt before the Qazi in an
action preferred by a mason whose hands were cut off under the king's order. This story has so well been put by the late Dr. Sir Iqbal that I make no apology for quoting it verbatim. He says:

This shows that the king did not claim any exemption from the law that regulated the conduct of the poor in the realm. What a contrast do the facts revealed by other religions and countries present!
live without her for a moment. But when there came the question of doing justice between man and man, the law of the land was not twisted to favour the royalty and even Nur Jahan had to bow to it. Maulana Shibli has put the incident in verse which I quote for the reader’s benefit:—

قصر شاهی میں کہ ممکن نہیں گیراں کا گذر
ایک دین نورجہان بام پہ تیزی حلوا فگن
کوئی شامت زده راه گیر اڈر آ نکلا
گزیدہ تیلی قصر میں هر جارطرف سے قذفن

گیرت حسن سے بیگم نے طمنجع مارا
خاک پہ ذہر تھی اک کشتہ ہے گور و کفن
ساتھیہ ہی شاہ جہانگیر کو پہنچی جو خبر
فیظ سے ایک میں اب رویہ عدالت پہ شکن

حم بھیجا کہ کنیزان شیہستان شھبی
tsیہ وبیچہ آئین کہ سمج یا یہ خلیعہ یہ یہ سنک
نخوت حسن سے بیگم نے بصد ناز کہا
میری جانب سے کرو عرض باقیہ حسن

ہاں منبجع واقعہ قتل سے انکار نہیں
مغیالہ سے ناموس حیا لنہ یہ کہ کھاتیا کہ بزن
اسکی گستاخ نگاہی نہ یہا اسکو ہلاک

کشور حسن میرا جاریہ ہے یہی شروع کہن

مفتی دین سے جہانگیر نے فتوق پوجیا
kہ شریعت میں کسیکو نہیں کہی چپتی جان

مفتی دین نے یہ خوئی و خطر صاف کہا
شرع کہتی ہے کہ قاتل کی ایک دو گردن

لڑی دربار میں اس حکم سے تھیا ائی
پر جہانگیر کی اپر پہ نہ بل تیا نہ شکن

ترکنون کو دیا حکم کہ اند جاکر
پھیل بیگم کو کریب بستے زندگیر و رسین

پھر اس طرح اس کہبہن کی باہر لائی
اور جلد کو دین حکم کہ ہاں ویں بزن
This was a practical demonstration of the Quranic teaching:—

"Oh you who believe! be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for Allah's sake though it may be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relatives; if he be rich or poor,
Allah is most competent (to deal) with them both, therefore do not follow your low desires, lest you deviate; and if you swerve or turn aside, then surely Allah is aware of what you do” (4: 135).

Muhammad Tuglaq’s name is well known among the kings of India. Once he lashed a Hindu lad who at once ran to the Qazi’s court. The king had to appear and to confess his guilt as the subterfuges, “The king can do no wrong” or “No court can issue a writ against the king,” were of no avail in a Muslim Court. The Qazi recited the Quranic injunction

(Say my Lord has enjoined justice) (7: 29),

and ordered that the King should have on his back the same number of stripes as he had inflicted on the boy. The King took off his shirt and the boy inflicted 21 lashes. The King’s crown fell down. While lifting it up the King remarked “Thou insolent creature, thou richly deserved all this ignominy.”

I could go on giving other instances but I shall leave this part of the subject after narrating an incident about the life of one who is painted by interested and prejudiced writers in so black terms. The very mention of Mahmud Ghaznavi’s name is enough to invite a tirade of criticism from a certain section of the Indian community. But the manner in which he dispensed justice between man and man shall live as a monument of impartiality. During one of his attacks on India he was approached by a Hindu gentleman with a complaint that some members of the royal escort molested the residents and dishonoured the females of the locality where the army was encamping. Mahmud ordered that next time when any such occurrence was detected the complainant should come to him and the guards
of the royal equipage were told to let in the man any hour of the day or night. Three days later the man reappeared at the dead of night and informed Mahmud that one of the royal bloods was actually in the zenana of his house at the time. Mahmud at once accompanied the man and when he was let into the apartment where the culprit was enjoying his sleep embedded with one of the females of his house he ordered the lights to be put off. This being done Mahmud with one stroke of his sword severed the head of the culprit and then ordered lights to be brought in. Looking at the face of the man who had met his fate Mahmud asked for some water and some eatables. The owner of the house being poor could give Mahmud a few pieces of dry bread only which Mahmud swallowed with the appetite of a starving man after having performed his ablution and kneeled before his Lord. The complainant could not realise the significance of all that he had seen and made bold to be inquisitive. Mahmud told him that from the time he made his appearance with the complaint on the first occasion, the conqueror had taken a vow that he would not eat or drink so long as the guilty man was not brought to book and the wrong righted, that, when he entered the apartment where the culprit was supposed to be, light was ordered to be put off lest the sight of the man who was supposed to be of the conqueror’s blood should make him swerve from meting out the punishment and when, after inflicting the death penalty light was brought in, it transpired that the man was not of the royal equipage and so Mahmud kneeled before his Lord for a double thanksgiving, for having saved him from the shame and for having made him strong enough not to hesitate in punishing the culprit. Having done this, the vow was made good and Mahmud who had starved for three days broke his
fast. This is the sort of justice to which Muslims are accustomed and they expect that in their dealings they would not be denied the same. In fact I cannot express this better than by quoting Khwaja Dil Muhammad who addressed the Prophet by saying:—

