MUHAMMAD
THE
SIGN OF GOD
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PUBLISHED BY
THE "MUSLIM BOOK SOCIETY"
AZEEZ MANZIL, LAHORE,
(PANJAB.)

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MUHAMMAD THE SIGN OF GOD

The Idea of God and His Signs.

There have been stages in the life of man—stages of darkness, of infancy—stages of light and progress. During all these stages, as far as we know, the idea of God, in some form or other, has been present in the human mind. Man has always been conscious of a Being or Beings higher and more powerful than himself. He bowed to that Power either in fear or in gratitude. At first the prompting idea of reverence to God or gods was fear. Anything mighty and grand appealed to human nature and inspired an awe. Mountains were worshipped, also trees, rivers, and planets. All these were supposed to represent gods or goddesses. The most perfect mythology is that of the Hindus. They believed that every element, every power—physical or mental—represented a god or goddess. Be it said to their credit that, unlike the Christians of our day, they believed not only in man-gods but also in woman-goddesses. Music had its own goddess, War its
own, Peace its own, and so forth. Music was the sign of one goddess, physical beauty the sign of the other; fire of one, water of another, and so on. Later on, when great Hindu Rishis were born and tried to purify the Hindu mythology, as did Socrates try to improve Grecian mythology, the Hindu polytheism developed into a sort of monotheism on almost the same principles as the Christians consider their trinitarian conceptions to be in fact unitarian. The Hindus began to consider all the various manifestations, all the different signs to be in reality those of only one deity—Brahma or Om.

In the infancy of human intellect anything novel, grand, or powerful and useful became the sign of some god or goddess behind it.

Not long ago some Hindus, with of course very crude intellect, took the steam engine when they first saw it, to be a sign of some deity. The Halley's comet when it appeared last was taken to be an ominous sign by natives of Europe in certain parts of the Continent. But on the other hand there have been scientists and philosophers who have argued and asserted that even this whole of the universe is not a
sign of any deity. The number of such scientists and philosophers has not been very large—it is not very large even to-day; but they have been always using logic, philosophy, and scientific knowledge to deny, or at least to throw doubt on, the existence of a God or gods. To a certain extent the issue has been narrowed now.

Only One God.

Due to the great purifying influence of Islam the idea of multiplicity of gods is being rejected by all thinking theologians as by philosophers. The Hindus of to-day are turning towards Brahma Samajism, their Christian brothers towards Unitarianism. As regards the philosophers, even they admit:—

"The reason, then, why monotheism may be accepted as the representative of theism in the abstract is not so much because it is the theism of all the more improved portions of the human race, as because it is the only theism which can claim for itself any footing on scientific ground. Every other theory of the government of the universe by supernatural beings is inconsistent, either with the carrying on of that government
through a continual series of natural antecedents according to fixed laws, or with the interdependence of each of these series upon all the rest, which are the two most general results of science:"

From this it must not be inferred that the philosophers and scientists accept God. They find it difficult, almost impossible, to definitely deny the existence of God. Huxley has said something to this effect, that it was difficult to prove the existence of God but it was more difficult to prove that He did not exist. The philosophers and scientists simply demand an undeniable sign of God.

**Demand for the Sign.**

Those who are not very religiously inclined, those who find no time or no inclination to enter into spiritual exercises, say that if God was omnipotent He could have given some such unmistakable and permanent sign that the most sceptic of His creatures could not close their eyes to it. If you say that all nature is a sign of God’s existence, His power, and His love to mankind they bring out arguments to deny

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1 Mill’s “Three Essays on Religion,” page 60.
The credit of creation they give to atoms or electrons. Against the argument of First Cause they say that the First Cause argument is in itself of no value for the establishment of theism; because no cause is needed for the existence of that which has no beginning: and both matter and force have had, so far as man's experience can teach him, no beginning—which cannot be said of mind.

The argument from the general consent of mankind is also set aside on the basis that to a thinker the argument from other people's opinion has little weight.

Mill denies that the argument from consciousness can be supported by any "logical process".

The most powerful argument which theologians have with them to prove the existence of God and His attributes is from the marks of design in Nature.

Mill concedes that the adaptations in Nature afford a large balance of probability in favour of creation by intelligence. But by later day scientists and philosophers even that much is denied. They argue from those theories—and
they are nothing more than theories which do not fully satisfy unbiased minds—which were shaped by Darwin like the "survival of the fittest" and the influence of heredity, that even the masterpiece of the work of nature—man—is but an evolved cell set on its way to evolution by some unfathomable accident and worked up by certain laws which they seem to have diagnosed and given the name of "natural selection," "survival of the fittest," etc., to reach the stage of a kind of ape, and from ape to Darwins and Haeckels, etc.

The arguments of these philosophers and scientists are not in themselves unanswerable. There is no doubt that no scientist, no philosopher, no atheist has yet been able to give such a substitute for God as would satisfy even an atheistic mind. It is for that reason that atheism is on the wane. An avowed atheist would most probably be laughed at by his own scientific and philosophical confreres. Sceptics nowadays call themselves Agnostics. Agnosticism had existed before also. It seems that Agnosticism is a sign of the weakening of the obstinacy of denying the existence of God. It is only a stage separated from the belief in the
existence of God. But from the very nature of God Himself it is difficult to definitely change the want of knowledge of the agnostics into knowledge.

These persons want a proof of God to be as definite as that of $2 + 3 = 5$. They forget that $2 + 3 = 5$ is correct only when we take it for granted that two represents one particular quantity and three another.

Euclid built up a very useful and exact science, but the basis of that science was only such definitions of point and line as can hardly even be conceived. If they be rejected as absurd the whole science falls to the ground.

**God can only be Known through Signs.**

It is not in the power of any person to take another by the hand and draw him into the presence of God so as to convince him on the evidence of his own eyes as to the existence of God. Man is finite. He is physical. Even his soul is not quite so refined, ethereal, immaterial, as that Infinite, Being who is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, without beginning and without end. It is difficult to prove the existence by argument alone because human
power of expression is limited; it is even defective. God is absolutely unique. There is nothing like unto Him. Man can find no analogy to convey the idea of His attributes. Even ordinary spiritual matters, as the continuance of life after death, cannot be explained by words. Sometimes even that which you know to be the truth you cannot prove in a law court. Able lawyers have many a time substantiated facts by their powerful arguments which were not really true. Maulana Rumi says that the feet of those who depend upon verbal arguments only to establish some truth are wooden, and wooden feet, after all, are not very desirable.

It is true that there are some spiritual means through which man becomes more convinced of the existence of God than of his own. He, as it were, sees Him, hears Him. His heart feels for Him a love which it does not feel for anything else. Ali—the fourth Khalifa of Muhammad—said that if the veil that conceals the Author of the universe were to be removed that would add nothing to his conviction because he was already fully convinced of the existence and sublimity of God.
But spiritual conviction alone is not a sufficient sign because it is not general, and it cannot be general. Nor can supernatural signs give complete satisfaction to everybody.

MIRACLES NOT SATISFACTORY SIGNS.

In days gone by when any messenger came from God he worked some miracles as a sign of his messengership. But the effect of the miracles could not but have been very transitory and the scope of influences extremely limited. Besides this, miracles might have proved the messenger's credentials, but they could not even at their best be convincing signs of the existence of God. When all these wonderful natural things in the universe do not satisfy sceptics how could supernatural things? What could be more wonderful than man himself, his whole organism as well as individual organs? The lines on the thumb of every man are different. Is this not a miracle? Or what miracle can be more wonderful than human thought? If human thought cannot satisfy persons of the existence of God, how can any miracle? Miracles were only meant to convince the people of the place and of the age of the
spiritual powers and purifications of the man who was sent for their guidance for the time being. Jesus is said to have been a great wonder-worker, yet what was the effect of those miracles? Not very appreciable at all. People, instead of getting convinced of the existence of God, rejected Jesus himself in spite of his curing the lepers and raising the dead. Nay, the most wonderful part of it all was that those persons who were already convinced of the existence of God—of one almighty God—opposed Jesus most in spite of his miracles, and insulted him, abused him, and ultimately crucified him. Jesus, who was said to raise the dead to life, could not save himself from the cross. Jesus himself is said to have given up "the ghost" with the cry of "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani" on his lips.

If God had meant miracles to be His signs then He would have gifted one of those miracle-workers eternal life in human flesh and blood to be present in every age and to go to every people to convince them of his spiritual power and of the existence of God. But he has not done so. Even Jesus, who is said to have
himself been raised from death, bid himself in celestial regions instead of remaining on our terra firma to be of some help to us who have come 1,900 years after him and to whom he has become nothing much more than a myth—so much so that some European savants deny his very existence.

Another objection in making miracles as signs is that why God should neglect human reason—which is the best gift given to man? Why some such sign be not sent which would satisfy human reason? Why He would not send a speaking, living, guiding sign—a sign which would manifest not only the existence of God but also his mercy and might, which would demonstrate that a belief in God secures for man not only some spiritual edification but also his physical and material progress, his moral and mental elevation?

There was a time when an earthquake, a comet, or, simpler still, some abnormally developed cow or bird was considered to be a sufficient sign of the Divinity. After this came men with miracles as signs or credentials from God. But now even the miracles fail to satisfy
man. Many old-time miracles can be performed by ordinary men. Solomon's miracle was to be able to fly about on a sort of throne. We have our aeroplanes and zeppelins. We have our telegraphs, telephones, electricity, gramophone, very effective medicines, etc., with which we can do many such wonders that would have been taken to be greatest miracles a generation back.

Lately in Zanzibar a fish has been found on the tail of which the Arabic words shan Allah (glory of God) are clearly discernible. But if a man cannot be impressed of the glory of God by seeing the glaring sun over his head every day, how can the writing on the fin of a fish impress him?

And suppose for a minute that we did come to believe by means of some miracle in the existence of a superior power which can work supernatural wonders, what difference can that mere belief make in us—or why should it please God if one of His handiwork believed in Him. God cannot gain anything Himself by our belief in Him. He, if He is Almighty God, should not profit by our "burnt-offerings," our ado-
rations. If God wants us to believe in him, if He sends signs for us to be able to believe in him, it is simply because by so doing we are perfected and elevated. If we invent a machinery for a certain object we can only be satisfied if that machinery serves that object. God sends us His signs to enable us to serve the object for which we have been created or evolved, to make use of our organs and passions rightly. A miracle cannot teach us, guide us on that path which would help us in attaining the object for which we were created. Man can best understand man, man can best guide man.

Man must be the Sign.

Thus after considering the whole question one is forced to come to the conclusion that if God meant an effective, universal, guiding and permanent sign in this world to convince human beings of His own mercy and might, He could not but select a man for it. Only a man could be intelligible to his fellow beings. Only a man could exemplify in his person and by his actions those attributes of God which have great influence upon humanity. Only a
man could demonstrate that the Author of this world has given man such potentialities that he can himself be the vicegerent of the Almighty Creator on this earth, and that human beings could find everything to their satisfaction on this very globe if they rightly understood the object of their creation and if they worked on the way which He had revealed to him whom he meant to be His sign.

