

" Muhammad is ... the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets ... "—Holy Qur-ân, 33 :

" There will be no Prophet after me."—Muhammad.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَجْلَدٌ مِمَّا نَشَرَهُ عَلَى سَوَابِغِ رَسُولِ مُحَمَّدٍ خَلِيَّةِ النَّبِيِّينَ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXIII.

MUHARRAM, 1354 A.H.

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APRIL, 1935 A.C.

HOW ISLAM WON ME

BY COL. DONALD S. ROCKWELL

The simplicity of Islam, the powerful appeal and compelling atmosphere of its mosques, the earnestness of its faithful adherents, the confidence inspiring realization of the millions throughout the world who answer the five daily calls to prayer—these factors attracted me from the first. But after I had determined to become a follower of Islam, I found many deeper reasons for confirming my decision. The mellow concept of life—fruit of the Prophet's combined course of action and contemplation,—the wise counsel, the admonitions to charity and mercy, the broad humanitarianism, the pioneer declaration of women's property rights—these and other features of the teachings of the Man of Mecca were to me among the most obvious evidence of a practical religion so tersely and aptly epitomized in the cryptic words of Muhammad: "Trust in Allah and tie your camel." He gave us a religious system of normal action, not blind faith in the protection of an unseen force in spite of our own neglect, but confidence that if we do all things rightly and to the best of our ability, we may trust in what comes as the Will of Allah.

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The broad-minded tolerance of Islam for other religions recommends it to all lovers of liberty. Muhammad admonished his followers to treat well the believers in the Old and New Testaments; and Abraham, Moses, Jesus are acknowledged as co-Prophets of the One God. Surely this is generous and far in advance of the attitudes of other religions.

The total freedom from idolatry, even in the modified form of image-worship and adoration of the myriad figures and faces of saints in church windows, statute niches and shrines, is a sign of the salubrious strength and purity of the Muslim faith. There literally is but One God in mosque, home, mind and heart—Allah, undiluted by adulation of gilded pictures and tinted plaster models of many saints, unconfused by likenesses of the Prophet himself, forbidden by the wisdom of the inspired mind which gave to a pagan people the monotheistic Qur-án. The concept of the Unity of God is not dimmed by the separate worship of a prophet as the son of God, by prayers to the mother of the prophet, nor by belief in the division of the godhead into a trinity, with divine inclusion of a saviour in the spiritual person of the deity, as in the Christian faith. Muhammad, revered as a human revealer of Divine wisdom, has not been elevated to divine status by overzealous disciples and the reflected glory of the roseate glow which martyrdom always casts over its victims.

The original teachings of the Prophet of Allah have not been engulfed in the maze of changes and additions of doctrinarians. The Qur-án remains as it came to the corrupt polytheistic people of Muhammad's time, changeless as the holy heart of Islam itself.

Moderation and temperance in all things, keynote of Islam, won my unqualified approbation. The health of his people was cherished by the Prophet, who enjoined them to observe strict cleanliness and specified fasts and to subordinate carnal appetites.

HOW ISLAM WON ME

This summer I visited all of Spain's great cathedrals, many originally built as mosques, and immediately afterward I knelt with thousands of Moors in the mosques at Fez, Marakesh, Rabat, Meknes, Tetuan and other Moroccan cities.

As the noble strains of organ music and sonorous chanting reverberated through the vaulted arches of the dim cathedrals, and the pleasant odour of incense was wafted between the lofty columns of the colossal Spanish churches, I had to admit that these are valuable aids to the staging of a good show. But religion should not lean on the props of a stage spectacle—rather austere purity of prayer without embellishment. Music and incense produce emotional reactions, the products of ecstasy instead of spiritual fervour. They have their place as stimulants for the religious sluggards; they are the wine and coffee of Christendom.

But when I stood in the inspiring mosques of Istambul, Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, Algiers, Tangier, Fez and other cities, I was conscious of a more powerful reaction—the potent uplift of Islam's simple appeal to the sense of higher things, unaided by elaborate trappings, ornamentation, figures, pictures, music and ceremonial ritual. The mosque is a place of quiet contemplation and self-effacement in the greater reality of the One God, Allah. It does not need to employ a three-ring circus of sight, sound and smell to attract and hold its faithful congregation.

The democracy of Islam has always appealed to me. Potentate and pauper have the same rights on the floor of the mosque, on their knees in humble worship. There are no rented pews nor special reserved seats.

With full respect for the traditions of another great religion, monasticism does not seem to me a necessary or healthful adjunct of spiritual guidance. Men of normal

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family lives can appreciate the problems and understand the frailties of their fellow men better than a priest leading an ascetic life, and of course the spectacle of a renegade priesthood, betraying the code of their cloth for the temptations of the flesh, is a deplorable one. Naturally Islam has never developed a priesthood nor bureaucratic church government.

The Muslim accepts no man as a mediator between himself and his God. He goes direct to the invisible Source of creation and life, Allah, without reliance on a saving formula of repentance of sins and belief in the power of a teacher to afford him salvation.

The universal brotherhood of Islam, regardless of race politics, colour or country, has been brought home to me most keenly many times in my travels, and this is another feature which drew me toward the Faith. I have been hospitably received by Muslim brothers from London, Paris, New York, Morocco, India, Persia, Turkey, Syria, Egypt and Poland ; and my heart has warmed to them all as earnest workers in this great cause.

The copies of the *Islamic Review* which reached my hands in America were a source of further encouragement to cling to my adopted Faith, and it is a pleasure to pause in my editorial duties to express my appreciation and admiration of the noble work being done at Woking, and to assure my friends throughout the Muslim world of my zealous purpose to aid in the Islamic Renaissance and to establish the Crescent more firmly in the Western world.

MUSLIMS IN POLAND

MUSLIMS IN POLAND

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE LITHUANIAN TARTARS

BY L. BOHDANOVICZ

(Continued from Vol. XXIII, p. 94.)

CHAPTER II

THE LITHUANIAN TARTARS BEFORE THE DIVISION OF POLAND

The Lithuanian Tartars reached the zenith towards the middle of the 16th century. It is rather difficult to determine their number at that time, as authors disagree on that point. Their data vary from 40,000 to 200,000, a discrepancy which is difficult to explain.

It is interesting to mention here a document dating from 1558 which concerns itself chiefly with the situation of the Lithuanian Tartars at this period. It is a memoir in the form of a manuscript written in Turkish language by an anonymous Lithuanian Tartar, during his stay in Constantinople on his way to Mecca, by order of Roustem Pasha, the Grand Vizier to and son-in-law of the Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. It is entitled: *Risalei Tatani Leh*—"On the Tatars of Poland."¹

It appears from this memoir that there were about 200,000 Tartars in Lithuania, divided between 100 colonies and villages. Each village had its mosque. The Imams were chosen in Crimea or Turkey. The Turkish language was already almost forgotten; the majority spoke Polish or White Russian patois; on the other hand, the Arabic alphabet was commonly used, even for these two languages. Their chief occupations were agriculture and military service in case of war. Other professions were looked down upon; soldiers were exempted from the payment of taxes. In towns the Tartars used to live

¹ This MS. has been translated into Polish and published by A. Muchliński, Professor of the Turkish Language at St. Petersburg University, in "Tęha Wilenska" (Wilno 1858).

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together, thus forming Tartar streets or even Tartar districts (traces of this state of things in almost every town in the region inhabited by Tartars is evidenced from the fact that there are streets even to-day called "Tartar"). In the army the Tartars formed separate troops and were commanded by their own chiefs.

