

“Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Last of the Prophets . . .”—
HOLY QUR-AN 33: 40. “There will be no Prophet after me.”—MUHAMMAD.

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Mrs. THELMA N. MATHESON.

A new member of the faith; whose declaration, giving the usual particulars seems to have been lost in the course of mail transmission from England. She appears to have embraced Islam towards the end of the last year.—Ed. I. R.

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THE HOLY QUR-AN ON JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

BY MAULVI AHSANULLAH

(Continued from page 287 of the current volume)

SURA AL-NISĀ'

Verse 156.—"Wa bikufri him wa qawlihim 'alá Maryama buhtánan 'azímá."

"That they rejected faith—that they uttered against Mary a grave, false charge."

Verse 157.—"Wa qawlihim, Inná-qatalnal-Masíha 'Isa-bna Maryama Rasúl-Alláhi; Wa má qatalúhu, wa má salabúhu wa lákin shubbiha lahum, wa innal-lazína-khtalafú fihí lafi shakkim minhu. Má lahum bihí min 'ilmin illat-tibá'azzanni wa má qatalúhu yaqíná."

"That they said (in boast): 'We killed Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, the Apostle of God.' But they killed him not, nor crucified him. But so it was made to appear to them and those who differ therein are full of doubts with no certain knowledge, but only conjecture to follow; for certainly they killed him not."

Verse 158.—"Bal-rafa'ahu-lláhu ilaihi—

Wa kána-lláhu 'Azízan Hakímá."

"Nay, God exalted him unto Himself and God is Mighty, Wise."

Verse 159.—"Wa im-min ahlil kitábi illá la-yu'minanna qabla mawtihí. Wa yawmal qiyámati yakúnu 'alaihim shahídá."

"And there is no one of the people of the Book but must believe in this before his death and on the day of judgment he will be a witness against them."

HOLY QUR-AN ON JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

Verse 171.—“ Yá ahlal kitábi lá-taghlú fi-dínikum wa
lá taqúlu ‘alal-láhi illal haqqa; innamal
Masíhu Isa-bnu Maryama Rasúlul-láhi
wa kalimatuhú alqáhá ilá Maryama wa-
rúhum minhu ; Fa-áminú billáhi wa
rusulihí wa lá taqúlú thaláthatun.
Intahú khairal-lakum
In-namal-láhu iláhun wáhidun
Sub-hánahú aiyakúna lahú waladun ;
Lahú má-fis-samáwáti wa-má fil-ardzi
Wa kafá billáhi wakílá.”

“ O people of the Book !
Commit no excesses
In your religion : nor say
Of God what is untrue.
Christ Jesus, the son of Mary
was (no more than)
An apostle of God,
And His word,
Which He bestowed on Mary,
And a spirit proceeding
From Him : so believe
In God and His apostles.
Say not ‘ Trinity,’ desist :
It will be better for you :
For God is One God
Glory be to Him :
(Far Exalted is He) above
Having a son. To Him
Belong all things in the heavens
And on earth. And enough
Is God as a Disposer of affairs.”

Verse 172.—“ Lai-yastankifal-Masíha
Aiyakúna ‘abdalláhi
Wa-lal malá’ikatul muqar-rabúna

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Wa mai-yastankif 'an'ibádatihi wayas-
takbir

Fa-sayahshuruhum ilaihi jamí'á."

“ Christ disdaineth not
To serve and worship God,
Nor do the angels nearest
(to God) :
Those who disdain
His worship and are arrogant,
He will gather them all
Together unto Himself
(to answer).”

THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTHDAY OF THE HOLY PROPHET

The Birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammad was celebrated, as is done every year, by the members of the Muslim Society in Great Britain and their friends at their house at 18 Eccleston Square, Victoria, S.W. 1, on the afternoon of Wednesday, the 9th of April, 1941.

The meeting was opened by a recitation in Arabic, followed by an English translation of some verses of the Holy Qur-án which was given by M. Dawud Cowan, M.A. The Chairman of the Muslim Society, Mr. Ismail V. deYorke then called upon a distinguished officer of the Indian Contingent serving in England, Major Muhammad Akbar Khan, M.B.E., to take the chair.