Incarnations of God or sons and daughters of God cannot be the right sign. These would rather be marks of His degradation and would turn the minds of sensible people from God more than towards Him. There is no reason why the Almighty God should make a sign of Himself by degrading himself and adopting the shape of a man or begetting a son or daughter? God would rather elevate man and endow him with spiritual and physical as well as intellectual gifts to make him His sign than lower Himself down to the level of man—His creation.

**Requisites of being the Sign.**

Among men also that man alone could be the sign of God who was the greatest.
The necessary requisites might be given thus:—

(1) The man who is to be the sign should proclaim that he has come for all mankind, for the world, to establish a belief in the existence, unity, might, and mercy of God.

(2) There should be no mystery about the man, and he should not try to impose the belief on his brothers by exciting their superstition, but should appeal to their reason and succeed in his own life and by his own example in making nations worshippers of God.

(3) The man should himself prove to be the greatest man by his worth; should be the best model for others; should leave some uncorrupted and permanent guidance for the coming generations, and should be universal.

(4) He should give practical demonstration that by the belief in God and by treating in His way as shown by him, man could achieve not only a spiritual edification but also physical, mental, and moral good—good for the individual, for society, for nation, for the whole of humanity.

**Four Men of Greatest Influence.**

The world has seen four men whose influence upon mankind has been deepest and most
lasting. They are (1) Buddha, (2) Moses, (3) Jesus, (4) Muhammad.

Buddha was, no doubt, a wonderful man. He had raised himself almost to the highest point. He had achieved Nirvana, or oneness with God. He taught high and noble ethics, no doubt. He excelled Jesus in this respect, that while Jesus only preached, he practised himself what he preached. He left his kingdom, his wife, and his relatives for his self-elevation. His was a great sacrifice. He devoted himself wholly and solely to self-elevation and succeeded in reaching a high place. But he could have never been meant to be the sign or model for the whole humanity. If all mankind were to follow him there would be no mankind left. His life of celibacy and detachment from the world, without which he himself could not achieve his end, if followed by all of us our race would be finished in a very short time. Man might or might not get to Nirvana, but he would lose this world without any doubt. Man has been allotted the duty of improving this world as well as of reaching his ideal. If all of us went up to Nirvana, this world would
lose its masterpiece. Surely God could not mean this, and Buddha could not be the sign for all humanity.

Moses could be certainly a better sign. He taught the people to worship God—only one God. He laid down rules for their guidance. He demonstrated practically that by worshipping God, man could profit himself. But the mission of Moses was very limited indeed. He claimed to be the Prophet of only one race. He was the sign for that race alone. He was not universal, and the effect of his teaching was too worldly, too rigid, and very restricted in its beneficence.

Of great men he who could represent God the least of all was Jesus. Jesus was the most excellent type of a humble, meek man, full of love for God and for man, but he could by no means be the sign God meant to send to the world to impress the people with his Omnipotence. Christ could not represent the All-Powerful King, the Universal Ruler, the Creator, the Master. A man who is vanquished by his enemies, a man who is forced to leave his mission unaccomplished, a man who at his last moment felt convinced that God had forsaken
him, a man whose incompetence and helplessness was mocked at and railed at while on the cross with a crown of thorns on his head, his head stooping, his ribs pierced, his hands nailed, could not be the sign of God.

The triumph of Moses was limited indeed, yet it was a triumph. He faced his enemies. He triumphantly carried his fellow-Israelites and brethren from bondage and slavery. Jesus could not even restore the greatness and the kingdom of the nation to whom he was sent.

The scope and mission of Jesus was even more limited than that of Moses. He preached what he did not or could not practise himself. While he himself could not spread his Gospel even among the Jews, he is said to have charged his disciples when he himself was going up to heaven, to spread it to the tribes at large. His mission in his own words was very restricted. He said:—

"I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of Israel" (Matt. xv. 24). We do not know whether he found those lost sheep of Israel or not, but this much we do know, that in the eyes of that sheep of Israel, which was not lost, he was
worthy of crucifixion, and that he failed to restore any tribe of Israel or of any other race to greatness in his own life.

God's object of making man the sign is vitiated, it is altogether lost, if occasion is left for men to take him to be above themselves—a God or Son of God. The mystification in which the birth and the death and the life of Jesus are involved is in itself a proof that he was not meant to be the sign. He has left no permanent record of himself or of his teachings. He might have convinced people of the existence of God or of His mercy by doing miracles 1,900 years ago, but he cannot satisfy anybody now.

When we come to Muhammad we find that he and he alone fulfilled in its entirety in his own person, by his own deeds, the requirements of the sign of God. If man is the masterpiece of God, Muhammad was the masterpiece in that masterpiece. He was the most perfect man, the greatest man, the best man, and if a man was to be the sign of God he could be no other than Muhammad (peace be upon him). He combined in him and in his life the best that had been possessed and that could be possessed by all the great men
and mighty geniuses of the world. Muhammad (may peace be on him, his friends and followers!) is the grandest and most unique personage in history. As a Prophet, a reformer, a monarch, a statesman, a legislator, an aristocrat, a friend, a husband, a father, a soldier, a recluse, a shepherd, and humble orphan—a man full of physical vigour and spiritual power, Muhammad stands head and shoulders over all men of all ages, at all times. There has been no person the details of whose life have been so minutely investigated and chronicled, and there is no man who, in spite of that close scrutiny of even the most private incidents of his life, has so commanded respect and admiration even from bigoted and prejudiced people. Men with far less qualifications, with no trustworthy record of their life, in spite of that mysteriousness which surrounds their life, and life-work, have been deified; but mighty Muhammad—one who without doubt can be called super-man, one who in his person represents most of the attributes which humanity assigns to God—he through his own imperative wish and command has remained up to this day, even to those of
his millions of followers who love him more than they love anybody or anything in this world, a mere man. If there was ever a man who deserved to be worshipped by his fellow-beings he was Muhammad—and Muhammad alone of all the men known to history. But he himself proclaimed *Inaama ana basharum mislukum*: “I am only a man like you.” Muslims cherish those words as they cherish every other word which fell from those adorable lips.

Muhammad was not like a meteor which shines for a moment and illuminates the sky. He was like a glaring sun—more brilliant than a sun—a sun that began to shine day and night, thirteen centuries ago, a sun that shines to-day, night and day, a sun that shall continue to shine as an undying sign of the glory of God even after the material luminary we see every day over our head gets dark for ever and ever.

Muhammad’s Proclamation of His Mission.

Muhammad had passed full forty years of his earthly life before the call came—before he was selected to be the sign of God to represent His goodness to humanity and to demonstrate His greatness and might.
The wordings of the call, which can but poorly translated as follows, are significant:

Read in the name of thy Lord, who hath created (all things); who hath created man from a clot of blood. Read, for thy Lord is most generous, who hath taught the use of the pen, and teacheth man what he knew not.

This was the first lesson to an untutored man of forty in an age when it could not be guessed at all how “the use of the pen” and teaching “man what he knew not” would be the most potent and marvellous signs of God’s generosity to man, and how Muhammad himself would be the greatest and best instrument for that progress which man was destined to make through the use of the pen and the advancement of his knowledge.

Three years later the mandate given to Muhammad was this: —

O thou, enwrapped in the mantle!
Arise and warn!
Thy Lord—magnify him!
Thy raiment—purify it!
The abomination—flee it!

1 Al-Qur-an, chap. xcv.
And bestow not favours with a view to receive more in return.

And for thy Lord wait thou patiently.  

Muhammad was to call men to the worship of the God of not any particular tribe or race but to the worship of the Rabbulalamin—the Lord of the worlds. Muhammad was to be the sign of God, not for any single race or country, but he was to be Rahmatullilalamin—the mercy for the worlds.

Muhammad proclaimed the Unity of God, the beneficences and mercy of God and the omnipotence of God, and when threatened by his countrymen, who demanded of him to stop his preaching, he defiantly said:

“If they bring the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, still I shall not stop in the mission which has been assigned to me.”

Muhammad after the proclamation of his mission, was persecuted most terribly. Many a time he almost lost his life. His own relatives and tribesmen put a heavy price on his head. He was single-handed, and the whole country

2 Al-Qur-an, chap. lxxiv.
3 "Islam, its Genius and Mission": J. J. Lake and Abulfida.
was against him. Even when he got a few adherents from those who knew him best, and even his secrets as his own wife Khadija and his cousin Ali and his slave Zaid and his friend Abu Bakr, the odds against him were tremendously great. But Muhammad was meant to be a sign of the greatness and might of God. He was to demonstrate that God is all-powerful and can work out deliberately and designedly His object, even through such an insignificant instrument as man is. J. J. Lake admits: We do not believe Muhammad to have been a Prophet, but we cannot help acknowledging that he was an instrument raised up by Providence to check the idolatry, pagan and Christian, then prevailing so universally.

Muhammad, whose father had died before he was born, whose mother died when he was only six years old, Muhammad who was born in a barren country which had been inhabited by most uncivilized peoples, who worshipped 365 idols, Muhammad who had against him even the

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1 One wonders what a queer conception of prophet-hood is in the mind of this author. If Muhammad was raised by God to work out the reformation admitted by Lake, and succeeded in his mission, does it not sum up what prophethood entirely means? —Ed.
elements of nature, proclaimed that he was sent to establish the doctrine of the Unity of God on this earth, and to guide people to greatness in every respect, and he did not die until he had fully accomplished all and more than all what he had proclaimed.

No Mystery about Muhammad's Life.

Muhammad's birth was not involved in any sort of mystery as was that of Krishna or Buddha or Jesus. He was meant to be the sign of God to man, to impress upon men the goodness of God to them. Man alone could be best teacher to man. If a man wants to take lessons in running, he engages a man to teach him, not a horse, although the horse can run much faster than the man. So when it was designed to teach goodness to man a man was sent to do it not an angel, nor a son or daughter of God, nor did God himself come down.

It was demonstrated in the person of Muhammad that a plain man could be a much better sign of God, and could do more good to his fellow-beings than a mystified demi-god or a supposed God-incarnate. Muhammad was a plain man—a plain Warner.
He was born in Mecca, in April, in the year 569 of the Christian era. He was of the valiant and illustrious tribe of Quraish. Hasham, the progenitor of Muhammad, was a great benefactor of Mecca and the guardian of Ka’aba, the great shrine of Arabian pilgrimage and worship, the custody of which was confided to none but the most honourable tribes and families.¹

In fact the guardianship of Ka’aba was connected with civil dignities and privileges, and gave the holder of it the control of the sacred city. Even the family of the wet-nurse of Muhammad, the Banisad, dated from the most remote antiquity.

On the seventh day of the birth of Muhammad his grand-father, Abdul Muttalib, gave a feast to the principal Quaraishites, at which he presented the child as the dawning glory of their race, and gave him the name of Muhammad—the praised one.