In a decree issued on the 20th of June, 1568, there are terms which hold sacred the rights of the Tartar nobility: "In view of the services rendered with faithfulness to the cause of the State by our Tartar subjects inhabiting the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and owning landed estates in it, We decree that as their rights, liberties and privileges which were granted to them by Our ancestors and by Us be reaffirmed and confirmed and that they shall enjoy the same rights as Our other subjects belonging to the nobility in Our State, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania."

Thus, the Tartars had almost all the rights of the other classes of the nobility or even had the privilege, which was extraordinary at that period, of marrying Christian wives without changing their religion.¹

The uppermost class was composed of those Tartars who had received landed estates, and, in virtue of this, were compelled not only to military service but to provide a contingent of horsemen, equipped and armed; to this class belonged the Princes, Beks, Mirzas and Olans who already occupied privileged positions in the country of origin. In comparison with the great dignitaries and magnates of the Duchy their landed endowments were small.

On this point it is interesting to emphasize the nature of the right of possession of the Tartars on those

¹ Narbutt, *op. cit.* Vol. VIII, p. 246: "The greater part of them led no women with them: for this reason they were allowed to marry native women under the condition that each man may have only one wife. As for the children, they adopted their father's religion."

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landed estates granted by the Lithuanian Grand Dukes. The right of possession was rather a precarious one, because, although conceded in perpetuity, these estates were indefeasible : in order to hand them over for money or gratuitously or to mortgage them one had to ask the permission of the Lithuanian Grand Dukes and, later, of the Polish Kings. It seems that this feature of the right of possession persisted until the division of Poland ; for King Stanislas Augustus decreed that this right of precarious possession be converted into a right of owner pure and simple.

The second class was made up of warriors ; they also received lands, but their lots were much smaller.

The first two classes were exonerated from the payment of taxes ; in exchange they had to do military service without pay.

The lowest class was composed of such Tartars as had not received any lands. This kind of "proletariat" earned their living by practising various professions, such as gardening, tannery, conveyance, etc. But they could enlist in the permanent troops and received a pay. Later on, some of them received lands and rights of nobility as a reward of their conduct in warfare. With time the differences between the classes became less marked.

At the end of the 16th century, under the influence of the Jesuits, the epoch of Catholic reaction began, and the situation of the Tartars became more precarious.

But even before this reactionary movement persecutions of the Tartars were committed by the local authorities and their rights were being gradually denied to them. But these were not systematic, because the Tartars had defenders in the persons of the Jaguillo Kings. In 1519 they sent to the King of Poland, Sigismond I, a petition worded thus : " The glorious Witold is no more, he did not order us to forget the Prophet, whose name we repeat

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turning towards the Holy Places, just as our Caliphs do. We have sworn on our sword to love the Lithuanians when the fate of war brought us to them and when they said to us as we were entering their territory: 'This land, these waters, this sand and these forests will be in common between us.' Our children are not ignorant of Witold's name and near the salt lakes (*i.e.*, the Crimea and in Kiptchak) they know that in your land we are not strangers."

The King was not insensible to their demands and in his letters to the Palatine of Troki he severely ordered to stop exactions; one of three letters, dated from 1537, has come down to us (Archives of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, vol. 20, fol. 32).

The 1588 Constitution deprived the Tartars of the right of having Christian serfs, forbade them to build or to repair mosques, and condemned to death Mussulmans convicted of proselytisation.

The 1615 Constitution forbade them to marry Christian girls, and deprived them of the right of being commanded by their own chiefs.

In 1620 their position became still worse because of the war between Poland and Turkey; the right of owning real estate was brought to strict limits.

These persecutions caused the emigration of Tartars into Crimea and Turkey, which were Poland's border countries at that period. Even now there are traces of this emigration at Dobrudja (Rumania), and in Turkey, and in Asia Minor or the Kizyl-Iruak.¹

A small part of those who remained there were some who were not courageous. They were converted to Christianity. The rest hid themselves in their villages and waited for better days, and tried to become assimilated to the native population by changing their dress and manners.

¹ Ubcini Letters on Turkey.

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In spite of these persecutions the Tartars took advantage of every occasion to show their devotion to their new fatherland. Professor Talk Hryniewicz of Cracow University, and who has written much concerning the Lithuanian Tartars in his work "The Muslims,"¹ says that the fidelity of the Tartars to Poland amounted to heroism. On the other hand, the fact that these persecutions did not express the real feelings of the Polish people towards them, and were only the consequence of misunderstood religious zeal, is proved by the sentence written by King Jean Sobieski's father, Jacob Sobieski, in his Journal of the Chociun Campaign,² in 1621, *i.e.*, in the midst of the period of religious persecutions: ".....the following were killed in the skirmish: Captains Bolidan and Garowig, two Lithuanian Tartars, a chivalrous people who always deserved well of the country." There are many similar testimonies. The Tartars did not let an opportunity pass to prove their loyalty to Poland in that epoch of perpetual wars which Poland was constantly waging against Moscow, the Ukrainian Cossacks, Sweden, etc. In the war annals one meets again and again the names of the valiant Tartar officers so eloquently described by Sienkiewicz in his *Tielogy* (and very properly, for Sienkiewicz's family was of Tartar origin and was converted to Christianity in 1741).

Generous and tolerant by virtue, the Polish people have done justice to the loyalty of the Tartars, and little by little, successive constitutions have given back to the Tartars their old rights and privileges. The 1659 Constitution, although it was specially aimed at, the dissenters compromised in the wars, recognised the loyalty of the Tartars and gave them back part of their former privileges. It is true that this applied at first only to soldiers. In 1662

¹ 2nd Edition, Paris, 1853, p. 23.

² *Memoirs of the Chociun Campaign, 1621*, Jean Count of Ostrog, Prokoje, Zbigniewski, Stanislas, Lubomissk and Jacob Tobieski, Cracow, 1853, p. 127.

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they were given back the liberty of worship. But their situation was improved chiefly under the reign of Sobieski. First of all, a general amnesty was given to all emigrants, then, in 1678, the King caused the Parliament to vote a Constitution which gave back to the Tartars almost all their former rights and privileges. Successive Constitutions in the 17th century still bettered their position, so that, by the time of the division of Poland at the end of the 18th century, they enjoyed almost the same rights (except the right to marry Christian women) as at the time of the definite union of Lithuania and Poland (1569).

Poland did not have to repent of this policy towards the Tartars ; for during the Independence War there were six cavalry regiments consisting entirely of Lithuanian Tartars.¹

Thus came to an end the properly Polish period of the history of the Tartars.

The Tartars, who came to Lithuania as early as the 14th century, most of them as former allies, had a good welcome : the Lithuanian princes, and, later, the Polish Kings were glad to have at their disposal an element of population which was faithful, obedient, submissive to military service, and ready to fight at any moment. We must not forget that at that time the Tartar cavalry had a world-wide reputation, possessing its own peculiar tactics, having given birth to what is now known as "light cavalry." The idea of giving them domains, and thus securing for them an indispensable minimum of well-being, was very far-sighted ; for one could reckon upon their gratitude. On the other hand, being not very numerous, and too far from their countrymen, whose state had begun to weaken, they could not aspire to independence.

Very liberally and willingly they were granted numerous privileges, but they did not enjoy all civic rights : even at the time of their greatest expansion they were

¹ Genbarzewski—Genealogical Tree of the Polish Regiments, Warsaw, 1825, p. 16.

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refused political rights. Welcomed as old allies, they were treated, so to speak, as "guests": with much consideration.