تیری امت کو حکومت جب سی اے سرور ملی
پیدیوں کو گلشن میں شہبم گل کے کانگے پھر ملی

Can any nation, any culture or any court of law adduce one instance of such an even-handed justice and in the absence of the supremacy of law not one of the causes of the present world-wide unrest? Americans claim to be the most democratic people. But the manner in which the lives and properties of the dark inhabitants of that place are being destroyed shall for ever remain a blot on the fair name of the whole nation. The punishment of lynching is being inflicted on the dark complexioned people of that country for most ordinary offences against the white race. In fact the ideal aimed at by Buddha and cherished by Christ and others was given a practical shape by Islam and this fact stands unchallenged even by the stalwarts of all the known creeds.

The question of democratic institutions raises a question of far-reaching results. In countries where Islamic conception of the equality of man is not practised, people less favoured by Providence in matters of wealth have no chances of establishing their brain superiority. They must live the life of their fathers, and dare not look above themselves. Thus, a Shudra dare not hear a word of the Vedas on penalty of molten lead being poured into his ears. Under other rules a dark-skinned man dare not aspire to the position monopolised by the white race. Not so under Islam where a new convert, a slave or a man of the lowest parentage may with impunity aspire to be the topmost man of the realm. This is not a vain
boast. The case of Bilal has been cited already. In India a slave was fit for succeeding his master and thus founding the well-known Slave Dynasty. If England now allows equal chances of rise in life to its sons, it is on account of the healthy influence wielded by Islam. In fact even there the rule of democracy has not been established in the true Islamic spirit. What I have said above is not the conclusion of a mind inclined to be partial towards Islam. Every man who has studied this religion and its traditions and history has come to the same conclusion. Mahatma Gandhi while dealing with the subject opined: "Someone has said that Europeans in South Africa dread the advent of Islam, Islam that civilised Spain, Islam that took the torch of light to Spain and preached to the world the Gospel of Brotherhood. The Europeans of South Africa dread the advent of Islam, for they are afraid of the fact that if the native races embraced Islam, they may claim equality with the white races, for I have seen that any Zulu embracing Christianity does not ipso facto come to a level with all Christians, while immediately he embraces Islam, he drinks from the same cup and eats from the same dish as a Musalman. That is what they dread."

Similarly Mrs. Sarojini Naidu expressed herself by saying "Islam preaches universal brotherhood—complete democracy towards which the Western world is coming nearer and nearer. Islam is destined to become the converging point of widely divergent creeds."

VINDICATION OF RIGHTS

Closely connected with the rule of democracy is the problem of the vindication of rights, and a little honest pursuit for truth will reveal the deplorably
sorry figure that all religions and civilisations except Islam have cut in this connection. A reference to the pages of the world’s history shows that rights of individuals and nations withheld, denied or usurped have always led to disturb peace and tranquillity. Before the advent of Islam the class that now goes by the nomenclature of the fair-sex had a sad plight. It is not the place to discuss this phase of the question in detail, but I shall make a few references to what provision other religions and cultures had made for women. The West now has the cheek to scoff at the East and the case of the female sex is considered as the weakest spot in Oriental life. But what is the verdict of history?

The Greeks regarded females as being without intellect as was opined by the celebrated Greek thinker Simonides Amorgines who said, “God made women at the beginning without intellect.” With the Athenians she was an evil which had to be tolerated for producing children. Coming to later times we find Lord Christ giving vent to his disgust by addressing his mother as “Go woman, what have I to do with thee.” St. Paul, St. Augustine and other Christian priests of fame regarded woman as the instrument of the devil and were never tired of advocating a harsh treatment of the sex. In fact Christianity condemned a female to the extent of saying that she was the cause of the conception of sin and that Lord Christ had to suffer crucifixion to atone for this. It were these teachings that coined the English proverb:

“A woman, a dog, and a walnut tree,
The more you beat them the better will they be.”

Coming nearer home we find that Hindu religion and culture had no better place for women. According to the Rig Veda, god Indra is reported to have
said, "Woman's wit is hard to know aright and her intelligence is small." In the same book we find, "With women there is no friendship, their hearts are like those of hyena." In fact wives were treated no better than chattel and we find in the Mahabharata the manner in which the Pandvas lost their common wife Dropdi in gambling to the Kauravas. Manu says, "Women have impure appetites, they show weak flexibility and bad conduct. Day and night must they be kept in subjection, they must not study Vedas." Again Lord Buddha could not attain Nirvana so long as he did not extricate himself from the company of his wife. Under Islam, however, she was given a position which even men might envy. "Paradise lies at the feet of mothers," "You have rights over women and they have similar rights over you," "They are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for them," are some of the teachings laid down by Islam.