Fortunately even the pre-prophetic life of Muhammad is before us. The life of great men generally begins to be reckoned from the moment that their greatness is acknowledged.

¹ "Mahomet and his Successors," by W. Irving.
That was not the case with Muhammad. His early life and character is also well known. His travels with his uncle and as an agent of the lady who later became his wife, have all been recorded. We know that his moral worth gave him great influence in the community and country. The historian Abulfeda says that Allah had endowed him with every gift necessary to accomplish and adorn an honest man. He was full and sincere; so free from every evil thought that he was commonly known by the name of Al-Almin, or the Faithful. The great confidence reposed in his judgment and probity caused him to be frequently referred to as arbiter in disputes between his townsmen.  

Historians relate the following remarkable incident:

The sacred temple of Ka’aba once caught fire and had to be repaired afterwards. Dispute arose among the people as to which person should be given the great honour of replacing the Black Stone that was highly reverenced by all. At last they agreed to abide by the decision of the first person who entered by the gate,

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2 “Mahomet and his Successor,” by W. Irving.
Al-Haram. It so happened that the first person to enter was the universally respected and trusted Al-Amin-Muhammad, and Providence thus arranged in that early period of his life to lay down the principle of representation and to make the sacred stone an emblem of constitutionalism. When Muhammad heard what the trouble was he directed that a great cloth should be spread upon the ground and the stone laid upon it. Then he asked every tribe to elect one person each from among them. When that was done he directed those elected persons to carry the cloth with the stone upon it to the place where it was meant to be fixed. Thus all the tribes were equally represented in the ceremony of carrying the sacred stone. Then they elected him as the representative of all the tribes to place the sacred stone in its new place.¹

Muhammad Established the "Theory of Design" as a Fact through Himself.

If we study Muhammad's life and work we cannot then refuse to believe that the world

¹ I wish that all those Muslims who go to pilgrimage and kiss the sacred relic should remember that that stone is an emblem of constitutionalism.—M. H. K.
was created and is controlled by a Designing Power. We may go so far as to say that the solar system is no proof positive of the designing powers of God because we were not told with what object the system was being established nor do we really know its genesis. Scientists have formed a theory of the solar system having been automatically and undesignedly evolved, and when they said that even the solar system with its wonderful arrangement and working was no proof of design it was hard to find any better proof. But Muhammad did become a better proof—an undeniable proof of the designing powers of the Creator. Study the history of the whole world at the time when he was born and it will be found that it was the darkest epoch in every respect in human life. All religions had been debased and corrupted.

Prof. J. J. Lake says:—

"It was not in Christendom alone that what is popularly misnamed philosophy had done its worst, the evil culminating in idolatry. This so-called philosophy, which has developed itself afresh as Spinozism, had already over-
powered the earlier revelation in the East. The results in the Semitic races of Central and Eastern Asia were most corrupt systems of idolatry, so that between these and Christendom, to which may be added the northern tribes of Europe, the known world presented one vast scene of idolatrous abominations, and, as was afterwards discovered, the then unknown world was in the same condition. . . . Even some of the Jewish tribes failed to escape the general contagion, joining in the idolatrous observances, and sending offerings to the heathen worship in the Ka'aba at Mecca.”

“The Persian religion was thoroughly degraded when Artaxerxes Mnemon, the brother of Cyrus, introduced the worship of Mythra and the Phallic cultus. But the height was not, perhaps, reached until the sixth century, when Mazdak instructed all men to be partners in riches and women, just as they are in fire, water, and grass; private property was not to exist; each man was to enjoy and endure the good and bad lots of this world. Better minds in Persia revolted at this frightful communism, and Mazdak was ultimately put to death; but
his doctrines had taken root and spread to the West."

Idolatry in Arabia had reached its most degraded depth. "Nature was deified, and amongst the objects of worship were a stick, rocks, stones, even a piece of dough, and objects unfit to name. Each tribe had particular idols and temples, and human sacrifices were not unknown."

The political, social, moral, and intellectual condition of Arabia was not any better than that of the other part of the world. Perhaps it was the darkest spot in that darkest age. The temper of the Arab people, armed against mankind, was doubly inflamed by the domestic license of rapine, murder, and revenge.¹

"Drink, adultery, and gambling were common: there were no moral, religious, or social restrictions, no limits to marriages, restraints on divorce. A son inherited a father's wife with the rest of his chattels: a man would marry an orphan for her money, and leave or ill-treat her as soon as he had secured it. A divorced woman was not allowed to re-marry,

¹ "The Miracle of Muhammad," by M. H. Kidwai.
as this might have seemed a slur upon her husband. Revengeful women did not feel satisfied until they had made their teeth meet in the heart of their enemy or had dyed their garments with his blood. Slaves were treated like beasts. Not only human sacrifices and the burying alive of children, but suicides were frequent, while bloody quarrels were an everyday occurrence and death was often the penalty of a single rash word. In short, to quote Gibbon, ‘In this primitive and abject state, which ill deserves the name of society, the human brute without arts or laws, almost without sense and language, is poorly distinguished from the rest of the animal creation.’

Such was the condition of the world in general and of Arabia in particular. How was it altered? Not by any sudden natural phenomena which could be taken to the accidental. Not by any supernatural miracle which might be considered as a superstition. The condition of Arabia and of the world through it was bettered in all its aspects through a set design. A man was selected to be the instrument of it—a man of matured age well known to the people
—a man without any mystery attached to him—a man who refused to make any miracles the means of the reformation—a man who elaborately worked the reformation himself under the guidance, through the inspiration, of God. The reformation was absolutely perfect. Its influence was universal and lasting, but every step in its achievement was deliberately taken, so that nobody in his senses could deny that all that was done was through a design. Even the inspiration was not sudden, though it was of permanent value and of universal efficacy.

How complete was the reformation can be judged from the following quotation from Christian and biased authors. After dealing with the hopeless condition of Arabia for generations immemorial Washington Irving says: "The time at length arrived when its discordant tribes were to be united in one creed, and animated by one common cause; when a mighty genius was to arise who should bring together these scattered limbs, animate them with his own enthusiastic and daring spirit, and lead them forth, a giant of the desert, to shake and overturn the empires of the earth."
Carlyle, speaking of the Prophet’s work, says: To the Arab nation it was a birth from darkness into light. Arabia first became alive by means of it. A poor shepherd people, roaming unnoticed in its deserts since the creation of the world: a Hero Prophet was sent down to them with a word they could believe: see, the unnoticed becomes world-noticeable, the small has grown world-great; within one century afterwards, Arabia is at Grenada at this hand, at Delhi on that; glancing in valour and splendour and the light of genius, Arabia shines through long ages over a great section of the world. Belief is great, life-giving. The history of a nation becomes fruitful, soul-elevating, great, so soon as it believes. These Arabs, the man Muhammad, and that one century—is it not as if a spark had fallen, one spark, on a world of what seemed black, unnoticeable sand? But lo, the sand proves explosive powder, blazes heaven high from Delhi to Grenada!

Gibbon writes, of this wonderful transformation: The genius of the Arabian prophet, the manners of his nation and the spirit of his religion involve the cause of the decline and fall
of the Eastern Empire, and our eyes are curiously intent on one of the most memorable revolutions which have impressed a new and lasting character on the nations of the globe. Mr. Gilman adds: History is crowded with wrecks of systems of religion which have been outgrown by mankind. The career of the prophet is never an easy one; he may pipe, but his audience may refuse to keep time to the march he entunes. It is comparatively easy to make good and far-reaching plans, but more difficult to carry them out. Least of all is it easy for a prophet to gain a hearing in his own country and among his own kin, among those who have known him as a child, as a boy, as a growing youth, and finally as a man, liable to the inconsistencies of a man, to the irregularities of a man, to the failures to which humanity is ever exposed. Yet this, all of this, is what Muḥammad, the unlearned Arabian, the camel-driver of the widow Khadija, attempted. He, who perhaps could not write his own name, declared himself not only to be a teacher, but the teacher who must alone be listened to in the most important matter that concerns humanity, the
regulation of its loftiest duties to the most high God.

Everybody admitted the influence of Muhammad over Asia and Africa, but his influence over Europe has only lately been recognized. John Joseph Lake, Fellow of the London Meteorological Society, says: Islam ought to attract our attention and interest, for the Western world is greatly indebted to the Moslems for its present state of advancement, as will be seen in the course of these pages; and when the glamour that obscures the general mind, owing to the prominence given in the studies of our youth to Greek and Latin, has been modified by a due proportion of Oriental studies, it will be acknowledged. And again: The Islam of Muhammad also contained a germ which, when subsequently more fully developed, spread its influence into Europe, and has been heavier on Western idolatry than its arms were upon the East. It began in the establishment of schools by Muhammad, and, to assist in these and his educational plans generally, he released such of his prisoners of war as could read and write as soon as they had taught a certain number of
boys to do the same; and if any were willing to remain and take charge of schools they were liberated at once.

The Arabs had for ages been addicted to oratory and poetry, and held competitions in the latter at the annual meetings of Okadh. When advanced to power under the successors of Muhammad, they cultivated the arts and sciences in addition. So early as the ninth century they followed the course pursued in later times, introducing experimentation instead of the Greek system of theorising.

The subjects upon which their authors wrote most extensively are history, statistics, travels, voyages, chronology, numismatics, gems, pulpit oratory, agriculture, rural economy, irrigation, pure and mixed mathematics, science, topography, medicine (in which they had pharmacopoeias), chemistry, zoology, botany, natural history, and geology; and they were no triflers in these matters.

Ladies of rank joined the poetic throng, and amongst the blue-stockings who achieved reputation were Velada, Ayesha, Labana, Algasania, and many daughters of Khalifs. Odes, sonnets,
satires, elegies, and other minor compositions were abundant; and though the Saracens never attained to a tragedy or an epic, by the mutual intercourse between them and the south of France they gave birth to the Provencal poetry, and instilled a freedom of thought which, accompanying the poetry, resulted in awakening Europe from the nightmare of the Middle Ages.

Muhammad changed the whole basis and course of civilization no less in its political aspects than moral, social, or religious.

Muhammad denounced the vendetta, or blood-feud, and established a fine in lieu; he extinguished the cruel custom that had previously prevailed in Arabia of burying female children alive; he suppressed incestuous marriages, and the terms on which he did so shows the previous state of Arab society, in which it had been permitted to marry mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, and such near connections; he also limited the number of wives to four, and indirectly restrained concubinage. He also brought divorce within moderate bounds. This had, in the "times of ignorance," before he assumed his mission, been of such frequent
occurrence, that one woman is named who is said to have had forty husbands.

Professor Lake writes: But Islam has had its revenge on Seventh-Council Christianity, as will be seen in the following chapter, by its introduction of freedom of thought and the cultivation of learning into Europe.