At the end of the 16th century, when the foundation of the United Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania became stronger, and the help of the Tartar cavalry became less valuable, because in the meantime its technique had been adopted by the Polish-Lithuanian cavalry, the Government gave way to the Catholic reaction which was as hard towards the Tartars as towards the other infidels. They then being, as now, much attached to their religion and too proud of their past to submit, emigrated *en masse*. The least daring remained and were converted, and the others, obeying both the morals of their religion which prescribed fidelity to their chief, and the tradition of their past which commanded the Tartars to be a warlike people, did their best to show their devotion to their new country on the battlefield. These efforts were not in vain, for, little by little, they regained their former rights.

(To be continued.)

AL-HAQ—THE TRUTH¹

BY MAULVI W. B. BASHYR-PICKARD, B.A. (CANTAB.)

O Muslims, O my brothers-in-Islam,—This is a very happy occasion for me, when, in response to the kind invitation from your president, Mr. Zafar Ali, I revisit the University of Cambridge, which has for me so many memories and associations of the happiest and highest nature, but to-night doubly so, in that now for the first time do I visit in Cambridge some of my Muslim brothers in the Faith.

But I have a message to speak, so, with this brief prelude, I proceed.

¹ An Address delivered before the International Muslim Association, Cambridge.

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I think many people would agree that the subject upon which I address you now, THE TRUTH (*Al-Haq*), is the supreme subject. The one thing that really matters in life is the Truth. Truth is the bed-rock of existence. Those who have not found Truth must still search therefor: those who have found Truth must rejoice therein and progress therein, laying hold on eternal life. Or, if there be any who neither have found Truth nor yet are engaged in searching after Truth, in what state should we say that such were—even a walking amid the shadows and high lights of unreality, lulled by soporific falsehoods or torn by the blind teeth of evil.

Now, what is the nature of this “ Truth ” ? Assuredly Truth is imperishable. It is even one of the Names of God (*Alhamdu lillah il Haq!*) neither old nor new, but eternal. If thou dost seek to find new Truth, thou pursuest delusion. The discovery of Truth is likened unto a traveller, who journeyth into distant lands and sojourneth therein. His knowledge is increased and his heart, becometh enlarged with wisdom; yet whatsoever appeareth strange to him and noteworthy and new is but a rolling back of the cloak of his own ignorance and blindness. So might a traveller come upon the Pyramids or set foot in America, yet who in this would be so far lost to reality as to proclaim anything new. It would seem that the depth of reality knoweth nothing new.

Continuing, while in the essence of Truth we find nothing new, we find also a concomitant quality—an ever-freshness. Truth wearieth not: the repetition of Truth wearies not the pure heart. It is only the assertion of falsehood and the repetition of falsehood that wearies, that aggravates, that irritates, that nauseates.

The Truth is so beautiful that to look thereupon delights, even as the face of the Beloved delights the beholding lover. What wonder that men who have seen

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this beauty forget all else and have gladly laid down their lives in the exhilaration of such vision. Yea! and even in this age, even in these days, the vision hath not lost its delight, its power, and men are ready even now to lay down their lives for the Truth.

To dwell with the Truth, to contemplate the face of the Beloved, to surrender to the Truth and to serve the Beloved wrappeth a man's life in an unassailable armour of peace, and Peace is also a Name of the Beloved (*Alhamdu lillah is Salam !*).

Let me now illustrate this a little. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (may the Peace and the Blessings of Allah abide with him!) bringeth the Truth, maketh known the revelation of the Truth; yet he himself lays no claim to bring anything new, no *new* religion—nay! simply a re-statement of Eternal Truth, a purifying and a cleansing and a restoration of the former religion, even the religion of Arbraham, and of Moses, and of other Prophets of old, and of Jesus (may the Peace of God abide with them each and all!).

Passing now to practical matters (for what is knowledge without its application and of what value is knowledge from which is derived no benefit?), let us find the relation of Eternal Truth to human existence, to human life.

The case would appear to be thus: to set one's life aright one must grasp Eternal Truth and build upon this substructure. *The Truth* itself is eternal, ever-living and the source of life. A human life based upon Eternal Truth is secure, cannot be shaken, enters into peace, passeth from stage to stage of unfolding, of development, of evolution from one perfection blending into another perfection; and lo! elemental truth, how simple! how vast! how closely related to the individual and yet all-embracing!

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And what is *The Truth*? What is *Al-Haq*? Even the Unity of God, unto Whose Name be praise! (*Alhamdu lillah il Ahad!*) There is no god but God the *One* (*Wahid, La ilaha il Allah*).

This is the secret of existence; this, so clear of perception, so instantaneous in recognition by reason, so that conviction followeth, even as the flash of lightning. This is the bed-rock of all existence: this is the beginning of the Perfect Path. Without knowledge of this Truth, what is life? What is effort? What is the direction? What is the goal? I say unto you that, without the reality of this Truth, life and effort are but a wandering and a torment upon a sea of uncertainty and doubt—a rudderless, compassless voyaging at the mercy of wild waves, piled up in the darkness of night. And “Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth.”¹ (*Alhamdu lillah en Noor!*)

There is no god but God; *La ilaha il Allah*; verily this repetition brings an instantaneous flash of conviction. Reason bows as to an axiom and assenteth readily without desiring an elaborate process of argumentation before belief is made firm. But mark what follows; after instantaneous belief in this statement of fundamental Truth lay on thereto long consideration and pondering and meditation upon this simply expressed Truth that God is *One*. He hath no partner, nor is there any other object for the worship of humanity save only Allah, and the resultant effect is but a strengthening, a brightening and making clear of the elemental conviction and a deepening of that first delight. “Say: He, God, is One.” *Qil: Huw’ Allahu Ahad.*²

And now, having considered the foundation, let us consider the superstructure; for what builder would depart and make an end, having merely assured himself that

¹ The Holy Qur-án, 24 : 35.

² The Holy Qur-án, 112 : 1.

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the foundation was perfect? What of the architect? What of the building? The building is the perfection of human life and human relationships; and the Architect is Allah, the All-Wise. The Holy Prophet Muhammad bringeth the perfected design from the Lord of the Worlds and delivereth unto mankind, the builders, the message revealed by Allah, the All-Wise, and the Prophet instructeth them in the carrying out of the design and showeth them the making perfect thereof. So we complete the sacred formula: having said *La ilaha il Allah*, we make complete in relation to ourselves and to all humanity by saying *wa Muhammad ur Rasul Ullah*—and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.

This section requireth explanation. We no longer deal with Unity, we deal with diversity. We turn to the multifarious needs and duties and relationships and situations of mankind; many and diverse indeed; rich and poor, young and old, wise and requiring instruction, the diversity of race, the diversity of nation, the diversity of social status, the diversity of sex, of parent and child; of those desiring the meeting of their Lord and the walking in His Path and those who turn aside into the ways of infidelity and thanklessness. And, by the Grace of God through His Messenger Muhammad, we receive the Guidance, the Distinction, the Book par excellence, *Al Hudan*, *Al Furqán*, *Al Qur-án*, the Holy Qur-án. *Al hamdu lillah illathi anzala 'ala 'abdihi 'l kitaba, wa lam yaj'al lahu iwaja*—Praise be to God who sent down unto His Servant the Book, and set therein no crookedness.