Then again under Hindu Law a woman has no independent property. She can not inherit or dispose of her possessions and even where she does succeed, her estate is for lifetime only with no power of disposal. In Christian countries the case is worse still, as there she has no independent existence. From birth till marriage she is an appendage to her father and must pass as Miss so and so, and after marriage she is Mrs. so and so. Even pieces of furniture have independent names but not so a female. She must lose herself in the person of her father or husband. Come to Islam and you find her a personality by herself. She has a specified share in the property left by her father, brother, husband and son which she can dispose of at will. So strict is the injunction laid down by the Quran in regard to the law of inheritance that while the non-observance of prayer, fast, etc. does not bring on the
default the odium of *Kufr*, anyone transgressing the limits of the law of inheritance is dubbed as a *Kafir* out and out.

As regards her marital rights, a female can find no better treatment than under Islam. It is true that Islam under some exceptional circumstances does permit the plurality of wives, but this permission is couched in a language which can admit of no two meanings; Says the Quran:

“And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four, but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them) then (marry) only one or what your right hands possess; this is more proper, that you may not deviate from the right course” (4:3). This amply illustrates the anxiety to secure from the husband unalloyed justice for the wife. Unfortunately the non-Muslims have not grasped the real significance of the principle, and day and night we find attacks being levelled against Islam on the score of this alleged weakness. A little careful consideration and impartial study will show that while other religions in a way sanctioned or tolerated secret polygamy and even polyandry, Islam had the courage to face the situation and solve it squarely. Not long ago England was faced with a serious situation. The toll of death paid by England during the Great War created a serious disparity in the numbers of the males and females, and in order to tide over the situation the Parliament was faced with a piece of legislation sanctioning polygamy. But the ecclesiastical protests proved stronger than the national need of the time. I do not wish to go into the details of the results that follow from such a state of affairs because it is beyond the scope of this book to say even a word likely to injure the feeling of even an individual, and
so I take leave of this side of the question.

While allowing polygamy under exceptional circumstances, Islam has made provision for a divorce at the instance of the wife and for her remarriage in case of a divorce or death of the husband. No other religion had the fairness to be so just to the females and for the change in the angle of vision of other religions which came into touch with Islam, the entire world owes a deep debt of gratitude to it. It was through the influence of Islam that that noble son of India Raja Ram Mohan Roy fought against the institution of Sati. The Arya Samaj, that reformed sect of Hinduism has approached Islam in accepting the doctrine of widow marriage, and this is another triumph of Islam. In this connection I must appreciate the Herculian efforts made by Dr. Gaur, Mr. Sarda and others for ameliorating the position of the females by getting laws passed superseding or altering the rules of strict Hindu law in certain respects. This fact by itself shows that Hindu law in its pure form does not do justice to the claims of the fair-sex. Thus while on the one hand human agency has improved upon the text of revelations as in the case of Hinduism and Christianity, in the case of Islam it is the disregard of God’s decree that has created this muddle. The suffragette movement of the West illustrates how pent up feelings led to bloodshed and unrest, and what the suffragists have failed to get in spite of so much agitation and loss of life and property was conceded voluntarily, nay, ordained by Islam long before the pinch was felt.

CAPITAL AND LABOUR

If we look into the disruptive elements of to-day we find that the great diversity in the distribution of wealth is one of the chief causes of the discontent-
ment that has caused such serious upheavals as we witnessed recently in Russia and which bid fair to enact the same drama in several other countries. On the one hand there are people who are rolling in wealth and on the other we find millions who are literally starving. A nation that allows its sons and daughters to perpetuate such a state of affairs prepares the ground for a serious cleavage and bloodshed. Burke was cent per cent right when he said "Hungry stomachs are a prolific cause of revolution." Long ago the world witnessed the scenes of the French Revolution, the very mention of which makes one's hair stand on their ends, and we have even to-day the Communist movement gaining ground and threatening the peace of the world. All this is the outcome of the uneven distribution of wealth. Islam was the first religion and in fact the last too, to foresee this and to lay down a systematic policy which, if honestly followed, must result in a complete eradication of this fruitful source of agitation. If every Muslim contributes to the Zakat fund faithfully and if this fund is properly expended, after a few years you will have to make efforts to find a needy man. So far as this particular problem is concerned, there have been three great revolutions in the world that we know of. The French Revolution and the Russian upheaval were both prompted by Godless ideals and in spite of the extensive bloodshed that was occasioned by these mass movements, the world has in no way been brought nearer to the millennium. The third revolution was the evolution that Islam suggested and the pages of Islamic history show how this scheme worked for the uplift of humanity without even the use of a harsh word, not to talk of bloodshed. Mark the anxiety of the Islamic teachings to restrict within reasonable limits the human craze for wealth. It banned usury and thus closed the gates for the
diffusion of the Shylock mentality. It prescribed a month’s fast even for the rich so that they may experience the pinch of hunger and be attentive to the needs of the poor and the starving, and for the regular support of the infirm, it established the Bait-ul-Mal. All this it did without in the least curtailing a man’s right to acquire personal property by honourable means. Can the world carve out another scheme with such far-reaching ideals?