The Greek and Roman philosophies are very poor exemplars of the earlier Oriental systems from which they were derived, being little else than a more or less advanced Spinozism, or direct Atheism. Science was in a dormant state, the little known being confined mostly to the priesthood, who used it in promoting the superstitions by which they profited and ruled. Thus science was fossilized and choked; and the same during the Middle ages. History teaches us that spiritual and secular enlightenment walk hand in hand, and superstition obscures or extinguishes both together.

Christianity came to the relief of the world, but it was destined at first to become entangled in its meshes. The ecclesiastical powers gradually slid into superstition, and finally planted idolatry in the seat of God.
When this state of darkness was far advanced Muhammad came into the world, and studied and revolted at the scene.

The world was gradually working up for the appearance of a representative leader against these superstitions. Some had made efforts in this direction, but the time was not ripe, and their powers were not equal to the additional strain that had to be encountered under such circumstances. His acute mind recognized the necessity, and saw the gap.

"It has been justly remarked," says our author, "that Islam, by converting victorious invaders of countries where it prevailed, mitigated in some degree the evils of Mongol, Tartar, and Turkish conquests. On the other hand, by its own invasions it checked the dark ages in Europe, encouraged education and civilization, and pressed them to the North very much against the will of the authorities, civil and ecclesiastical; who, in the growing freedom of mind, heard the distant sound of the knell that tolled out the death of tyranny and oppression."

If the Muslims have now to quit Europe, they can march forth with pride; for, in estab-
lishing constitutional government, they have rung the death knell of absolutism in that quarter of the globe, and Russia, Constantinople parasites, and Neo-Liberals may do their worst. A fire has been lighted on the shores of Western Asia that cannot be extinguished, and Islam will have its revenge on Eastern Seventh Council Christianity as it has already had on the Western.

It is a singular fact that, whilst the rest of the world was sunk in serfdom, Islam practised "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality." A Muslim could not hold another Muslim in slavery, a captive taken in war on embracing Islam was ipso facto free; and not only so, but, whatever might be his colour, was theoretically and practically on an equality with the rest.

Even such a bigoted author as the Rev. George Trevor, M. A., Canon of York, has had to admit:—

"Nor was it by arms and luxury only that the caliphs won their brilliant reputation. Europe is indebted to their fostering care for much of its literature and science. Greek was unknown in Western Europe till after the fall of
Constantinople; but the Arabs early translated into their own noble language the writings of the Greek and Roman philosophers, mathematicians, astronomers, and poets. The little that Western Europe knew of these productions was from Latin translations of the Arabic versions. The invention of Algebra is all their own. Arabic literature attained its Augustan age in the reign of the famous Haroun-el Raschid [A. C. 786], when the nobles of France and England could neither read nor write. It declined under the conquest of the Turks, as, previously, the Greek had disappeared before their own; and in both cases Egypt was the last home of the learned. What the schools of Alexandria did for Greek learning, those of Cairo have since done for the Arabian. For many centuries they have been acknowledged as the purest fountains of Arabic literature, and of Mussalman theology and jurisprudence. The splendid mosque El Azhar continues to attract students from every part of the Moslem world: it is regarded as their principal university, and is said to contain from one to three thousand students, of whom several hundreds are blind.
While the Moslems were establishing new empires on a well-meant conception of the Divine Unity, the Christians were ruining both Church and State in a fresh controversy, which resulted in the triumph of a worship hardly to be distinguished from polytheism and idolatry. Nothing so excited the indignation of the Saracens as the use of images in religious worship. Christians, Jews, and even Magians were entitled to indulgence as disciples of a 'book'; but the worship of idols was a crime. These fierce Unitarians held to the letter, and beyond the letter, of the Jewish decalogue; they not only abhorred all reverence for images or pictures, but refused them a place in buildings set apart for worship, and where the Qur-an was strictly followed, prohibited their very existence.

The primitive Christians were as zealous if not as furious as the Muhammadans. For the first three centuries there is no trace of images or paintings being permitted in churches. Gradually their use was introduced amongst other superstitious corruptions, till at length the private heresy received the sanction of ecclesiastical authority and common usage.
"The exertions of the Emperor Leo II to check this degrading superstition shook the imperial fabric of Church and State to its foundation. His edict for the removal of images out of the churches [A. C. 726] was resented by the revolt of the whole Latin Church under Popes Gregory II and III, and issued in the destruction of his dynasty. The reformers were stigmatized as Iconoclasts, and the worship of images was publicly authorized and commanded by the Seventh General Council. [A. C. 786]." ¹

God manifests Himself by two kinds of His attributes, (1) jalali (might), (2) jamali (goodness). Muhammad represented both.

**Muhammad the Sign of God’s Omnipotence.**

The quotations given above, which can be multiplied a hundredfold if needed, undeniably prove that Muhammad was the most unique man in history. There has never been any other man in the world who has influenced the life and history of mankind to the extent that Muhammad has. We know the helpless condition in which Muhammad was in the early part

¹ "Egypt: From the Conquest of Alexander the Great to Napoleon Bonaparte."
of his mission. We know the hopeless condition of his people and of the world at large. We know the difficulties he had to face and surmount. Man and nature both combined to defeat him. But they failed. Muhammad proved by his deeds that man was really the vicegerent of God on earth, that man was undoubtedly created in the image of God, not only as far as his goodness was concerned, but also as far as his ruling, dominating, commanding sovereign powers were concerned.

Muhammad transformed the camel drivers of Arabia, who used to cut each other's throats and who lived mostly a camp life, who were hardly distinguishable from brute creation, into the pioneers in civilization and culture, conquerors of vast territories, builders of wonderful public works, organizers of marvellous institutions, founders of a great many sciences and arts.

Muhammad demonstrated the omnipotence of God in this way, that he stood up single-handed in a superstitious country and proclaimed that he was commissioned by God to proclaim His Unity. He was opposed on all sides, yet he triumphed and did not die until the whole of
Arabia had believed in the Unity of God and in Muhammad's mission.

"By a series of well-conducted military operations his enemies were completely overthrown. Arabian idolatry was absolutely exterminated; the doctrine he proclaimed, that 'there is but one God,' was universally adopted by his countrymen, and his own apostleship accepted.

"Let us pass over his stormy life, and hear what he says when, on the pinnacle of earthly power and glory, he was approaching its close.

"Steadfast in his declaration of the Unity of God, he departed from Medina on his last pilgrimage to Mecca, at the head of one hundred and fourteen thousand devotees, with camels decorated with garlands of flowers and fluttering streamers. When he approached the holy city, he uttered the solemn invocation: 'Here am I in Thy service, O God! Thou hast no companion. To Thee alone belongeth worship. Thine alone is the kingdom. There is none to share it with thee.'

"From the pulpit of the Ka'aba he reiterated, 'O my hearers, I am only a man like your-
selves.' They remembered that he had once said to one who approached him with timid steps; 'Of what dost thou stand in awe? I am no king. I am nothing but the son of an Arab woman, who ate flesh dried in the sun.'

"He returned to Medina to die. In his farewell to his congregation, he said: 'Everything happens according to the will of God, and has its appointed time, which can neither be hastened nor avoided. I return to him who sent me, and my last command to you is, that ye love, honour, and uphold each other, that ye exhort each other to faith and constancy in belief, and to the performance of pious deeds. My life has been for your good, and so will be my death."

"In his dying agony, his head was reclined on the lap of Ayesha. From time to time he had dipped his hand in a vase of water, and moistened his face. At last he ceased, and, gazing steadfastly upward, said, in broken accents: 'O God—forgive—be it so. I come.'

"Shall we speak of this man with disrespect?
His precepts are, at this day, the religious guide of one-third of the human race.”

All other signs of the omnipotence of God may be denied, as they do not proclaim their mission and purpose in a way which can be intelligible to every man. But Muhammad did proclaim, and nothing in this world, in spite of the most tremendous effort, could stop him from accomplishing his mission and purpose.

The contemporary record of this triumph in the Qur'ān itself is in chap. cx., as follows:—

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

1. When there comes the help of Allah and the victory.

2. And you see men entering the religion of Allah by troops.

3. Then celebrate the praise of your Lord, and ask for His forgiveness; surely He is oft returning (to mercy).

History also records that when on his last pilgrimage to Mecca, mentioned above, he delivered his farewell sermon, hundreds of

1 “The Conflict between Religion and Science,” pp. 82, 83, 84.
of people were present. He opened the sermon with these significant words:

O people, listen to my words; for I know not whether, after this year, we shall ever meet here again. Ah, my hearers, I am but a man like yourselves; the angel of death may at any time appear, and I must obey his summons.

He would then proceed to inculcate not merely religious doctrines and ceremonies, but rules for conduct in all the concerns of life, public and domestic; and the precepts laid down and enforced on this occasion have had a vast and durable influence on the morals, manners, and habits of the whole Muslim

world. 1

At the end of his sermon, leaning towards the mighty concourse who but a few years before were most callous and conscienceless people, steeped in all sorts of vices, who buried their daughters alive and worshipped most abject fetishes, who persecuted and stoned and almost killed the solitary wanderer—the orphan child of Amina, who had none but God to help him in his mission to set his people on the right path

and to bend their heads before one and only God, Muhammad exclaimed: “O Lord, I have delivered my message and accomplished my work.” The hosts below made answer with one voice: “Aye, truly, that thou hast.” He cried: “O Lord, I beseech Thee, have Thou witness to it.”

Muhammad did not get only men to certify the accomplishment of his mission, his God Himself certified it in these words:

“Alyaoma akmalto lakum-dinakum va at-mamito ’alaikum n’aimati va razito lakumo-l-Islam a dina” (Al Qur-an, chapter v. 3).

“This day have I (God) perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you, and chosen for you Islam as your religion.”

As far as Islam as a religion went, its perfection was complete. For these last thirteen hundred years there has been no addition to or subtraction from that.

It might be said that Muhammad could not represent the omnipotence of God, because Muhammad adopted physical means to secure his triumph and the triumph of his faith. The use of means in itself militates against the idea.

1 Abul Feda.
of Supreme Power—against His omnipotence. God, if He meant to prove His omnipotence, should not have adopted any physical means, and should have given Muhammad sudden success. Why He made Muhammad fight the battles, risk his life, and secure only gradually by great and arduous personal exertions, by the unflinching support of the few friends and followers he had made, the triumph of his mission?

Mill says, and nobody can deny the truth of it, that the necessity for contrivance—the need of employing means—is a consequence of the limitation of power; who would have recourse to means if to attain his end his mere word was sufficient? ¹

Muhammad anticipated this objection over thirteen hundred years ago. He plainly said that God was under no necessity of using means to work His will. Under the inspiration of God Muhammad said:

_Innama amroho iza arada shaian ainyaqula laho kun fayakun._

_Fasubhanal lazi biyadehe malakuto bulle shai._

¹ Three essays on religion, p 75.
inva ilaihe turja'omn (Al-Quran, chapter xxxvi, vv. 82, 83.

We quote from the translation of the Christian Rodwell the meanings of the two verses and of five others preceding them, as all these throw light upon the subject of design, application of means, and omnipotence. ¹

"Who even out of the green tree hath given you fire, and lo! ye kindle flame from it.