So in the hands of all men, who read the Message from God, is placed the possibility of perfection. The Book revealed with Truth will, by the Grace of God, guide through the perplexities of the multifarious phenomena by the Way of Peace, the Perfect Path, so that they deviate not. And herein one must stress the pre-eminence given

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in the Qur-án to the duty of prayer, to the efficacy of prayer ; and is not this the most reasonable, the most natural of all means of steadfastness in the Way of God ? To turn often towards Allah in prayer, to be imbued with the memory of Allah, *pénétré du Souvenir du Seigneur*, is surely the first means of cleansing and of nearness to God. With the memory of God in one's heart ever renewed, one's actions will be increasingly towards righteousness, justice and mercy and towards fulfilling the commands of God. The world will lose its power of distracting, of turning men aside into the ways of forgetfulness and wandering and alienation from the Lord of Mercy.

The duty of living is upon mankind, and Islam bids man live in the world, where duties are to be found and where he may be a maintainer of Justice and an accomplisher of the Commands of Allah. Often remembering God, we shall more fully realise that everything belongeth unto God (Whose Name be praised !), everything is His and in His Control. Allah is the All-Encompassing. Nothing is outside of His Possession and Knowledge. We cannot move beyond this. Whatsoever place we are in, there is God. Whatsoever substance we touch, we are not separated from God. The Heavens and the Earth, the Between and the Beyond—assuredly He knoweth and He possesseth.

And yet there is an alienation from God, a state that is referred to as a separation from God, and beware indeed of this, for it is as death compared with life.

Remembrance of God and purification and striving in the Way of God (*fi sabilî 'llah*) and the practising of mercy, and forgiveness and forbearance and the swallowing down of anger and the turning to the Protection of God—these increase a man or a woman in nearness unto God (Whose Name be praised !): and the contrary separateth a man or a woman from God—even forgetfulness of God, remain-

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ing in a state of uncleanness, negligence in the Way of God and turning aside to arrogance, pride and injustice, and carelessness of evil.

And your Lord is the Most High, the Mighty, and, to those who walk in His Way, He is the Most Merciful of the merciful ones, but, to the disobedient, to those who turn not humbly towards Him, He is the Severe-in-Chastisement and the Mostly-to-be-feared.

Think not these are idle words ; look around you and behold the appalling punishments that day after day are meted out, and consider what actions have brought down what punishments.

Indeed, there is no compulsion in religion—*la ikraha fi 'ddeen*.¹ Belief cometh not of compulsion, either of God or man. There is an invitation to belief, to the Faith, to the Way of Mercy, to the Perfect Path, but beyond that nothing. The choice is entirely a matter of individual desire, of individual assent and the Grace of God (Whose Name be praised !) the One, the Eternal, the Bountiful, the *Truth*.

Truth—nothing is better than Truth. Truth is the supreme object of knowledge, the supreme object of love, *Al Haq*. Knowledge advanceth by sure stages of truth unto *The Truth—Al Haq (Alhamdu lillah il Haq!)*.

Now absolute knowledge is a sifting of truth from error, of good from bad, of right from wrong ; the Qur-án is therefore called *Al Furqán*, the Distinction, for by the revelation of the Qur-án truth standeth clearly discerned from error, and the Right Path appears plainly, shining between the shadows of error. Surely on both sides of the Path errors stray away into remoteness and darkness and doubt, but the Perfect Path lieth between excess and defect, and leadeth, by the Permission of God, unto the threshold of the Beloved.

¹ The Holy Qur-án, 2 : 256.

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And now I must bring this discourse to a conclusion, and I hope that, while doing so, I may refresh within your minds the Qur-ánic verse : “ Say : the Truth hath come and the falsehood vanished ; surely falsehood is a vanishing thing ! ”¹

So I conclude with a description of the Perfect Path, which leadeth unto the Beloved. For the Beloved is One without partner, and the Perfect Path is established upon Eternal Truth, not deviating one hair's breadth. Therebeside (by the Permission of Allah) blossom the beauties of Peace and a Light from the Beloved's presence falleth thereupon, shining through the leaves of Mercy upon the fruits of Wisdom and Purity. So, by the Mercy of your Lord, it cometh to pass that, though the ascending path at times wearieth and bruiseeth the feet of the pilgrim, nevertheless a fragrant wind, by the Grace of your Lord, fresheneth his hopes and his courage and his trust, so that the pilgrim with delight and thankfulness ascendeth by the Way of Truth to the presence of the Beloved, well-pleased and well-pleasing.

Surely the Truth hath come and falsehood is a vanishing thing.

Qul: Huw' Allahu Ahad. Wa 'lhamdu lillah il Haq.

“ Say : He, God, is One.” “ And Praise be to God, the Truth ! ”

May the Peace and the Blessings of Allah abide with you, my brothers, and may the memory of the Names of the Beloved ever delight your hearts.

¹ The Holy Qur-án, 17 : 81; see also 34 : 49.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

TWENTY YEARS AGO¹

THE WAY TO WORLD PEACE

The Rev. L. Walter Mason, D.D., speaking on the above subject at Pittsburg said :—

“ If peace is ever to come on earth, it must be through man’s religious nature, and not through his individual or class interest. . . . Although Christianity claims as its founder the Prince of Peace, it has never at any time in its history, even in the lands inhabited wholly by Christians, produced a state of peace. This is the truth we need to remember when thinking of the war, people ask anxiously if Christianity has failed. The sin of war, like any other sin, is in the mind and heart—is in the intention. And that intention has never been absent from Christendom because in time of peace the nations were preparing for war. There is no guilt resting on the Church to-day which has not been there all the time. And in the second place, in so far as religion divides men, it is itself a cause of war. Next to business—the desire for plunder, religion has been the most prolific cause of war. When the Church had temporal power it made war exactly like the secular State, only with deep guilt calling it a holy war.

“ The full implication of monotheism is not yet realized in religion. Christianity still has many of the primitive characteristics of a race religion ; it starts from “ The chosen people and proceeds on special revelation : Its object is to save lost man from an evil world, and the means is not through the purification and redemption of this world, but through the Church, to help man into a salvation beyond the world. Jesus taught that man is the child of God and therefore divine, and that man should work to make this earth into a heavenly kingdom. The Church has taught the exact opposite, that man is a fallen and depraved creature, and that salvation is after death. . . .

“ So although we must acknowledge that the Church, that Christianity, has not abolished war any more than has commerce, finance or organised labour, yet we believe that nothing less powerful than religion can accomplish that end. But it must be religion in a broader form, more universal form than that of any race religion. . . .

“ The Baroness von Sutner during the Balkan War was introduced at a peace meeting in this country by a man who expressed the opinion that while war was a bad thing, that an exception must be made by that war, which had for its purpose the expulsion of the Mohammedans from Europe. . . .

¹ *Islamic Review*, April 1915.

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“A Roman monk in the eleventh century returned from the Orient and inflamed all Europe to arm and rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidel Mohammedans. Now it is not only the Holy Sepulchre, but diamond mines, water powers, forests, and fertile valleys that are in the hands of the Mohammedans—the disbelievers whom Christians must convert. It does not require very much imagination to see sinister possibilities in such a propaganda should some strong national and commercial interests join hands with this religious prejudice, especially if a liberal portion of fear should be mixed.

“We may expect a great hue and cry when the fact is brought home to Christendom that Mohammedanism, the other great missionary religion of the world, is gaining faster than Christianity. . . . And, notwithstanding, the vast sums spent by the Christian Churches, Christianity has taken root in none of these countries. Christianity grew out of Judaism in Palestine. Paul, a Greek-speaking Jew, took his interpretation of Christianity to Europe, and Europe further modified it to suit European understanding and ideals.