In his opening remarks Major Akbar made reference to the state of turmoil in which the world finds itself to-day and pointed out that the only true solution of our problems could come from a deep study and imitation of the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the perfect example. Major Akbar then requested Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah, the well-known author and authority

PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY

on the Islamic world, to deliver his address on "The Prophet's Message to the Warring World."*

The Sirdar in his talk showed us how the Prophet's message to a world at war can be found in the sermon he preached on Mount 'Arafat on the occasion of his last pilgrimage to the Holy City of Makka (Hijjatu 'l-Wadā'). The message given out in that last sermon has as great a bearing on our times as it had over thirteen hundred years ago. It laid stress on the fundamental unity of man, every man or woman being a brother or sister before Allāh, the Creator of all. In this message of the Prophet, respect for the sanctity of another's property was enjoined without which there could be no peace or rest in the world. The Prophet's great call was for full justice between man and man without privileges granted by adherence to any "chosen" race or class. Only when the spirit of brotherhood as preached by Islam had come into its own could the world look forward to the unhampered march of peace and progress.

Major Akbar in thanking the Sirdar for his eloquent address assured the audience that the soldiers of Islam were at all times willing to give their all in order that justice might one day rule the world. The example of the Holy Prophet was ever before them and they would continue to follow such an example.

The meeting was closed by the chanting of *Durūd* which was led by Major Muhammad Ashraf Khan, I.O.M. The guests then repaired to two reception rooms in which buffets had been prepared and there had tea, chatting and meeting friends and acquaintances until about 5-30 P.M. by which time most of the guests had left for their homes.

Although there is great difficulty in arranging such functions in war-time, nevertheless the celebration had

*The full text of the Sirdar's speech and a partial view of the gathering will appear in our next issue—Ed., I. R.

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been a great success. There was a large attendance which was further swelled by fifty officers and men of the Indian Contingent who were enabled to attend through the kind permission of Colonel Hills, their Commander. English Muslim friends were there in full strength, many of them travelling great distances in order to be present. Mrs. Knight and Mrs. Williams came from Cambridge and Mrs. Mitchell came all the way from Bradford in the north of England in order to be with us on the happy occasion.

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

(Continued from p. 325 of the last issue.)

There is another implication in the phrase "in the way of Alláh." The circumstances in which these battles of the Holy Prophet's time took place would almost suggest that even if there were no reference to it in the Holy Qur-án itself. The Holy Qur-án however refers to it explicitly. In Chapter 8, Verse 39, we read: "And fight with them until there is no more persecution and religion should be only for God." Mark the word "for." It is a crushing reply to such enemies of Islam as insinuate that Islamic wars aim at establishing the faith of Islam as the only faith in the world. Probably our Christian friends see their own minds reflected in the Quranic verses. That the Christians as a religious community have always believed in the forcible conversion of the world in their own faith needs hardly to be argued. Materialism prevailing in the Western mind and religious considerations thrown in the background, there has, no doubt, been some softening of that religious attitude within recent times, but that is again

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

commercialism getting the better of the religious impulse. In view of the fate of the Moors and the Jews throughout their history in Europe it can be safely said that the Christians as a religious community are incapable of toleration. No wonder they should read absence of religious tolerance in such verses of the Holy Qur-án as are, in fact, the *magna carta* of religious freedom. The verse just quoted very clearly states that the sole object of Muslim fighting should be what in modern language is called liberty of conscience. Religion should be only for God. No power should stand between the individual human soul and its Creator. The rankest disbelief should not be interfered with by physical force. It is a tragedy of history, however, that the purest of beliefs have been persecuted in the world. An instance of this persecution is to be found in the case of the first followers of Islam. In a very appealing manner the Holy Qur-án, in its Chapter 22, Verses 39 and 40, describes how callously this liberty of conscience was denied to these angels on earth:

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

Indeed, it is one of the miracles of the Holy Qur-án that any objection which may be raised in connexion with any of its teachings, or any misunderstanding

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which may be fostered on that account, is always anticipated by it and effectively forestalled, as in the present case. It does not stand in need of any advocacy by any one with regard to anything it teaches.

Verse 191.—“ And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you out, and persecution is severer than slaughter ; and do not fight with them at the sacred mosque until they fight with you in it, but if they do fight with you, then slay them : such is the recompense of the unbelievers.”

Our Christian adversaries are too ready to seize upon passages like the one with which this verse begins, to insinuate that a Muslim has nothing but a drawn sword for an unbeliever. The fact, however, is that wherever a passage such as this is to be found, it is either followed or preceded by a clear exposition of the situation in which such hard measures are to be adopted. The reader will invariably find that the injunction provides for a measure of self-defence in case of extreme suffering. What is more, every now and then, as here, the Holy Qur-án refers to a principle of universal application. “ Persecution is severer than slaughter ” is a principle that transcends all communal, social and national distinctions. It is not confined either to the Muslims or the Arabs. As a matter of fact, on the situation changing, an unbeliever may avail of this permission to retaliate against so-called believers. As a rule prescribed by God, it is no respecter of individuals or nations.