"What! must not He who hath created the Heavens and the Earth be mighty enough to create your likes? Yes! and He is the skilful creator.

"His command when He willeth aught, is but to say to it, Be, and it is.

"So glory be to Him in whose hand is sway over all things! And to Him shall ye be brought back."

After God created those atoms or electrons, that matter and energy which are taken by scientists to have had no beginning, and which are given the credit of having evolved, through definite and settled laws, the universe and all that there is in it, without any contrivance,

simply by the word "Kun" ("be") as a sign of His omnipotence, He then, out of His own free will, without any pressure, without any help, contrived means and instruments to work out definite laws, to manifest His wisdom and intelligence, and to leave impression for man of undeniable design.

The object of not using any means in creating the fundamental atoms or electrons was to give proof of His omnipotence. No scientist can explain the "how" or "why" of the electrons. He takes them to be uncreated. Why? Because God has left no trace of any means, in fact he never used any means, as the Qur-an tells us, in creating these electrons. He had to demonstrate His omnipotence—that he could create even such matter without any contrivance, only by one word "kun," that could be taken to be the fashioner of the world by learned scientist. When the scientists assert that matter and force, atoms and electrons are uncreated, they know that they are indulging in an impious fraud. If the matter and energy existed from all time, and if they were solely responsible for this universe, then it should have always existed as it
exists to-day. There ought to have been no change—not even by accident. The laws of gravitation and repulsion, the evolution of planets, the creation of life and all its consequent developments—all the laws of Nature must also have been permanent with matter and energy. But that is not so. Scientists cannot say that our present solar system had no beginning. Everything had a beginning except God. Matter and energy certainly had a beginning, though because they were created without any means or contrivance we cannot say how and when they were created. After creating them God set laws for the evolution of the Universe. The Universe developed and evolved according to those laws. Heaven and earth, ant and man, all evolved through those definite and set laws which God had set.

Surely nothing is detracted from the power of God by believing that the world was evolved gradually through complete laws of extreme precision. It rather overawes us more of the intelligence and skill of the Creator when we see what wonderful means, designed of course by none but God Himself, have been used, and
how wonderfully the Universe obeys the laws laid down for every atom in it, how the least deviation from it brings instantaneous punishment, how upon the death of one seems to depend the life of the other in the organic creation, yet all different kinds and species exist.

Al-Qur-an appeals thus to the power and intelligence of God:

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.

Mill says: “First, then: there is one conception of Theism which is consistent, another which is radically inconsistent, with the most general truths that have been made known to us by scientific investigation.

The one which is inconsistent is the conception of a God governing the world by acts of

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1 Al-Qur-an, chap, xxxvi, vv. 38, 39, 40.
variable will. The one which is consistent is the conception of a God governing the world by invariable laws.”

Al-Qur-an, while asserting repeatedly that God is Omniscient and Omnipotent, holds to the latter view and now and again says:—

_Falam tajida lisunnatillahe tabdila,_
_Wa lan tajida bisunnatillahe ta'vila._

Thou shalt not find any change in the ways of God—yea, thou shalt not find any variable-ness in the way of God (Rodwell, p. 283). Omnipotence and government by invariable laws is reconcilable when the ruling and the legislating Power is the same.

Mill admits: “If there be a Creator, his intention must have been that events should depend upon antecedents and be produced according to fixed laws. But this being conceded, there is nothing in scientific experience inconsistent with the belief that those laws and sequences are themselves due to a divine will. Neither are we obliged to suppose that the divine will exerted itself once for all, and, after putting a

1 “Three Essays on Religion,” p. 60.
2 Al-Qur-an, chap. xxxv. v. 43.
power into the system which enabled it to go on of itself, has ever since let it alone. Science contains nothing repugnant to the supposition that every event which takes place results from a specific volition of the presiding Power, provided that this Power adheres in its particular volitions to general laws laid down by itself. The common opinion is that this hypothesis tends more to the glory of the Deity than the supposition that the universe was made so that it could go on of itself.”

What could be more reasonable, then, than for Muhammad being used as the undeniable sign of the omnipotence of God to man? Nobody can deny that he proclaimed his Mission and carried it through. The task was gigantic, and the means adopted were heroic. But he succeeded through the help of the Omnipotent God. The instrument was Muhammad, but Mahammad was the creation of God. Why Muhammad had to adopt means was because God did not choose to change his “sunnat”—the invariable law. Man would not have been impressed with any sudden triumph, man would

not have profited by any immediate convulsion. Earthquakes and other catastrophes like it have no permanent effect upon the mind of man as a proof of the might of God. His power, together with design and intelligence, have been completely and permanently manifested by the work done by Muhammad. Muhammad was, and still is, the best sign of the Omnipotence of God.

If we can draw any conclusion from the working of Nature, we can say that, although mercy of the Cherisher and Sustainer of the universe underlies it, and without that the universe would have come any second to a catastrophic end, the Supreme Power rules the world, not only with immutable laws, but also with an iron hand. No law of Nature can be disobeyed with impunity, very often the punishment is very severe.

"Nature impales men, breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones like the first Christian martyr, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons them by the quick or slow venom of her
exhalations, and has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve, such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabis or a Domitian never surpassed."

Man has no doubt been given power to protect himself. All other creatures who have feelings of pain have been given the same power. Man can conquer even death, insomuch that he would be spared the pangs it causes. But even the least consideration of the working of Nature would convince everybody that the doctrine of the absolute love of the Creator which Christian theology has put forward, cannot be held to be true.

God is no doubt loving, but to say that God is all Love is as wrong as to say that God is all Wrath. If Mills’ theory that Nature represents only a callous and cruel Maker is not correct, the Christian theology which represents God as a father who would suffer his children to do wrong, now that He has atoned for their lives by a cruel and horrid sacrifice of His “only begotten Son,” besides being immoral and misleading, cannot appeal to reason at all. If God should be compared to a father He should be compared to such a father as would be strict to his children,
and see that they do not develop in them any vices that would do them or society any harm. God can be only a father who loves his children but does not spoil them. He has laid down the government of the world under strict laws. His Providence works as a surgeon who does not hesitate even to amputate an arm of his patient, if by that he can save the rest of his body from blood-poisoning. A surgeon cannot be blamed of cruelty when he uses a lance or a knife with the best of motives, and for the good and health of the patient.

In the same way if Muhammad had to take recourse to the sword he cannot be blamed. He did not allow himself to be killed or crucified as his predecessor was. He defended his new found nation. In this his object was nothing but good of the people themselves—good of the humanity at large of setting a model nation—a model Empire. However, there can be no greater mistake than to think that Muhammad used the sword for the propagation of the Truth.

Al-Qur-an says, "La ekraho fiddin" —there should be no compulsion in the matter of religion.

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1 Al-Qur-an, chap. II.
Draper admits—

"It is altogether a misconception that the Arabian progress was due to the sword alone. The sword may change an acknowledged national creed, but it cannot affect the consciences of men. Profound though its argument is, something far more profound was demanded before Mohammedanism pervaded the domestic life of Asia and Africa, before Arabic became the language of so many different nations.

"The explanation of this political phenomenon is to be found in the social condition of the conquered countries. The influences of religion in them had long ago ceased; it had become supplanted by theology—a theology so incomprehensible that even the wonderful capabilities of the Greek language were scarcely enough to meet its subtle demands; the Latin and the barbarian dialects were out of the question. How was it possible that unlettered men, who with difficulty can be made to apprehend obvious things, should understand such mysteries? Yet they were taught that on those doctrines the salvation or damnation of the human race depended. They saw that the
clergy had abandoned the guidance of the individual life of their flocks; that personal virtue or vice were no longer considered; that sin was not measured by evil works but by the degrees of heresy. They saw that the ecclesiastical chiefs of Rome, Constantinople, and Alexandria were engaged in a desperate struggle for supremacy, carrying out their purposes by weapons and in ways revolting to the conscience of man. What an example when bishops were concerned in assassinations, poisonings, adulteries, blindings, riots, treasons, civil war; when patriarchs and prelates were ex-communicating and anathematizing one another in their rivalries for earthly power, bribing eunuchs with gold, and courtesans and royal females with concessions of episcopal love, and influencing the decisions of councils asserted to speak with the voice of God by those base intrigues and sharp practices resorted to by demagogues in their packed assemblies! Among legions of monks, who carried terror into the imperial armies and riot into the great cities, arose hideous clamours for theological dogmas, but never a voice for intellectual liberty or the outraged rights of man.
In such a state of things, what else could be the result than disgust or indifference? Certainly men could not be expected, if a time of necessity arose, to give help to a system that had lost all hold on their hearts.

"When, therefore, in the midst of the wrangling of sects, in the incomprehensible jargon of Arians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Monothelites, Monophysites, Mariolatrists, and an anarchy of countless disputants, there sounded through the world, not the miserable voice of the intriguing majority of a council, but the dread battle-cry. 'There is but one God,' enforced by the tempest of Saracen armies, is it surprising that the hubbub was hushed? Is it surprising that all Asia and Africa fell away? In better times patriotism is too often made subordinate to religion; in those times it was altogether dead.

"Scarcely was Muhammad buried when his religion manifested its inevitable destiny of overpassing the bounds of Arabia."

In the Encyclopædia Britannica we find "It is to be remembered that the Arab armies were not devastating hordes; they recognized the need of law and order wherever they went, and it was
the policy of their leaders to take over the administrative system of the countries which they seized."

Muhammad was not only the sign of the might, omnipotence, and supreme sovereignty of God, who carried his purpose through in spite of all the obstacles, in spite of the use of the sword against it, but also the sign of the goodness and mercy of God. Muhammad combined in him the virtues and strong points of Moses and Jesus both. He represented God's attributes of Jalal and Jamal both—peace be upon him and his followers, and also triumph be for him and his followers!

Muhammad the Sign of the Goodness of God.

Philosophers and scientists are inconsistent in their belief as to whether Nature represents goodness and beauty or cruelty and callousness. Mill at one place holds that the greater part of the design of which there is indication in Nature, however wonderful its mechanism, is no evidence of any moral attributes. But on the same page he admits:—

"Yet, endeavouring to look at the question without partiality or prejudice, and without
allowing wishes to have any influence over judgment, it does appear that, granting the existence of design, there is a preponderance of evidence that the Creator desired the pleasure of His creatures. This is indicated by the fact that pleasure of one description or another is afforded by almost everything, the mere play of the faculties, physical and mental, being a never-ending source of pleasure, and even painful things giving pleasure by the satisfaction of curiosity and the agreeable sense of acquiring knowledge; and also that pleasure, when experienced, seems to result from the normal working of the machinery, while pain usually arises from some external interference with it, and resembles in each particular case the result of an accident. Even in cases where pain result, like pleasure, from the machinery itself, the appearances do not indicate that contrivance was brought into play purposely to produce plain.”