NATIONALISM AND ISLAM

Muslims in India are sometimes accused of lukewarmness or rather indifference in national affairs and it has been asserted that this is the result of the teachings of Islam. The reply is an emphatic ‘NO.’ Not to talk of nationalism, Islam advocates internationalism by treating the entire human race as one family. In fact the religion of Islam:

خنجر جدل کسی پہ تلی ہیں هم امیر
سارد جہان کا درد همارے جگر میں ہے

(The affliction of every other man makes me welter; for, love for the entire world lies embedded in my bosom.)

History testifies to the proposition that Muslims went as conquerors but adopted the conquered country as their home. How the Indian Muslims came to entertain the ideas that they hold is a long story. When the Muslims came to India the inhabitants of the country treated them most uncharitably. In spite of their superior culture they were treated as untouchables. A dog, universally treated as a dirty and an impure animal, could get into the Chaunka of the
Hindus and even partake with impunity of the dishes prepared for the members of the household but a Muslim's touch, nay, his very shadow, was enough to pollute the food. This propaganda was so vigorously carried on that a Hindu child from his very birth was told to regard Muslims as *Malech*. The Muslims who came to adopt India as their home were face to face with a serious situation for years together. Human nature, as it is, revolts against such a treatment and people who are subjected to such a treatment form a group of their own. As a proof of this assertion I refer to the tangle that is at present facing the Hindu leaders. The untouchables whom the caste Hindus now, for political reasons, claim as a part of their large community have, on account of the social boycott to which they were subjected, formed a separate block and claim to have nothing in common with the rest. Surely the untouchables have so far acquired nothing from the teachings of Islam except perhaps a sense of self-respect to make them adopt this attitude. It is the social persecution on the part of the caste Hindus actuated by a desire to retain the unfortunate untouchables as their menial attendants that has driven the latter to this position. This is exactly what happened when the Muslims realised that they were being denied even the bare rights of citizenship. They formed a separate block and subsequent events added to the rigidity of the same. The result is the unfortunate *impasse* the we are witnessing to-day. It is thus clear that the Indian Muslims were driven to their present position by the social boycott on the part of those with whom they came to live as brothers. Had they been treated differently they would have framed one solid block with the other communities in spite of the difference in religious convictions, for they are taught to join hands even with infidels in common matters.
WARS AND JIHAD

I now come to a question which has been rendered very delicate by the critics who have not grasped it thoroughly. Allegations have at times been made to the effect that Islam preached Jihad and its followers revelled in wars. In order to get an insight into the true spirit of the laws of Islam on this subject I crave the reader’s indulgence a little.

There was a time when some visionaries tried to bring about Utopia in this world by ruling out wars completely from the world’s polity. But now such an effort can be regarded no better than following the will-o’-the-wisp. There are three motives in the main which can eventuate in wars, and these are self-aggrandisement, self-preservation and protection of the oppressed. A nation may feel quite contented and may have no ambitions for conquest, but it may be dragged into the arena on account of the insatiable appetite of a neighbouring people. Then again it may have to face a conflict just to protect a weak ally against the aggression of a stronger foe. If a nation does not respond to the last two calls it is either depraved or composed of cowards, and in either case can hardly pass for an ideal nation.

Before Islam, Hinduism preached the doctrine of Ahinsa, while Christ taught “Love thine enemies and forgive thine enemies,” “when you are smitten on the right turn your left cheek” and “give your cloak to the man who takes away your coat.” So far as these mottos are concerned they can decorate any walls, but no nation can live by impracticable mottos alone. In the case of Ahinsa we find that Lord Krishna, one of the staunchest advocates of the principle had himself to launch headlong into that fratricidal war in which his genius supported the Pandvas and his armies fought for the
Kauravas. In fact the towering act of Lord Krishna was the training he gave to Arjun in the art of war with a view to making him kill his cousin Duryodhan and the sermons so administered are his greatest work.

Coming to Christianity we find that Lord Christ himself realised the hollowness of the doctrine preached by him and is reported to have said, “Think not I am come to send peace on earth. I come not to send peace but sword” (Math. 10, 34). “Then said he (Jesus) unto them. But now he that hath a sword let him take it and likewise his script, and he that hath no sword let him sell his own garments and buy one” (Luke, 22: 36), and history shows that while his followers threw the first teachings to the winds, they carried out the behest in the latter teachings in letter and spirit. This shows that the author of the Sermon on the Mount realised that his gospel of peace could not be suitable for all times and he went to the other extreme ordaining for his followers that they could go about without clothes but not without a sword.