“Let something happen to a missionary and a warship is immediately despatched. This seemed to be at one time a part of the technique of the expansion of the British Empire, and younger nations became apt pupils. When Germany was looking for a plausible pretext to seize Kiao-Chao, by a lucky coincidence two German missionaries were killed by a Chinese mob. The fact that these missionaries belonged to a religious order which had been expelled from Germany made no difference, their death was very promptly avenged by the immediate seizure of the Chinese territory!!

THE QUR-ÁN AND THE ORIENTALISTS

BY PROF. MOZAFFAR-UD-DIN NADVI, M.A., F.M., B.E.S.

“If you accept the responsibility of writing history you cannot do so honestly without allocating blame as well as praise, where either is due to the men who take a leading part in the events which make that history. And the right and duty of criticism or approval for their contributions does not cease with their death.” So says Mr. Lloyd George in his preface to the third volume of *War Memoirs*, recently published. It is a sound enough doctrine if one is writing history, but we are not entirely

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convinced that to accept the responsibility of writing history has enabled Mr. Lloyd George to do it. Rather would we say that he has conducted a brilliant offensive into the historian's territory so as to secure for himself a good position there. And this applies, with equal, if not greater, force to many Christian missionaries and *Orientalists* who have written the history of other peoples and of their religions. They do not "allocate blame and praise where either is due," but shower all possible blame on those whose convictions and beliefs are different from their own, and reserve all possible praises for themselves, as if it were their monopoly. Nay, some of them cleverly pass on the defects of their religion to the religions of other peoples. Failing to purge their own faith of its disabilities, natural or artificial, they find it very convenient to ascribe the same disabilities to other faiths, so as to get this much satisfaction that their faith is as good as any other. This sort of counter-blame by the prejudiced writer is directed less to the embellishment of their own cause than to the detriment of others.

That most of the *Orientalists* who carry on research work in Islamic studies are not free from the taint of missionary propaganda is made perfectly clear from the manner in which they misrepresent and misinterpret the teachings of Islam. For example, J. N. Rodwell has, in his preface to the English Translation of the Qur-án, inserted a good deal of most mischievous falsehood regarding the source of Islam, the significance of its teachings, the character of its author and the like. In the garb of a literary service he has done notable disservice, not only to the cause of Islam, but also to the cause of humanity itself, and he lets the cat out of the bag when he suggests the following method of propaganda :—

A line of argument to be adopted by a Christian missionary in dealing with a Muhammadan should be not to attack Islam as

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a mass of error, but to show that it contains fragments of disjointed Truth—that it is based upon Christianity and Judaism, partially understood, especially upon the latter—without any appreciation of its typical character, pointing to Christianity as a final dispensation.

Most of the European scholars who have translated the Qur-án, or written anything concerning it, have attacked it as the basis of Islam from three angles, that is to say, its compilation, its sanctity, and its originality ; their real motive being to reduce it to the level of their own book, the Bible. Professor D. S. Margoliouth has also, in his treatise, *The Early Development of Mohammedanism*, attacked the Qur-án as the basis of Islam, and we propose in this article to discuss the questions involved under those three heads.

(A)—The Compilation of the Qur-án.

It is asserted by most of the *Orientalists*, including Professor Margoliouth, that the verses and suras of the Qur-án remained scattered and disjointed during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, and that they were collected after his death on the authority of the verbal evidences of the Companions. This assertion only serves to betray the ignorance of those who make it. It is a negation of truth to say that the verses and suras of the Qur-án were collected after the Prophet's death, for there is strong historical evidence to show that all the verses of the Qur-án were collected and the suras named under the direct instruction of the Holy Prophet himself. The process of collection was that whenever verses were revealed, the Prophet directed his scribes, the chief of whom was Zaid bin Thabit, to place verses of similar nature together under one sura, and himself gave the name to each sura. Sometimes it so happened that verses of two suras were revealed simultaneously, and the Prophet had them recorded separately so as to avoid confusion. Thus towards the close of the Prophet's life all the verses

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had been arranged and the Suras named. What was done by Caliph Abu Bakr was to place these suras in the order suggested by the Holy Prophet and no more. The third Caliph, Othman, simply issued an official copy of the Qur-án (which was an exact copy of that prepared by Abu Bakr), gave it publicity and forbade the use of other copies (which differed from the official one only in pronunciation) so that different readings might not lead to differences of doctrine such as have actually occurred in the Christian Church. More than thirteen hundred years have elapsed, and not a single Muslim has ever questioned the genuineness and validity of the Qur-án, but, curiously enough, the *Orientalists* have now begun to do so. I quote but a few out of many pieces of reliable evidence available in support of the facts I have set out above.

1. Hudhaifa, a Companion of the Prophet, narrates that the Prophet recited certain verses of the Sura *Baqara* (Chap. II), of *Al-i-Imrán* (Chap. III) and of *Nisá* (Chap. IV) in some of his prayers.

2. It is recorded in *Bukhari*, the most authentic book of *Hadith*, that the Prophet recited certain verses of *A'aráf* (Chap. VII) in prayers.

3. Several traditions in the various books of *Hadith* unmistakably show that the Companions knew the names of the different suras which the Prophet recited, partially or wholly, in his prayers from time to time.

4. Hakim writes in his book *Mustadrik* that the Qur-án was collected thrice, and that the first collection was made during the lifetime of the Prophet himself.

5. The same traditionist has narrated the following in the name of Zaid bin Thabit :

“ We used to collect the verses of the Qur-án in the presence of the Prophet, copying them from various pieces of paper.” (This statement is authentic and altogether reliable, satisfying all the conditions of *Bukhari* and *Muslim*.)

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6. "The copying of the Qur-án was nothing new. The Prophet himself ordered the copying of it. . ." The above testimony is supplemented and confirmed by verses of the Qur-án itself. A few of such verses are given here :

Nay, surely it (the Qur-án) is an admonition. So let him read it who pleases. (It is written) in honoured books (which are) exalted and purified, in the hands of scribes, noble and virtuous.¹

According to Imam Razi these scribes refer to the Companions of the Prophet, but according to some commentators to those who committed the Qur-án to memory.

Again says the Qur-án :

Most surely it is an honoured Qur-án, in a book that is protected ; none shall touch it, save the purified ones.²

Surely on Us (devolves) the collecting of it (the Qur-án) and the reciting of it. Therefore when We have recited it, follow its recitation. Again, on Us (devolves) the explaining of it.

Surely We have revealed it (the Qur-án) with truth, and surely We will protect it. A Prophet from Allah recites pure books, containing reasonable instructions.³

The verses quoted above show clearly enough that the Qur-án did not, in the Prophet's time, consist only in scattered and disconnected fragments, but that it was a well-arranged and jealously protected piece of work.

Thus the first collection of the Qur-án was actually made during the Prophet's lifetime, and the second soon after his death. The Caliph Abu Bakr, in the first year of his reign, when many of the Companions, including those who had committed the Qur-án to memory, had been killed in the battle of Yamama, at the request of 'Umar, directed Zaid bin Thabit to make the second collection of the Qur-án, arranging its suras. There were other collections of the Qur-án also, but they differed from Abu Bakr's in readings. The official copy came into the custody of 'Umar when he became Caliph, and after his death it passed into the hands of his daughter, Hafsa. In the time of the Caliph Uthman, when non-Arab Muslims were found reciting the Qur-án in their own way, naturally controversy arose as to the correct reading and right

¹ The Holy Qur-án, 80 : 11-16. ² *Ibid*, 56 : 77-79. ³ *Ibid*, 75 : 17-19.