In the next page he further admits:—

“There is, therefore, much appearance that pleasure is agreeable to the Creator, while there is very little, if any, appearance that pain is so;
and there is a certain amount of justification for inferring, on grounds of Natural Theology alone, that benevolence is one of the attributes of the Creator."

Ernest Haeckel, the greatest living scientist and theorist, is also inconsistent. At one place he says:—

"We now know that the whole of organic nature on our planet exists only by a relentless war of all against all. Thousands of animals and plants must daily perish in every part of the earth, in order that a few chosen individuals may continue to subsist and to enjoy life. But even the existence of these favoured few is a continual conflict with threatening dangers of every kind. Thousands of hopeful germs perish uselessly every minute. The raging war of interests in human society is only a feeble picture of the unceasing and terrible war of existence which reigns throughout the whole of the living world. The beautiful dream of God’s goodness and wisdom in nature, to which as children we listened so devoutly fifty years ago, no longer finds credit now—at least among educated people who think. It has disappear-
ed before our deeper acquaintance with the
mutual relations of organisms, the advance-
ment of oecology and sociology, and our know-
ledge of parasite life and pathology”.

But on pages 85 and 86 he goes on in
rapturous exclamations thus:—

“The school of the twentieth century, flour-
ishing anew on this firm ground, shall have to
unfold to the rising youth not only the wonderful
truths of the evolution of the cosmos, but also the
inexhaustible treasures of beauty lying everywhere
hidden therein. Whether we marvel at the majesty
of the lofty mountains or the magic world of the
sea, whether with the telescope we explore the
infinitely great wonders of the starry heaven, or
with the microscope the yet more surprising
wonders of a life infinitely small, everywhere does
Divine Nature open up to us an inexhaustible
fountain of aesthetic enjoyment. Blind and insen-
sible have the great majority of mankind
hitherto wandered through this glorious wonder-
land of a world; a sickly and unnatural theology
has made it repulsive as a ‘vale of tears.’ But
now, at last, it is given to the mightily advancing
human mind to have its eyes opened; it is given
to it to show that a true knowledge of nature affords full satisfaction and inexhaustible nourishment not only for its searching understanding, but also for its yearning spirit.

And he ends the confession of his faith with these words, to which every Muslim can say "Amen":—

"May God, the Spirit of Good, the Beautiful and the True, be with us."

The fact is that these philosophers and scientists have no right to find out the attributes of God from the working of nature. To them this cosmos is altogether accidental. It had no Designer, no intelligent Architect, no living Fashioner. They take all that exists to be only the creation of blind chance—at least in its beginning. They think that even those laws which they admit govern the whole universe were laid down not deliberately, not intelligently, not with any purpose or object but just by accident. They themselves, in spite of all their intellect, all their knowledge of the component parts of life, all their knowledge of the organic and inorganic properties, cannot create a fly, yet they are foolish enough to
take unintelligent, lifeless, insignificant atoms

be the creators and fashioners of all that

exists and the authors of all those immutable

laws which govern every atom. What right

have they to say that the struggle in the exist-

tence is a proof that God is either not Omnipo-
tent or not Good? They do not know, or care to

know, the purpose, the object of the struggle.

The mere fact of destruction does not show

cruelty or callousness—it is no proof of the

want of goodness on the part of the destroyer.

Surely a surgeon cannot be blamed if he uses

his knife to take away deleterious matter from

the body. Anybody in his senses can say that

it is meant of goodness on the part of the

surgeon when he uses his knife.

This subject, i.e., whether the apparent

struggle and contention in this world disproves

the existence of a good God, has been discussed

in greater detail in the ISLAMIC REVIEW of April,

1915, under the heading “The War and God.”

Suffice it here to say that when the scientists

admit that science fails to explain the object,

the raison d’être of the universe, they have no

right to infer from what they see of destruction
in it that the Creator was not Good or not Omnipotent. They should take the advice of the greatest poet born on this earth—the immortal Hafiz. He says:

_Hadis as mutribo mai go vo raze dahrkamtarjo. Ki kas nakushoodo nakushayed ba hikmat een moammara._

"Better talk of music and wine and not of unravelling the mysteries of the universe. Because nobody has nor anybody shall be able to undo the world—mysteries through science or philosophy."

There are powers, not scientific powers, but spiritual powers, in man through which he can conquer death—through which pain becomes pleasure. What right have the scientists to say that death is cruel, when they do not know the other side of death? If they really believe that there is nothing after death, then they have no reason to believe that death is by any means a cruelty. Man by death is relieved of all worries and anxieties and pains—nay, man by his death supplies many little insects and worms with food. Why, then, should death be a proof of the cruelty of God to scientists?
Theologians have no fear of death. According to them, this world is meant to be a place of temporary sojourn; therefore to them neither pain nor pleasure in this world alarms or attracts. They try to live in a way that all the misery and discomfort which they have to face in this world may be thoroughly compensated in their life to come. They believe that this world is only to sow the seed. Whatever their lot may be in this world, they will do their best to conduct their life in a way to secure for them eternal happiness. They might have to meet severe trials, but they believe that their ability to triumph over these trials has been gifted by the Good and Just and Omnipotent God in proportion to the severity of trials. If they have a will, if they can conduct themselves well, they are sure to triumph. Even in this world they would secure happiness and success, but if they fail in this world, even then they have no reason to be disappointed. Failure in this temporary world might be success in the permanent world to come. The span of life-work for man increases through his religious beliefs. Ideals become
higher and nobler. Progress becomes more congenial. Temporary sufferings and cares lose much of their sting. By sympathy for others, sufferings and pains become sources of delight and satisfaction.

Farid-ud-din-Attar, a great Muslim saint, of whom Maulvi Rumi was proud, once exclaimed:—

"I would that the sorrow of all men were laid on my heart, that men might be free from sorrow".

The following Urdu couplet expresses the same sentiments:—

_Aye Mushir achchha hua ter taira daman hogaya_

_Khushk auron kai li-ey to babre 'isyan hogaya._

Those who have a keener insight into the nature of the universe—those who can go deeper into the why and wherefore of all that exists, those who have studied not only the flesh, the matter, but the spirit, the soul, they have no doubt left, that the Creator is not only omnipotent but also benevolent and good.

To Haeckel man is only a mammal, and he quotes:—
"Imperious Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,  
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.  
O that that earth which kept the world in awe  
Should patch a wall to repel the winter's flaw."

To Muhammad he is the vicegerent of God himself, who can rule over the heaven and earth.

And Hafiz defiantly says:—

_Hergiz na mirad anki dilaš zindashud ba ishq  
Sabt a:i ber jurida-i'-alam cavame ma._

“He whose heart has been vivified by love never dies. My eternal existence has been engraved on the annals of the universe.”

However, Muhammad was a practical man. He proved the goodness of God by actual demonstrations. He became the undeniable sign of the goodness of God. He banished evil. He elevated the morals of men. He improved the very nature of human beings. He saved the weak from oppression. He gave rights to women and slaves. He freed millions from the curse of alcoholism, absolutism, bigotry, superstition, and so forth.

He changed the very character of religion. Before him religion was considered to be a sort
of philosophy. If there were any rules of life given by religion they were dogmatic. If they elevated human character, it was only a personal or individual matter.

Buddha taught individuals how to get to Nirvana. Christ taught them how to get to the Kingdom of God in heaven. Muhammad, peace be upon him, brought down "the Kingdom of God" on earth. He taught men how to improve, not only themselves, but the whole race, the whole world.

The voice of Muhammad, the illiterate, the helpless, the persecuted, was not, for sure, the mere voice of a man. It was a thunder, a lightning from Above—a thunder that roused men from their death-like sleep, a lightning that burnt up their deep-rooted vice and immorality, and, at the same time, revealed a "Kingdom of Heaven" upon earth, inhabited by people of angelic piety, saintly veracity and heroic courage, sublime, serene, self-sacrificing, magnanimous, patriotic, generous, philanthropic, kind and helpful even to the brute creation, loving their neighbours, protecting and sheltering the orphan and the destitute.¹

¹The Miracle of Muhammad.
The contemporary record in history of how Muhammad made a debased people good, is as follows:—

Ja'far-al-Tayar, one of about ninety Muslims forced, in the fifth year of the Prophet's proclamation of his mission, to take refuge in Abyssinia, told the Christian King of that country what Muhammad had done in that short time. "Oh King!" said he, "we were an ignorant and misled people, we worshipped images, ate dead bodies, were lewd, ill-treated our neighbours, and the strong despoiled the weak of their property. We had long been in this condition when God sent a Prophet to us from amongst our own people, whose noble birth, truthfulness, honesty and righteousness were well known to us. He called us to God, to worship Him, and Him only, and to leave off adoring the idols and stones before which our fathers and forefathers knelt. He ordered us to obey God alone, and not to make any one His equal. He made it incumbent upon us to offer up prayer, to give alms, to fast when not sick or travelling. He commanded us to speak the truth, to give back safe and whole what is entrusted to us by
others, to be affectionate to our relations and kind to our neighbours, to shun wicked acts, licentiousness and bloody quarrels. He told us not to bear false evidence, not to deprive orphans of their property, not to impute bad motives, or be suspicious of women. We have taken his advice and admonitions to heart, have believed in his truthfulness, have followed all the orders which God has made known to us, and have believed in the unity of God. We abstain from what is forbidden and confine ourselves to what is permitted. Our people are infuriated at this change in our belief, thoughts, and actions. They have persecuted us, and done their best to force us back to the idols, images, and wicked acts which we have left. When it became impossible to live among them, and when persecution and torture became unbearable, we left our country, and, believing you to be a tolerant king, have taken refuge in your dominions."

A bigoted writer like William Muir admits: Few and simple were the precepts of Muhammad up to this time. His teaching had wrought a marvellous and a mighty work. Never since the
days when primitive Christianity startled the world from its sleep and waged mortal combat with heathenism had men seen the like arousing of spiritual life, the like faith that suffered sacrifices and took joyfully the spoiling of goods for conscience' sake.

From time beyond memory Mecca and the whole Peninsula had been steeped in spiritual torpor. The slight and transient influences of Judaism, Christianity or philosophical inquiry upon the Arab mind had been but as the ruffling here and there of the surface of a quiet lake; all remained still and motionless below. The people were sunk in superstition, cruelty, and vice. It was a common practice for the eldest son to take to wife his father's widows, inherited as property with the rest of the estate. Pride and poverty had introduced among them (as they have among the Hindus) the crime of female infanticide. Their religion was a gross idolatry and their faith rather the dark superstitious dread of unseen beings, whose goodwill they sought of propitiate and whose displeasure to avert, than the belief in an over-ruling Providence. The life to come and retribution of good and evil
were, as motives of actions, practically unknown.