For over half a century Christian nations, though starving, have been making every provision for wars and the Great European War—that conflagration of the West which engulfed the entire world will stand as a monument of the world’s expenditure on wars. The League of Nations has been endeavouring to reduce the chances of wars in the future, and the Kellog Pact, the Washington Agreement, the World Disarmament Conference of Geneva and many other similar treaties effected in this connection have always exposed to human gaze the futility of these efforts directed at eradicating this necessary evil altogether. Why have all these conferences and treaties failed? It is because the root cause has not been reached. So long as the greed of nations to exploit others is there and is countenanced by others
equally anxious to acquire world supremacy, this question cannot be solved. Even a man who runs can see that while the representatives of each nation make lucidous speeches at these conferences for bringing about complete disarmament, to make wars impossible, the people whom they represent are busy in spending huge sums on forging newer and deadlier weapons for effacing all other nations from the face of the earth. Study the budget of any country and you will find that by far the biggest item of expenditure is for the upkeep of military, naval and air forces. Is this the way to eradicate wars? In fact Dr. Sir Iqbal has correctly satirised the constitution and the aims of the League of Nations by saying:—

(برفقد تا روش رزم درین بزم که
دردمدنان جهان طرح نو اندخخته اند
من ازین بیش ندام که کفن دژد جند
بهر تقسیم قبر انتخانی ساخته اند)

(In order to eradicate the evils of warfare from this ancient society the well-wishers of the world have chalked out a new line of action. But I know that this is nothing but a pact of shroud stealers to divide the graveyard between themselves.)

Then again these treaties, even if concluded, are binding so long as a party does not feel strong enough to treat them as mere "scraps of paper." The pages of history bear testimony to the fact that as soon as a nation or a country acquired the strength necessary to exploit others, it turned its back on treaties solemnly entered into. It is thus abundantly clear that these efforts are based on wrong basis and since all roads do not lead to Rome, the desired results cannot be achieved. Let the comity of nations honestly adopt the laws of Islam with regard to wars
and Jihad and they will find that this world which at present can be likened to a hell will turn into a paradise, wherein each man and each nation in obedience to the Quranic command:

(Eat and drink of the provisions of Allah and do not act corruptly in the land, making mischief) will go about his and its business unmolested physically or mentally by anybody else. Will the nations of the world take a bold step and accept this invitation?

Thus realising that war could not be entirely ruled out, Islam took the only possible step—that of regulating it with a view to reducing its terrors and horrors, and no polity based on common-sense could have done better. We read in the Holy Quran:

"Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed, and most surely Allah is well able to assist them. Those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah. And had there not been Allah's repelling some people by others, certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered, and surely Allah will help him who helps His cause; most surely Allah is Strong, Mighty" (22:40) and:

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

And

"And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits; surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits" (2:190).

These are the verses that give permission to Muslims to wage wars and when analysed these lay
down the following principles:—

1. War is not permissible as an act of aggression.

2. War is permissible only where it is to be fought in the name of God.

3. When an enemy attacks, the Muslims have to come out in self-defence.

4. When any man or nation whether Muslim or otherwise commits acts of aggression against women whether Muslims or not or when cloisters, churches, synagogues and mosques are threatened to be pulled down, it becomes the duty of every Muslim to fight against the oppressor.

Note for a moment the cosmopolitanism of Islam. It does not restrict the use of the sword for the protection of the mosque only. On the other hand mosque is mentioned last of all and a Muslim may have to draw sword against another Muslim for the protection of the weak and oppressed and the places of worship of other religions.

5. In no case are Muslims to exceed the limits on penalty of incurring God’s wrath.

It may perhaps be not out of place to make passing reference to the passive resistance movement practised by Mahatma Gandhi. Times out of number the Mahatma has given expression to the view that this doctrine has been adopted by him because active violence is not within his competence. Fundamentally he is not opposed to bloodshed where it can lead to the goal. While leaving the shores of India to join the Round Table Conference the Mahatma opined that if on his return the Indian youth thought that he had not played the game fairly, they would be within their rights to kill him and that this would be no violation of the rules of non-violence. Thus outwardly there may be a thousand claims to an abstract negation of bloodshed but in reality the
laws promulgated by Islam are being followed by all advancing countries.