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pronunciation of certain words and letters. Caliph Uthman, to avoid this conflict, sent for the official copy of the Qur-án (compiled by Abu Bakr and afterwards placed in the custody of Hafsa), and caused to be prepared four, some say seven, copies of the same by Zaid bin Thabit, Abdullah bin Zubair, S'ad bin al-'As and Abdur Rahman bin Harith, which copies he despatched to different provinces of the Empire, and it is for this reason that Caliph Uthman is known as the "Compiler of the Qur-án," otherwise he had absolutely no hand in the collection of the verses or arrangement of suras. This was the third collection of the Qur-án. The three collections were really the three stages of the compilation of the Qur-án.

In the light of the above evidences and arguments, is it justifiable for *Orientalists* to say that the Qur-án has been compiled on the basis of verbal assertions, and therefore cannot be genuine? It may be noticed here that all the pre-Islamic poems of Arabia which have come down to us are recognised by the *Orientalists* in general as genuine and correct, though they, too, have been compiled on the verbal evidences of the Arabs. How is it, then, that the Qur-án, which was committed to memory by a large number of Companions, and was recorded by others, though scattered on pieces of paper, cannot be recognised as genuine by the same *Orientalists*? Can it be that this is a part of the missionary propaganda?

(B)—The Sanctity of the Qur-án.

The second charge against the Qur-án is that it cannot claim the sanctity accorded to other revealed Books, first, on the ground that it is based on verbal evidence, and secondly, for the reason that the Qur-án was revealed piecemeal by instalments as it were, whereas other Divine Books were disclosed to the Prophets all at one time. This charge partially rests on the hypothesis that the collection of the verses of the Qur-án was not made

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during the Prophet's lifetime, and when once that hypothesis is shattered the charge also falls to the ground. The general tendency of the missionary-minded Christians, when they set out to attack a religion or system, is to anticipate certain possibilities and find an hypothesis on the strength of such possibilities. Subsequent writers of the same turn of mind devote themselves to strengthening and holding up that assumption or hypothesis. And in the course of time a vast edifice is erected on that purely hypothetical basis. Needless to say, a house built on sand cannot last long.

As regards the second ground of the charge, that is, that the Qur-án was revealed piecemeal, and by instalments, it should be borne in mind that the Book was intended to be a guide to Arabia, and through Arabia to the whole universe. The Arabs had long been immersed in polytheism and idol-worship, besides being addicted to drinking, gambling and all immoral acts. When the Prophet first announced that his mission was to guide the people, to purge them of their vices and to cure them of their ills, the entire country rose against him. The Arabs showed no disposition to pay any heed to him, much less to respond to his call. For so stubborn a people, the sudden revelation of a book of the size of the Qur-án could not be suitable. They required a time-to-time warning, a place-to-place threatening, a prolonged knocking and a continuous hammering. The Qur-án, whose revelation covered the whole period of the Prophet's apostolic career, served the purpose. It took the Qur-án some thirteen years to prepare the ground, and brighten the atmosphere of Arabia, and it was in the latter half of the period of the Prophet's mission that the verses of the Qur-án began to be appreciated by the bulk of the people. Thus its revelation by instalments slowly but steadily succeeded in bringing about a revolution which most probably could not have been effected by any process more rapid.

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The unbiased historian, be he a European or non-European, believes, in his heart of heart, that almost all the revealed Books have undergone some adulteration, and that the only Book which has marvellously defied all change, and successfully resisted all kinds of contamination is the Qur-án. Professor Margoliouth, who has attacked the Qur-án right and left, cannot help saying: "The topic chosen by the present writer might be called the supplementing of the Qur-án, *i.e.*, the process whereby the extempore, or indeed exmento, utterances thrown together in that volume were worked into a fabric which has marvellously resisted the ravages of time." ¹

(C)—The Originality of the Qur-án.

Another charge that is levelled against the Qur-án is that it contains nothing original. We cannot understand this charge, and perhaps those who make it understand it no better. If it is meant that the Qur-án embodies all the beliefs and tenets which other revealed Books taught to mankind at the time of their respective revelations, we, Muslims, do not disagree. This is exactly what we believe. Islam is not an extraordinary link in the chain of religions. It is precisely the same that was given to mankind through Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. In this sense no Muslim can justifiably claim originality for the Qur-án. If, however, the suggestion be that the Qur-án is only the reproduction of what was contained in the Bible or other books, revealed or unrevealed, we emphatically say that this is a lie. Is it possible for an absolutely illiterate man to master those other books so marvellously and to assimilate their teachings so accurately and excellently in his creed? Again, there were Jews and Christians in Arabia who excelled in Biblical studies, yet they exercised no influence.

¹ Preface to the "Early Development of Muhammadanism."

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They could neither guide the people to the right path, nor cure them of their vices. How is it, then, that the Qur-án, supposing it to be a defective reproduction of the Bible, could bring about, in the short space of twenty-three years, what the Jews and Christians, with their revealed Books, failed to achieve in the course of centuries ?

The fact is that religion has two sides,—Beliefs and Observances. In the matter of Beliefs, such as the Existence of God, the Unity of God, the Mission of the Prophets, and the Revelation of Books, almost all religions teach one and the same thing. But on the practical side of life, such as the lawfulness of certain actions and the unlawfulness of others, different religions have, according to the needs of the time, given different instructions. By the time Islam was introduced civilisation and culture had made much progress, and consequently it had to fit in with the improved condition of human life. Further, to provide for future advance, Islam contained a seed of growth within itself which, in the light of environment, could be developed to the best advantage of humanity. Islam, being a progressive religion, could not shut its doors against legitimate advance, hence it is adaptable and flexible. It is not, therefore, surprising that the Qur-án has incorporated all the good elements that were found in other revealed Books (for the Author of all these Books is the same—Allah), as well as making its own contribution to the uplift of mankind.

It is, therefore, evident that the charges against the Qur-án—from all three angles : its compilation, its sanctity, and its originality—are based on the critics' perversion or ignorance or misunderstanding of the history of that Book. If they will but approach the subject impartially, and with sympathy, they will realise for themselves that there were three stages in the assembling together of the verses of the

THE QUR-ÁN AND THE ORIENTALISTS

Qur-án in a volume. The first was Collection, and that was made during the lifetime of the Prophet; the second was Compilation (in the shape of a book), and that was effected by Caliph Abu Bakr at the request of 'Umar, and the third stage was Enforcement or publicity and that was given by Caliph Uthman.

That the *Orientalists'* objections against the teachings of Islam is based on ignorance has been testified to by the Christian scholars themselves. The Rev. R. Maxwell King writes:—

I have read in Muslim writings such deep and tender expressions of respect and reverence for Jesus that for the time I almost forgot I was not reading the words of a Christian writer. How different, it is sad to say, has been the way in which Christians have spoken and written of Muhammad. Let us put it down to its true cause—ignorance.

In conclusion, it must be said in all fairness, that our remarks anent the *Orientalists* are directed against those people only who give publicity to mischievous lies in the interest of mission work. On the other hand, the fair-minded scholars of Europe and America, however limited their number, who have studied Islam impartially command our respect and gratitude. They are generally convinced of the universal force of the great Book, the Qur-án, and we cannot do better than quote here the views of some of them:—

If it (the Qur-án) is not poetry—and it is hard to say whether it be or not—it is more than poetry. It is not history nor biography. It is not anthology, like the Sermon on the Mount, not metaphysical dialectics, like the Buddhist Sutras, nor sublime homiletics like Plato's conference of the wise and foolish teachers. It is a Prophet's cry, Semetic to the core, yet of a meaning so universal and so timely that all the voices of the ages take it up, willingly or unwillingly, and it echoes over chosen hearts to world-conquest, then gathering itself into a reconstructive force that all the creative light of Greece and Asia might penetrate the heavy gloom of Christian Europe when Christianity was but the Queen of Night.—Johnson.