Thirteen years before the Hijra, Mecca lay lifeless in this debased state. What a change had those thirteen years now produced. A band of several hundred persons had rejected idolatry, adopted the worship of one God, and surrendered themselves implicitly to the guidance of what they believed as revelation from Him, praying to the Almighty with frequency and fervour, looking for pardon to His mercy and striving to follow after good works, almsgiving, chastity and justice. They now lived under a constant sense of the omnipotent power of God and of His providential care over the minutest of their concerns. In all the gifts of nature, in every relation of life, at each turn of their affairs, individual or public, they saw His hand. And above all, the new existence in which they exulted was regarded as the mark of special grace, while the unbelief of their blinded fellow-citizens was the hardening stamp of reprobation. Muhammad was the minister of life to them, the source under God of their new-born hopes, and to him they yielded an implicit submission.

In so short a period Mecca had, from his
wonderful movement, been rent into two factions which, unmindful of their old landmarks of tribe and family, had arrayed themselves in deadly opposition one against the other. The Believers bore persecution with a patient and tolerant spirit, and though it was their wisdom so to do, the credit of magnanimous forbearance may be freely accorded. One hundred men and women, rather than abjure their precious faith, had abandoned home and sought refuge, till the storm should be overpast, in Abyssinian exile, and now again a still larger number, with the Prophet himself, were emigrating from their fondly-loved city with its sacred temple, to them the holiest spot on earth, and fleeing to Medina. There the same marvellous charm had within two or three years been preparing for them a brotherhood ready to defend the Prophet and his followers with their blood. Jewish truth had long sounded in the ears of the men of Medina, but it was not until they heard the spirit-stirring strains of the Arabian prophet that they, too, awoke from their slumber and sprang suddenly into a new and earnest life.

The Qur-an itself is a living testimony of the
work of Muhammad. It gives the qualifications of Muhammad’s followers:

"Happy now the believers, who humble themselves in their prayer, and who keep aloof from vain words, and who are lovers of charitable deeds, and who restrain their appetites (save with their wives or those whom their right hands possess) then they shall be free from blame: but they whose desires reach further than this are transgressors: and who tend well their trust and their covenants, and who keep themselves strictly to their prayers; these shall be the heritors, who shall inherit paradise, to abide therein for ever.—Sura xxiii.

"And the servants of God of Mercy are they who walk upon the earth softly; and when the ignorant address them, they reply, ‘Peace!’ They that pass the night in the worship of their Lord prostrate and standing, and that say, ‘O our Lord, turn away from us the torment of Hell, for its torment is endless: it is indeed an ill abode and resting place!’ Those who when they spend are neither lavish nor niggard, but keep the mean: those who call no other gods with God, nor slay whom God hath forbidden to
be slain, except for a just cause and who commit no fornication (for he who doth this shall receive punishment)—Sura xxv.

“Who fulfil their pledge to God, and break not their compact. And who join together what God hath bidden to be joined, and who fear their Lord, and dread an ill reckoning: and who from desire to see the face of their Lord, are constant amid trials, and observe prayer and give alms, in secret and openly, out of what we have bestowed upon them, and turn aside evil by good: for them is the recompense of that abode, gardens of Eden—into which they shall enter together with the just of their fathers and their wives and their descendants: and the angels shall go in unto them at every portal saying: ‘Peace be with you because ye have endured all things!’ Charming the recompense of their abode.”—Sura xiii.

People have wondered why Muhammad took sword in his hand. They should know because Muhammad was chosen to represent God, to be the sign of God. He was destined to demonstrate that war is not absolute evil, that it should not be inferred from the law of destruction in
the universe that it cannot result in goodness. If through Muhammad’s wars, almost all of which were in the defence of the noble cause and had the idea of the establishment of a model nation, a few hundred people lost their lives, what did it matter when nation after nation, millions after millions of people, generation after generation, were imbued with life-giving and ennobling virtues, and when human nature itself was purified?

Buddha was all for self-annihilation, Christ for self-immolation—to be “eunuchs” in the cause of God, but Muhammad was all for being men—men in the best sense of the word. Buddha absorbed himself in the Great Force, Christ sacrificed himself for Truth, but Muhammad lived for the good of Humanity and for the glory of God—as an undeniable sign of His greatness, His goodness. It is difficult, no doubt, to die for a good cause, but it is still more difficult to live for it.

Muhammad changed religion from a dream to a fact. He demonstrated that God was really good to man, provided he acted rightly. He showed that the promise of goodness to man given by God was not a promise to be only redeemed some time after the present life, but
that any individual or any nation who would walk on the right path would secure prosperity and happiness even in this world. Muhammad did not only preach high maxims for life, but he showed the way how to live a useful and noble life. He himself set an example. He produced a nation that set an example. He did not ask people to leave their kingdoms, children, wives, parents, friends, and other fellow beings to seek the solitude of mountain tops or lonely caves to secure happiness and bliss, as Buddha and all other teachers except Moses had practised or preached before. On the contrary, he told people to help one another, to respect their parents and to support them when they get old, to comfort their wives and children, to be true to their friends, and to be worthy citizens of their country, to help the poor, to keep the law and order, and to work with brotherly harmony for the betterment of the whole of humanity.

He democratized the whole basis of man's social and political institutions. He stopped tribal quarrels. He stopped class wars. He even expanded the ideas of racial nationalism and territorial patriotism. His ideal was to
make the whole of humanity as one nation, and to aim at the improvement of the condition of the whole world, not of any particular country alone. Up to this day Muslims have a wider outlook of nationalism and patriotism than any other people. To them country, race, colour does not matter at all. To a Muslim another Muslim of a far distant country is as much a brother as any living next door to him. He would feel it as much his patriotic duty to defend any other Muslim country as his own.

The greatest good which Muhammad did to humanity was that he brought the message of God to man that the sun, the moon, the elements—in short, all that is in heaven or earth—can become subservient to man—that there is nothing in this world which is superior to man if he works out all his potentialities given to him by God. This message opened the doors of all scientific progress on one hand, and of all moral and spiritual improvement on the other. It raised the very status of man in the economy of the world. What could be greater goodness of God to man than to tell him that all the world has been given into his
service, and that under God Himself he cannot rule over everything? How could man, after this bow to any idols? How could he worship any more the sun, the moon, the fire, or any other thing? He was the overlord—the master. Even the mighty sun was his servant.

Since Muhammad taught this lesson, the world has progressed more, and is in a better position now to appreciate and to take advantage of this message, which for the first time in the history of man was preached in the Qur-ān in these words:

_Alam tarao annal'aha sakhhara lakum ma fissamavate va ma tilarrz; va asbaga 'alaikum ne'amahu zahiratanya batinatan_ (ch. xxxi, 20).

Do you not see that Allah has made what is in the heavens and what is in the earth subservient to you, and made complete to you His fairness outwardly and inwardly?

Again in chapter xiv., verses 32, 33, 34—

“Allah is He who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water from the clouds, then brought forth with it fruits as a sustenance for you, and He has made the ships subservient to you, that they might run their
course in the sea by His command, and He has made the rivers subservient to you.

"And He has made subservient to you the sun and the moon pursuing their courses, and He has made subservient to you the night and the day.

"And He gives you of all that you ask Him; and if you count Allah's favours, you will not be able to number them; most surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful."

And again in chapter xvi., verses 3 to 18:

"He created the heavens and the earth with the truth, highly exalted be He above what they associate (with Him). He created man from a small life-germ, and lo! He is an open contender. And He created the cattle for you; you have in them warm clothing and (many) advantages, and of them do you eat. And they are pleasing to you when you drive them back (to home), and when you send them forth (to pasture). And they carry your heavy loads to regions which you could not reach but with distress of the souls; most surely your Lord is Compassionate, Merciful. And (He made) horses and mules and asses that you
might ride upon them and as an ornament; and He creates what you do not know. And upon Allah it rests to show the right way, and there are some deviating (ways); and if He please He would certainly guide you all right. He it is who sends down water from the cloud for you; it gives drink, and by it (grow) the trees upon which you pasture. He causes to grow for you thereby herbage, and the olives, and the palm-trees, and the grapes, and of all the fruits; most surely there is a sign in this for people who reflect. And He has made subservient for you the night and the day and the sun and the moon, and the stars are made subservient by His commandment; most surely there are signs in this for a people who ponder; and what He has created in the earth of varied hues; most surely there is a sign in this for a people who are mindful. And He it is who has made the sea subservient that you may eat fresh flesh from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear, and you see the ships cleaving through it, and that you might seek of His bounty and that you may give thanks. And He has cast great mountains
in the earth lest it might be convulsed with you,
and rivers and roads that you may go aright,
and landmarks; and by the stars they find the
right way. Is He then who creates like him
who does not create? Do you not then mind?
And if you would count Allah’s favours, you
will not be able to number them; most surely
Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

Also read chapter xxxi. 29 and chapter
xlv. 12, 13.

It was a wonderful revolution in the theo-
logical conceptions of man worked by Muham-
mad. It was a marvellous exposition of the
undeniable goodness of God to man.

Christian theology had impressed upon
man that he was a miserable wretch born in
sin, having inherited disobedience of law from
his mother Eve and father Adam, that
he was incapable of working out even his own
salvation.

Hindu philosophy, before Christian theology,
had gone a step further and declared that the
world itself was an illusion (maya), that man’s
business was to secure his exit from this wretched
world as soon as possible, that his birth in
this world meant nothing but a sort of punishment to him or a chance given to expiate the sins committed by him in his previous transmigrations. He was warned to exclude himself absolutely from the world, so as to secure a relief from subsequent births.

Muhammad presented to man quite a different but much elevated notion of himself and of the world he lived in. It was said before Muhammad that man was born in God’s image, but it was left to Muhammad to explain what was meant by that assertion. The Holy Qur-an gives the position of the vicegerent of God to man and calls him Khalifa. As God is the ruler of all that exists, so man is the ruler of everything, and is subservient to none but God. He is really in the image of God. He is really his vicegerent if he develops all his physical, mental, and spiritual powers to their perfection. God has given him capabilities to rule the world. How much spiritual advancement and scientific progress is before man if he works on the proposition laid down by the Qur-an. Those who have devoted themselves to spiritual advancement have formed wonderful miracles. Those who
have devoted to scientific progress have mastered the sea and also the air. Who knows that if man works on with greater diligence and intelligence he might succeed in conquering death even physically? Who knows he might find out the secret of perpetual youth? Who knows he might rule over the sun more thoroughly and be able to utilize its life-giving properties? He might yet be able to find the elixir of life in a medicinal combination of oxygen and hydrogen, etc.—In short, he can do anything. Immense material for his scientific progress is in store for him.

Now he knows that nothing is impossible for him to achieve if he works under the direction of Him who is the Creator, Sustainer, and Cherisher of all that exists. No higher good could be done to him than to have made him His own vicegerent by the Omnipotent God. And Muhammad was the sign for that.

Muhammad the Greatest Man and the Ever-Living Sign.

The definition of the greatest man as given by Dr. Michaelis is:—

“The greatest man is he whose genius has
the most far-reaching influence on posterity."

Muhammad, and none but Muhammad, will be entitled to be called the greatest man, even if we raise the above standard to its ultimate height and say: "Greatest man is he whose genius and character have the most versatile, deep-rooted, far-reaching, beneficent, and permanent influence on humanity irrespective of race, age, sex, country in multiform aspects of human life, thoughts, and deeds."