Then Islam had the benefit of seeing these teachings put into practice by the Prophet himself. The Prophet was in fact so keen on avoiding wars that at times his followers suspected a clothed confession of weakness in the terms to which their leader agreed. Study the life of the Prophet and you will find that on many occasions, in spite of the fitness to take up the gauntlet, he accepted terms regarded as humiliating simply to avoid bloodshed. The flight from Mecca, the innumerable treaties with the non-Muslims and the peace terms accepted at Hudabia are ample proofs of this assertion. Where, however, the Prophet did accept a challenge it was in self-defence, and when he came out victorious he acquitted himself so nobly that Bosworth Smith had to acknowledge, “I am not aware that the Saracens in their full career of conquest deliberately burnt a single city—whether as a precautionary measure or to support their prestige or to glut their revenge.” I shall refer here only to the conquest of Mecca. The Prophet had to leave Mecca, on account of the incessant persecution of himself and his followers. Not content with this, the Meccans tried to create trouble for him in Medina and for several years the Muslims were allowed no rest. When the Prophet came to Mecca on the occasion of the annual pilgrimage, he was denied access. But when by force of arms he conquered Mecca see how he entered the city as a conqueror. Says Gibbon, “The return of Marius and Sylla was stained with the blood of the Romans; the revenge of Mohammad was stimulated with religious zeal, and his injured followers were eager to execute or prevent the order of massacre. Instead of indulging their passions and his own, the victorious exile forgave the guilt and united the
factions of Mecca. The chiefs of the Koreish were prostrate at his feet. 'What mercy can you expect from the man you have wronged?' 'We confide in the generosity of our kinsmen.' 'And you shall not confide in vain; begone. You are safe, you are free.'"

The noble example set by the Prophet was followed by the Muslims at all times and in all climes. About four hundred years after the Prophet's death, we find Salahuddin engaged in a life and death struggle with the entire Christian world. But mark the nobility of character that loomed large in spite of the war period. Richard, the Lion-hearted, fell seriously ill during one of his struggles against Salahuddin and his physician lost all hopes. Salahuddin on hearing of this news sent his own physician along with precious medicines which cured the dying King. Jerusalem has witnessed several pitched battles between the Muslims and Christians and I leave it to Bosworth Smith to give in his own words the manner in which the Muslims behaved on being victorious. He says: "Jerusalem capitulated to Omar, the third Khalifa (Note: Umar was the second Khalifa) after a protracted blockade in the year 637. No property was destroyed except in the inevitable operations of the siege, and not a drop of blood was shed except on the field of battle. Omar entered the city with the Patriarch, conversing amicably about its history. At the hour of prayer, he was invited by the Patriarch to worship in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but he refused to do so for fear that his descendants might claim a similar right and so the freedom of religious worship, which he wished to secure to the inhabitants by the articles of capitulation, might be endangered. In the year 1099 the Holy City fell before the arms of the (Christian) crusaders after a much shorter siege. It was taken
by storm, and (after a proclamation of general amnesty) for 3 days there was an indiscriminate slaughter of men, women, and children; 70,000 Musalmans were put to the sword, 10,000 of them in the mosque of Omar itself.........This comes not from an enemy but from the monkish historian, an eyewitness and a partaker of what he relates, Foulcher of Chartres. Raymond of Agiles and Daimbert, Archbishop of Pisa, gave similar details, and all with approval. The city itself was pillaged; but the turn of the Saracens came once more in the year 1188. The breach was already forced, when the great Salahuddin retracted a hasty vow he had made to avenge the innocent blood that had been shed when the city had been sacked by the Crusaders, and took not Godfrey de Bouillon but Omar for his model. No blood was shed, and the captives were allowed to ransom themselves, the Frankish Christians leaving the city, the Eastern Christians continuing to reside there in peace.” Gibbon forgot to say that such of the captives who had no money to purchase their liberty were liberated at the expense of their victor, for the great Salahuddin paid for them out of his own pocket.

As stated above Islam expects Muslims to be prepared for Jihad. But Jihad does not mean a wanton desire for blood as has been distorted by propagandists in India and abroad. What a picture of Jihad has been drawn by these propagandists is amply illustrated by Akbar in his well-known poem "برق كليمسا " After giving details of the charms of a young Christian girl whom the poet met one night in the Church he says:

عرش كي ميي نيه كه كه كله كيه ك طولت كه بيار دولت و فورت و امان تره و قيدميس پنه نثار
تو اگر ہے وفا بانہ میں میری ہو جائی
ساری دنیا سے میرے قلب کو سیری ہو جائی
شوق کے چوہت میں میری چوڑو جوزبان یون کہوئی
nاز اور انداز سے تھوری کو قہوہا کر بولی

غیر ممکن ہے منجنین انس مسلمانوں سے
بوٹھ انطیق ہیاس قوم کے افسانوں سے
لن توانائی کی یہ لیتے ہیں اور میزی بن کر
جلی سرحد پہ چیا کوٹیں ہیں غازی بین کر
کوئی بننے ہے جومیہدی تو ہکو جاتی ہیں
آگ میں کوٹی ہیں توب سے لزجتی ہیں

گل کہلازی کوئی میمن میں تو اترا جالیوں
پائیں سلامان ایکم تو قیامت دہائیوں
مطمئن ہو کوئی کیونکہ یہہ ہیں نیک نیک نہاد
ہیں هنزؤ ان کی رگون میں اثر حکم جہاد