The creed of Muhammad is free from the suspicion of ambiguity, and the Qur-án is a glorious testimony to the Unity of God.—Gibbon.

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We may say that the Qur-án is one of the grandest books ever written. Such a book is a problem of the highest interest to every thoughtful observer of the destinies of mankind.—Steingass.

However often we turn to it (the Qur-án), it soon attracts, astounds and in the end enforces our reverence. Thus this book will go on exercising through all ages a most potent influence.—Goethe.

The Qur-án is unapproachable as regards convincing power, eloquence, and even composition.—Hirshfeld.

The Qur-án contains pure, elevated, and benignant precepts.—W. Irving.

CORRESPONDENCE

MITCHAM PARK,
SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

Through the great generosity and kindness of Mahomet Allum, who lent my wife and myself books on the religion of Islam I have found the true religion. I embrace Islam of my own free will.

ERNEST WILLIAMS WILKINS.

LONDON, W. 1.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

For some time past I have been interested in Islam. CHRISTIANITY does not appeal to me as it used to do, and in reading the *Islamic Review* I thought I could find something more comforting in that religion.

I should be very much obliged if you could send me further particulars regarding it.

Yours most faithfully,
(MRS.) FRANCIS CROSS.

CORRESPONDENCE

GRASBERG,
SWEDEN.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I am interested in the Faith of Islam, for which reason I shall be much obliged to you if you would be so kind as to further enlighten me on the same.

Yours truly,
YNGUE NORSTEDT.

HOLLAND PARK AVENUE,
LONDON, W. 11.

THE IMAM,
THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

May I be permitted to express my appreciation of the excellent exposition of your Faith contained in the pages of your esteemed Journal, *The Islamic Review*.

I have been a student of religion for some time, and I have come to the conclusion that religion simply means "the fostering of peace." A twofold peace is, of course, implied—the peace which should prevail between man and man, nation and nation; and the peace of the individual soul.

The Holy Qur-án, *Sura 11*, V. 112, reads:—"Yea, whosoever submits himself entirely to Allah and is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his God." The greatest blessing that could be conferred upon the Children of Israel was, "My Lord! Bless them and keep them; may the Lord cause His Countenance to shine upon them and be gracious unto them; may the Lord lift up His face unto them and grant them *peace!*"

It is obvious then that religion has very little to do with theology and metaphysics. It is a mode of *life* rather than a mode of thought, and its principles of justice, righteousness, truth and love must form the foundation of everyday life—of social administration or economics and of legislation. It must be, too, a character-builder, so that its devotees become lovers of peace, and pursuers of peace,—impassioned for peace, and speakers of words that make for peace.

Yours sincerely,
ALEC CLARMETT.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

LIVERPOOL.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

Assalam-o-Alaikum!

It may interest you to know what the *Peoples of all Nations*, a new and shorter edition of a world famous work, edited by Sir J. A. Hamerton, writes about Islam. This rather popular account of the nations of the world is too partial to CHRISTIANITY which is identified with civilization. That attitude gives exceptional value to the few impartial pronouncements it inserts about ISLAM. (Part 41, p. 970.)

“Mohammetanism has obtained a hold upon North Africa against which Christianity seems powerless to make progress. Missionaries who have laboured for many years, who have won the confidence of the people, and made themselves loved and respected, confess their record is one of disappointment, and that their few proselytes are generally unsatisfactory. Southwards, among the pagan tribes of the desert, it is Mohammetanism, and not CHRISTIANITY that is the proselytiser.

“The whole creed of Mohammetanism is so simple that even the most untutored mind can grasp it. ‘There is no God but Allah, and Mohamct is His Prophet.’ That is all, simple, direct monotheism, with a renunciation of idolatry in all its forms, of imagery, of symbolism and of priestcraft. Whoever will affirm that formula is already a Mohammetan. The rules of conduct and of state-craft are to be found embodied in a book, the Koran, the Divinely inspired words of the Prophet. There is no speculative element, no mysteries, no intricately elaborated theology; just God and the book that contains His law.

“The Koran is very drastic in its provisions against image-worship, apostasy, the drinking of wine, and the eating of certain ‘unclean’ foods, and it demands a rigid observance of the forms of prayer, and various ablutionary rites. It recognizes slavery, polygamy and the seclusion of women, and the facilities which it affords for divorce renders the marriage tie very lax.”

The latter part is obviously meant to balance the former.

Please make representation to the Librarian of the Picton Reference Library (Liverpool), so that the *Islamic Review* may be bound to enable one to refer to old numbers.

I wish you could persuade the B. B. C. to allow you to broadcast on Eid-ul-Fitr. Muslims number one-fifth of the British Empire, and can claim with good reason such a privilege.

Yours sincerely,
M. S. S.

PRECIOUS GEMS

WIMBLEDON,
LONDON, S. W.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Having become interested in your Journal *The Islamic Review*, and also having read a little of the Qur-án, it would give me pleasure to be able to go forward, so that I might understand more of the Prophet's writings. Will you please, therefore, give me any advice and books on Islam ?

Yours truly,
D. SAWGER.

PRECIOUS GEMS

All Allah's creatures are His family.

* * * * *

All Muslims are as one body. If a man feels pain in his head, his whole body complains ; and if his eyes suffer, his whole body complains.

* * * * *

All Muslims are like one wall, some parts strengthening others ; in such a way must they support each other.

* * * * *

All Muslims are brothers in religion, and they must not oppress one another, nor abandon assisting each other, nor hold one another in contempt. The seat of righteousness is the heart ; therefore, that heart which is righteous does not hold a Muslim in contempt ; and all things of one Muslim are lawful to another—his blood, property and reputation.

* * * * *

No man has believed perfectly until he wishes for his brother that which he wishes for himself.

* * * * *

Help your brother in adversity and redeem him if he goes astray.

MUHAMMAD.

THE HOLY QUR-ÁN AND ITS COMMENTARY

BY THE LATE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

(Continued from Vol. XXIII, p. 82.)

Verses 125-126.—Now I am going to refer to the event which has been recorded in these verses. In these days certain popular traditions are considered to be of much more weight than the written words of history, and quite rightly too. The history, in black and white, is the work, at best, only of a man or two, whereas the repository of popular traditions is the memory of a whole nation, continued through the ages. It is but just that the evidence of these millions of people should be accorded a larger measure of credence than that of one or two persons who sit down to write a history. That there was an ancient house of worship in Mecca has been a well established Arabian tradition from times immemorial, and the currency of such a tradition has been admitted even by the most hostile Western writers on Islam. The Holy Qur-án describes it as the First House of God,¹ and again, as the most Ancient House.² Historians of the pre-Christian era, too, have admitted the existence of such a house in Mecca.³ It is also related that the Prophet Abraham arrived at this very place when he banished Hagar and her child Ishmael. The fact that Ishmael settled here is quite evident, inasmuch as the whole race of Arabs is descended from him. On the other hand, the coming of Abraham, in the company of Hagar and Ishmael, to the country of Arabia is actually recorded by the Book of Genesis itself, and there is yet another tradition which says that when the Prophet Abraham came to this House, i.e., Kaaba, he found it being used as a temple of idol-worship and in sore need of repair. It is at this fact that the Holy Qur-án hints in the words “Purify My House.” Again in verse 127 a clear statement is made with regard

¹ Holy Qurán 3 : 95.