Muhammad has left permanent and undying influence upon the religious thoughts and life of human souls. He presented the best, the purest, the noblest, and yet the most rational conception of God.

Gibbon says:

"The creed of Muhammad is free from suspicion or ambiguity; and the Qur-an is a glorious testimony to the unity of God. The Prophet of Mecca rejected the worship of idols and men, of stars and planets, on the rational principle that whatever rises must set, that whatever is born must die, that whatever is corruptible must decay and perish. In the Author of the universe his rational enthusiasm confessed and adored an
infinite and eternal being, without form or place, without issue or similitude, present to our most secret thoughts, existing by the necessity of his own nature, and deriving from himself all moral and intellectual perfection. These sublime truths, thus announced in the language of the Prophet, are firmly held by his disciples, and defined with metaphysical precision by the interpreters of the Qur-an. A philosophic theist might subscribe the popular creed of the Muhammadans: a creed too sublime perhaps for our present faculties. What object remains for the fancy, or even the understanding, when we have abstracted from the unknown substance all ideas of time and space, of motion and matter of sensation and reflection? The first principle of reason and revelation was confirmed by the voice of Muhammad: his proselytes, from India to Morocco, are distinguished by the name of Unitarians; and the danger of idolatry has been prevented by the interdiction of images."

Muhammad's conception of God was not only spiritually most exalted and without any blemish, but that conception had also had the most beneficial effect upon human character—
ethically, sociologically, and even politically—if was, the basis, the fundamental source, the fountain-head of all Muslim civilization and advancement, and through that the first cause of the whole twentieth-century progress of the world. Upon the conception of the absolute Unity of God without a kufu, partner and co-sharer, upon the conception of the universal beneficence of God as the Rabbul-Alamin towards all humanity, whether high or low, black or white, Eastern or Western, upon the conception of the over Kingship of God as the Malik-e-Yaomiddin, the structure of the principle of Equality, Fraternity, and Liberty was laid.

All Muslim ethics, laws, literature, etc., are derived from the Holy Qur-an as spoken out by Muhammad under the inspiration of God himself.

Davenport says:

"The Qur-an is the general code of the Moslem world; a social, civil, commercial, military, judicial, criminal, penal, and yet religious code: by it everything is regulated; from the ceremonies of religion to those of daily life; from the salvation of the soul to the health of the
body; from the rights of the general community to those of society; from morality to crime, from punishment here to that of the life to come."

Sir William Muir admits:—

"The Qur-an abounds with arguments drawn from Nature and Providence; with a view to prove the existence of God, as the Supreme Ruler, and to enforce His sovereign claim on the obedience and gratitude of mankind. The retribution of good and evil in the world to come, the obligation to follow virtue and eschew vice; the duty and happiness of the creature in worshipping and serving the Creator, and such like topics, are set forth in language of beauty and vigour, abounding often with real poetry. Thus, also, the reasonableness of the Resurrection is taught by many forcible considerations, and especially by the analogy, so striking in Southern climes, of the earth, long dry and dead, quickened suddenly into exuberant life by the copious rain from heaven."

The ethical beauty of the teachings of Muhammad as revealed to him by God in the Qur-an is described in Chambers's Encyclopedia thus:—
"That part of Islam which distinctly reveals the mind of its author is also its most complete and its most shining part—we name the ethics of the Qur-an. They are not found, any more than the other laws, brought together in one or two or three Surats, but like golden threads they are woven into the huge fabric of the religious constitution of Muhammad. Injustice, falsehood, pride, revengefulness, calumny, mockery, avarice, prodigality, debauchery, mistrust, and suspicion are inveighed against as ungodly and wicked, while benevolence, liberality, modesty, forbearance, patience, endurance, frugality, sincerity, straightforwardness, decency, love of peace and truth, and above all, trust in one God and submitting to His will are considered as the pillars of true piety and the principal signs of a true believer."

Edmund Burke, the great English orator, paid compliment to the laws laid down by Muhammad in the following words:—

"The Muhammadan law is binding upon all, from the crowned head to the meanest subject; it is a law interwoven with a system of the wisest, the most learned, and the most
enlightened jurisprudence that ever existed in the world."

As to literature, every book written by a Muslim opens with a Quranic formula, whatever may be its subject-matter.

How much Muhammad influenced posterity can be gauged by the following quotation we take from the "Miracle of Muhammad":

"It was the Prophet who laid the foundation-stone of that vast edifice of enlightenment and civilization which has adorned the world since his time. The Muslims were commanded by the Quran to say, 'O God, increase my knowledge,' and heard Muhammad tell them, 'knowledge is the birthright of the Faithful; they take it wherever they find it.' Such were the seeds which grew into trees whose branches spread to Bagdad, Sicily, Egypt, and Spain, and whose fruits are enjoyed to this day by modern Europe. 'We cannot consider in this place, says Chamber's Encyclopaedia, 'what Islam has done for the cause of all humanity, or more exactly, what is its precise share in the development of science and art in Europe. Broad speaking, the Muhammadans may be said to
have been the enlightened teachers of barbarous Europe, from the ninth to the thirteenth century. . . . . . Arabic philosophy, medicine, natural history, geography, history, grammar, rhetoric, and "golden art of poetry," schooled by the old Hellenic masters, brought forth an abundant harvest of works, many of which live and teach as long as there will be generations to be taught.'

"Renan adds: 'The taste for science and literature had, by the tenth century, established in this privileged corner of the world, a tolerance of which modern times hardly offer us an example. Christians, Jews, and Mussulmans spoke the same tongue, sang the same songs, participated in the same literary and scientific studies. All the barriers which separated the various peoples were effaced; all worked with one accord in the work of a common civilization. The mosques of Cordova, where the students could be counted by thousands, became the active centres of philosophical and scientific studies.'

"Deutsch thus describes the work of the Saracens: 'To hold up the light to Humanity
they alone, while darkness lay around; to raise up the wisdom and knowledge of Hellas from the dead; to teach philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and the golden art of song to the West as well as to the East; to stand at the cradle of modern science, and to cause us late epigoni to weep over the day when Grenada fell.'"

Guisot and Draper both admit that it was the Muslim influence that freed Europe from feudalism and elevated it morally and intellectually.

The most uniq... feature of Muhammad's greatness is that his influence is permanent. Muhammad is an ever-living sign of God. The world stands no more in need of fresh signs, fresh prophets, fresh reformers. The life of Muhammad has been most minutely and elaborately chronicled. He lives to-day as he lived thirteen centuries ago. Those in Europe can follow him to-day as correctly and intimately as did those who lived with him in his own country. And even if his life-history had been obliterated, he would have still stood before our eyes preaching and guiding the human race towards its highest goal. Muhammad lives in
the Qur-an. Muhammad is ever-living. He will continue to outshine the sun. He will outlive the universe. Since Muhammad's time efforts have been made to work out the same principles which he laid down, but on more modernized forms. They have utterly failed. Sikhism, Brahmosamajism, Tolstoism, and Bahaism, etc., all started with the one idea of unifying more and more different religious ideas. They ended in creating new schisms. They failed to make any improvement upon Muhammad's idea of universal brotherhood. They rather degraded that idea. It was unwise on the part of those who, with the best of motives, started those sects. They ought to have approached in all humility the ever-living Muhammad. They ought to have studied the Qur-an well, and there they were sure to find all that for which their hearts had a craving. The door to Muhammad is open to all. But Muhammad was no god. He did not claim to be an intercessor, even. He did not claim to be the saviour of mankind. He, on the other hand, taught that every man or woman is his or her own saviour. No burdened soul can bear the burden of others.
Islam does not depend upon any human personality. It rests upon God alone. Every person can approach God by himself. The way to God is open to all. More than thirteen centuries ago the Holy Qur-an declared, and the same it proclaims to-day:

_Innal lazina amanu va'llazina hadu vannasara vassabi-'ina va amana billahe ва yaumal akhrite va 'amila salihan falahum ajrohum 'inda Rabbihim va la khaufun alaihim ва la hum yahzinun (ii. 62)._"

"Surely those who believe (Muslims), and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve."

And—

_Laisalbirra an tovallu wijuhalum qibalal masrige ва maghribe va lakinnalbirra man amana billahe va yaomil akhrite valmalaxikate va kitabe valnabiyna va atalmala 'ala hubbihi zavilqurba valyatama valmasakina vebnassabile vassaelina va sirrigab ва aga-mossalata ва atazzakata valmufuna bi'ahdihim iza 'ahadu vassabireena filbasae vazzarrae ва ki qibase ulaekeallaqina sadaqu ва ulaeqa humulmuttagun (ii. 177)_"
"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflict—these are they who are true (to themselves), and these are they who guard (against evil)."

And—

\[\text{Vallazina juminuna bima unzila elaika va rama unzila min qablika, va bilakhirate hum yuqinun (ii. 4).}\]

"And who believe in that which has been revealed to you and that which was revealed before you, and they are sure of the hereafter."

The above-given three verses when read with the true spirit from the best and unimpeachable religious and moral basis of universal beneficence, goodwill, and fraternity. Muham-
mad taught those thirteen centuries ago. Muhammad teaches them to-day.

Muhammad lives and his teachings also live. Even an enemy of Muslims has very recently admitted:—

"They are the living things of Islam, and until they are neglected Islam will be a force in the world. Faults in the Muhammadan body are not difficult to find; but this at least may be said, that in no part of the world does there exist a Muhammadan society in which men are cruel to those whom they employ, indifferent to their parents, systematically dishonest to one another, or socially oppressive to the poor, all of which odious vices are practised as common customs in the land whence come those persons who sally forth to regenerate the East. It is not Muhammadan law that we should admire, but the observance by Muslims of their own freewill of those social duties which Christians will not perform save at the end of a policeman's truncheon."¹

There are in this world a number of people even in England who are great materialists and

¹ "The Caliph's Last Heritage," by Sir Mark Sykes, chap. x, p. 93.
while disbelieving in a God are ready to bow their head before Muhammad. They acknowledge his superhuman greatness, his unique personality. All what he did they attribute to him and to him alone. They take the sign for the original. They are mistaken. Muhammad himself was inspired to proclaim:

"Say: Surely, (as for) me, my Lord has guided me to the right path: (to) a most right religion, the faith of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not of the polytheists. Say: Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the Lord of the worlds; no associate has He; and this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit. Say: What! shall I seek a Lord other than Allah? and He is the Lord of all things; and no soul earns (evil) but against itself, and no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another; then to your Lord is your return, so He will inform you of that in which you differed. And He it is who has made you successors in the land and raised some of you above others by (various) graces, that He might try you by what He has given you; surely your Lord is quick to require
(evil), and He is most surely the Forgiving, the Merciful."

Muhammad was not God, But he surely was the best and the ever-present sign of God. (May peace and triumph be for him and his followers, now and always!).

Printed by S. Shamas Din at the Punjub Steam Press, Lahore.