دشمن صبر کی نظر میں لگاؤہ پاہیاَ
کا مبایعہ کی دل زار نآہم پاہیاَ

عرش میں یہ کہ اعلیجت جان راہت روح
اب زمانا پہ نہیں ہے اثر آدم و نوح

شجر طور یا اس طرح میں پودا ہی نہیں
گیسوٹری حورا یا اس طرح میں سودا ہی نہیں
اب کہانی دفع میں باقی ہیں براق و رفرف
نکاتی بندہ گئی ہی قوم کی انتجن کی طرف

ہم میں باقی نہیں اب خالد جانباز کا رنگ
دل پہ غلبہ ہے فقط حافظ شہرزال کا رنگ

یہاں نہ وہ نعرہ تکیب نہ وہ جوش سپہا
سپر کسپ آپ ہی پر پہتھرہی سبجان اتھ
جوہر تب گھیا نصیب کے اترو ہے نثار
نور ایمان کا تونہ آگیہو روا پہ نثار

انہوںہی مگر صفحہ مختصر سر به بہت بد و نیک
دو لیلا هو رہے ہیں کہتی ہیں اتھا کی ایک
The conception of the institution of Jihad as conveyed by the non-Muslim propagandists is so distorted that we can not blame anybody who has not made an independent study of Islam if he entertains the acutest repulsion against this religion. To be frank, if the teachings were to be as horrid as these are painted, 90% of the modern educated Muslim youths would have abjured their faith in favour of atheism, and perhaps I would have been in the foremost rank of the apostates. Since this question is rather of importance I shall have to deal with it as a separate clause.

The word Jihad has been derived from *Jihd* which means to exert yourself to the utmost. This term is used in Arabic in different connections but all convey the same sense. For instance, if you milk a cow of its last drop of milk it would be termed جهاد الليم and if a man is extremely hungry he would be in a state of جهود الطعام. If a people are forced to suffer a life of unbearable troubles and with a view to save themselves from the aggressors they make a revolt, they are supposed to have gone to Jihad. In fact it denotes a state of mind in which after undergoing untold sufferings, a man is forced to resort in self-defence to measures not necessarily warlike. In our daily life we find people saying that they wish to
carry on a Jihad against drinking and smoking or against foreign goods. But this does not mean that they intend taking up arms against anybody. Thus by inculcating the spirit of Jihad Islam rendered a great service to humanity. It substituted Jihad for Harab which means warfare pure and simple. I have quoted above a verse:

وقاتلوا في سبيل الله الذين يقاتلونكم ولا تعتدوا ان الله لا يحب المعتدين *

All commentators are agreed that this revelation was made at the time when the Muslims had been subjected to unheard of atrocities before the battle of Badr. Finding Mecca too hot for them on account of the incessant persecutions of the Koreish, the Muslims left their hearth and home and went over to Medina thinking that there they will have a peaceful life. But the Koreish falsified their hopes and moved towards Medina to efface Islam and Muslims from this earth. Under these circumstances a band of 313 badly equipped Muslims was ordered to seek Jihad against a well trained and fully equipped army of 1,300 strong. The situation was so critical that seeing the enemies’ prowess, the Prophet threw himself before his Creator and cried:

اللهم ان اهلكت هذا لعصابة فلن تعبد في الأرض  آبدا *

(O my Lord! if this small band of thy worshippers is killed, there would be nobody on earth to remember Thee for ever.) These circumstances clearly show what the term Jihad means and how it is to work in practice. It is an institution which enjoins on every Muslim to sacrifice his all for the protection of the weak and the oppressed whether Muslims or not. He is in duty bound to see that oppression and
injustice, in whatever form, are stopped, and if in order to secure this end, he fights the aggressor, he is said to be engaged in *جهاد في سبيل الله* (Jihad in the name of God). Not long ago some misguided Muslims of India were led to believe that Jihad had become a necessity for them. Did they take up arms against the Government? No, they quietly left their homes to seek shelter elsewhere. This amply illustrates that in spite of the influx of time and the wrong interpretation placed on the Quranic text by friend and foe the Muslims still know what the term Jihad really signifies. Can any man with a shadow of justice in him still say that by laying down the institution of Jihad, Islam did anything besides curtailing the evils of warfare and is this not the greatest service rendered to the cause of universal peace? Jihad, in short, is an institution for the protection of the oppressed against the aggression of the tyrant and it is on this account that one who goes to Jihad is called *Ghazi* and holds a position far superior to one who has spent his whole life in prayer and meditation. I wish and pray that the entire world may accept this teaching of Jihad so that a lasting peace may be concluded in the world under which no man will be allowed to play the tyrant in any form. This will be heaven on earth.