² *Ibid.*, 22 : 29.

³ *Vid Diodorus Siculus.*

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to the erection of its walls ; while the last of this series of traditions states that the Prophet Abraham, together with Ishmael, stood by this House and prayed to God that He might raise up among that people a Prophet, on whose account the House should become a point of attraction for the whole world ; and in a reliable tradition it is stated that the Holy Prophet said to his brothers of the Arab race that it was through him that the prayers of Abraham were fulfilled. Nay, we have his actual words with us, and they are these : “I am the prayer of Abraham.” This should not be taken to mean that the promise of God in this respect had been accomplished in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. Actually a considerable portion of it had to see its fulfilment in times to come. The fact remains, however, that the fulfilment came through him and through no other person in history. Over and above all this, hard by the boundary walls of the Sacred House of Kaaba, there is a spot even now, which is called the “Place of Abraham.” In the course of my pilgrimage to Mecca I had the privilege of standing on that sacred spot and addressing prayers to God which mostly concerned the success of the Working Muslim Mission.

It is also learnt, from reliable traditions, that it is here that Abraham and Ishmael stood together and addressed their aforesaid prayer to God. But, apart from these proofs of theories, there is a proof of practice available in this connection, namely, that the Arabs, from very ancient times, have been known to run between *Saffa* and *Marwa*, and this is called *Saee* in the terminology of pilgrimage rituals. The rite known as *Umra* also consists of this. Now, keeping in view all these practices and traditions on the one hand, and on the other considering the fact that it was only the Holy Prophet Muhammad, in the whole race of Ishmaelites, who laid any claim to prophethood—does it appear in any way difficult to a man

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of common-sense to understand that his claims were just and right? It is to emphasize this aspect of the situation that the Holy Qur-án, as I have already explained, uses the word "*Haq*" in speaking of the advent of the Holy Prophet, and repeatedly asserts that both his appearance and his claims were completely in accordance with the needs of the moment. A portion of the prayer of Abraham, however, was fulfilled before the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. People used to make pilgrimage to the Kaaba from Syria and Egypt, from Yemen and Hadramaut, and even from the distant country of Persia. But the other part of it which is referred to in v. 128, was to see its fulfilment after the Holy Prophet's time. I cannot understand why this part of Abraham's prayer should not be taken to be a very great prophecy in itself. One passage from the prayer is this: "My Lord! Make it a town of safety and provide such of its people as are believers with fruits as subsistence." But the other portion of it speaks of the place being made a place of prostration and bending low before God—things that could hardly have entered the imagination of men living in the days of the Holy Prophet, yet they are seeing its fulfilment to-day in truly astonishing manner. While on this subject, I take the liberty of bringing into the discussion that part of Abraham's prayer also which is mentioned in section 6 of the chapter entitled "Abraham." The prayer is to the effect not only that the House should be made a place of safety, but also that idols should be cast out of it, never to be reinstated. It also prays that the heart of the world people be so inclined towards it that all may come running to it. I admit that even before the time of the Holy Prophet this House was the centre of attraction for people round about. But till that time there was nothing so significant in it as to tempt others to take possession of it. The Prophet Abraham himself had purged it of idols, but after a time the idols

THE HOLY QUR-ÂN AND ITS COMMENTARY

occupied the House once more. I again emphasise the fact that a considerable part of the prayer of the Prophet Abraham had not been fulfilled at the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Both the Holy Qur-ân and the Prophet Muhammad, after referring to this prayer, laid emphasis upon certain words therein. These words were of such a kind that their fulfilment would appear impossible at the time, but the Holy Prophet declared, by way of challenge, that the time for their fulfilment had actually arrived, and that that fulfilment was to be accomplished through him. The world's events have since brought about that Arabia is now actually fit to be the domain of the greatest rulers of the earth; and, strangely enough, whichever of the outside nations has become its ruler, has declared itself to be the guardian of this Sacred House. The word "security," which the prayer contains, has also the implied meaning that no non-Muslim power will ever rule over this land; and this prophecy also has been fulfilled in spirit as well as in letter. So much for the physical safety of the country. But, as we have seen, where the Prophet Abraham prayed for the physical protection of its inhabitants he also mentioned their spiritual welfare—namely, that they should for ever remain free from the contamination of idol-worship,¹ and it actually so happened that although the House of Kaaba had been the centre of idolatry for centuries before Muhammad, that son of Abraham so freed it from this pollution that it is now well over 1,300 years that it has been maintaining its prayed for purity in a wonderful manner. It is, indeed, a miraculous fulfilment of that prayer for the safety of the House that whereas the places of birth of other religions are, one and all, in the hands of unbelievers, the birthplace of Islam has never passed from the keeping of its followers. Benares, Hardwar, Pataliputra, Palestine

¹ The Holy Qur-ân, 14 : 35.

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and Jerusalem : none of these are in the hands of the followers respectively of Ram Chandra, Sri Krishna, Buddha, Moses and Jesus, who were born in one or other of these celebrated places. Such a contrast of events does certainly enhance the force of this prophecy relating to the Sacred House of Kaaba.

In verse 125 there is the further prayer that the place of Abraham be made a place of prayers, so that the generations to come may gather in this place to do their prostrations and make obeisance before God. It is noteworthy that at the time of the revelation of this verse there was not the most distant chance of any such things taking place on this spot. But since the advent of the Holy Prophet this has been the only House of Worship in the whole world where men will remain without even turning all the 24 hours, while making obeisance and prostrating themselves before the Lord. The churches and temples are open only at specified times during the week—even the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina has its doors closed from 11 or 12 o'clock at night until 3 in the morning, but if there is any house open for all the 24 hours of the day, and which is never without devotees in prostration, it is the House of God in Mecca only. During my stay in Mecca, I used to go to this House, at various times, both during the day and night, and often sat for hours in that place, but I always found in it persons bending and prostrating themselves before God. Now, if such a thing be the exclusive privilege of the Kaaba, is any other house in the world entitled to contend with it for the title of "the House of God?" To a man of insight this fact alone should constitute a mighty proof of the truth of Islam. It will, indeed, so appear when one considers further that when this verse was revealed, the Prophet himself had been turned out of Mecca by the hostile section of its population who were given to rank superstitions and idolatry.

(To be continued)

WHAT IS ISLAM ?

WHAT IS ISLAM ?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teachings. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.]

ISLAM : THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word Islam literally means : (1) Peace ; (2) the way to achieve peace ; (3) submission ; as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, *i.e.*, the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's Prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR-ÁN.—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number : belief in (1) Allah ; (2) Angels ; (3) Books from God ; (4) Messengers from God ; (5) the Hereafter ; (6) the Premeasurement of good and evil ; (7) Resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress ; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life.

The sixth article of Faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination ; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number : (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad ; (2) Prayer ; (3) Fasting ; (4) Almsgiving ; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Mecca.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of All the

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Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

FAITH AND ACTION.—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

ETHICS OF ISLAM.—“Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes,” says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His Attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine Attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels, and leading him to the border of Divinity.

THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.—Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments. Islam places man and woman under the like obligations, the one to the other.

EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

PERSONAL JUDGMENT.—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

KNOWLEDGE.—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

SANCTITY OF LABOUR.—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

CHARITY.—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.

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