**TOLERATION AND PROPAGATION OF FAITH**

It has sometimes been asserted that Islam was propagated by sword and that this has created a gulf between Muslims and the rest. I can not go into details at this time but I make bold to challenge any man to prove the truth of this allegation. The Magna Charta of the freedom of choice of religion is contained in the Quranic text *إِذَا اكْرَاهُ فِي الْدِّينِ* (There is no compulsion in religion). It may be that some misguided Muslims may have at times, misinterpreted
the rule of the Quran but we have the unqualified testimony of Lothrop Stoddard who says, "The rise of Islam is perhaps the most amazing event in history. The closer we examine this development, the more extraordinary does it appear. The other great religions won their way slowly, by painful struggle, and finally triumphed with the aid of powerful monarchs converted to the new faith; Christianity had its Constantine, Buddhism its Asoka, and Zoroastrianism its Cyrus, each lending to his chosen cult the mighty force of secular authority. Not so Islam." Lothrop Stoddard calls it amazing. I would say that the rise of Islam cannot be styled as an amazing event. On the contrary if Islam with such high ideals of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God were not to gain ground, it would have been an amazing circumstance indeed. The spread of Islam was occasioned by its intrinsic worth and by the chaste lives and selfless devotion of its votaries to the cause of humanity. In India it was through the saintly lives of divines like Khawaja Mu'in-ud-Din Ajmeri, Sayyed Ali Hajweri (Data Sahib), Qalandar Sahib and others, that Islam got numberless converts. Had Islam been propagated by force the suburbs of Delhi which was the seat of the Muslim Government for centuries together would have seen no non-Muslim to-day. But we find that Delhi and its suburbs are all populated by non-Muslims. Even now every day we find Hindus and Christians coming into the fold of Islam. Muslims are poor and powerless yet the teachings of Islam are a magnet for all seekers after truth. It is no fantastic statement on the part of Bernard Shaw that before long the whole of Europe, and England in particular, will turn Muslim. Has this statement emanated from this great thinker because any threat was held out to him by any Muslim potentate? No, he feels that the laws of
Islam are the laws of nature and these must be accepted. Truly speaking, the majority of the Europeans are in fact Muslims. They are only shy of confessing it, or being still under the spell of false propaganda, they do not know that Islam is their religion. Every European that declares his conversion to Islam says that he has been a Muslim for years together although he did not know it.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

This is one of the cardinal principles of Islam and its true conception is an important factor in moulding the life of man. Laws which have no sanction have no binding force and cannot command any respect. Thus in order to enforce the laws that I have discussed above, there should have been some sanction behind these and the life after death is the place or period when actions in this life are to be judged and reward or blame apportioned. Thus a Musalman cannot turn his back on the commandments of the Lord as he knows that he is to answer for all lapses on his part. We are taught that from the time we get to the age of discretion every act of ours is being preserved, and that on the Day of Judgment we shall have the entire sheet placed before our eyes when we shall be given credit for good deeds and punished for bad ones. Thus from childhood a Muslim has to guard against evil. He is ordered to obey the laws of God. Every religion believes in the accountability of action but the results are different. A Hindu need not worry himself about his actions because under the laws of Manu the last period of his life, say after 60, is to be devoted to meditation and prayer when all sins of omissions and commissions will be withheld. Till he attains that age he can do what
he likes. Similarly a Christian can forget all about the Day of Judgment because Lord Christ's crucifixion condoned the sins of all his followers. Not so in Islam. It does not set apart any period for seeking salvation and nor does it believe in the theory of atonement through others. Every man is responsible for his actions. Says the Quran:

من اهتدى فانما يهتدى لنفسه - و من ضل فانما يضل عليه -
ولا تذر وزرة وزرا اخراى *

(Whoever goes aright, for his own soul does he go aright; and whoever goes astray, to his detriment only does he go astray; nor can the bearer of a burden bear the burden of another—(17 : 15). To illustrate this the Prophet told his daughter Fatima that her parentage could not be an asset for her on the Day of Judgment. Islam believes in giving a practical shape to its teachings in every-day life. This is why in Islam there is no distinction between religion and politics and religion and worldly life. He who leads this life best is the best Muslim. A man who goes to the mosque five times a day, fasts throughout Ramzan and even performs the Haj cannot be a true Muslim if as a citizen of the world he does not conform to the rules laid down by Islam and injures anybody physically or mentally. Says a mystic poet of Islam:

هزار زهد ورياضت هزار استغفار
هزار طاعت شبها هزار بيداري
قبول نبيست اگرخاطره، بيازاري

(Any amount of piety and meditation, a thousand days of fasting and a thousand prayers each day accompanied by a thousand wasteful nights of devotion will not be accountable to the Lord if thou hast injured the feelings of one individual.) This is why every Muslim from his very childhood must lead a life
according to the injunctions of his religion, and not depend on the morrow which may never dawn at all. His day to day life must be a practical demonstration of the laws promulgated for his observance.

These are in short the teachings of Islam. To put in a sentence and as suggested by the Prophet in his saying: ﷺ ضرر ولا ضرار في الإسلام: "Help and not fight, assimilation and not destruction, harmony and peace and not dissension." Has any other religion done so much to bring about universal and lasting peace on earth and was it a mere flight of imagination on the part of the Prophet to adopt the title of رحمة العالمين (a blessing for the entire universe) that the Lord on High had conferred on him?