Killing of adversaries wherever found is just a description of the condition which prevails in the battlefield or in guerilla warfare, in which the unbelievers of Makka engaged the Muslims. The only thing that can stop this process is the surrender of one of the parties. Certainly no one approaches his adversary

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in a war with the object of embracing him or even arresting him in the manner of a civil officer.

The words "Drive them out from whence they drive you out" clearly show the nature of the war. The believers are simply to regain possession of their hearth and home, from which they have been forcibly ousted. This should finally decide the real objective of this war.

(To be continued.)

THE GARDEN OF PEACE

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

[We are starting in this issue a series of articles from the capable pen of our English Muslim friend, MR. BASHYR-PICKARD, B.A. (CANTAB.), which will reveal to many of the readers of the "Islamic Review" the incomparable beauties that abound in the pages of the Qur-án. This series aims at setting forth in an easily understandable manner the high merit of the Islamic attitude towards life.—ED., I.R.]

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. In the Name of God Who worketh mercy, Who sustaineth creation by His bounty. To Him be praise! Ruler of the nations, Lord of the worlds, the First and the Last.

I passed through the pilgrimage of this world and the Angel said unto me: "Seek peace." And I replied: "What is peace? and wherein is peace?" And the Angel replied: "Submission unto the will of God is peace and therein alone is peace." Then I said: "Teach me this peace." The Angel said: "Verily so! Because thou hast desired this peace, it shall be taught thee. Thou shalt be led to this peace. Thou shalt walk in the garden of Peace, which is the

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Garden of Islam." Then, while I beheld, the Angel departed from my sight and I fell down into a deep sleep, the time being but early night. And, as I slept, I dreamt vividly; and I beheld a desert of swords, even as a thicket of sharp swords, beneath which ran the blood of men, as it were a terrible marsh, a swamp of congealed blood, out of which arose swords shining with destruction. So I beheld this frightful scene with shuddering, for the deadly swamp lay across my path; and I stayed my steps, fearing for my life. Then, in my dream, I beheld in the heavens a light, and I thought it a star to shine over this desolation. And it appeared that the star descended, becoming a light of brightness, as it were a sun, gilding the swords of the swamp to gold and empurpling the stagnation of blood. Then I saw that the light had the form of a Book, glorious and shining, whose pages were open, and I could read these words therein: "This book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who guard against evil, who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer."—*Qur-án*, II: 2-3.

Then, at the descent of the Book, I beheld that the confused and murderous swamp glowed with change into a garden wherein was peace, the shade of trees, and the gentle murmuring of streams; and the air thereof was glad with the songs of birds. Not long had I looked, wondering, upon this garden of transformation, when I awoke and the time was something past midnight.

II

Upon the following morning I battled with the affairs of the world. I read of destructions and shatterings and the devouring flames of fierce hatred. I walked amid desolation of things material wherein and wherever already blossomed flowers of the spirit—bright blossoms that thrive wondrously amidst grief

THE GARDEN OF PEACE

and peril, which gleam with beauty amid bleak sufferings. Then, amidst all the hardness of the world, amidst the starkness of hatred, amidst the black brutality of conflict, I cried to my heart and said: "How can peace be? In this time of war, in this time of the will to destroy, how can peace be? Is not tumult and anger and the wielding of blind force more fitting than the quiet of peace?" Then it seemed, in response to my impatient self-questioning, I heard again the voice of the angel, saying: "Submission unto the will of God is peace, and therein alone is peace." Yet this saying proved too hard for me then, and I understood not.

At length the golden sun with serene shining beams sank rosily to rest. I gladly set aside my worldly labours and repaired through busy streets and winding meadow-paths homewards to seek food and sleep to renew the struggle of life on the morrow. And I entered the door of my house, and the voice of my wife cried: "Hush! talk softly! He is sick. I have put him to bed. I am so worried. The doctor is coming." My son sick, whom I had left boisterously well that very morning! The welcome of the house grew cold to me. The refreshment of the evening meal became an intrusion, and contentment fled from my heart. Even at that moment a hideous outer wailing, as of a doomed soul in despair, filled the quiet heaven with screechings of hatred, as though the devil were blaspheming; and I thought: "Peace! can there be peace? Is not peace outraged on every hand?" And I set my house into a state of preparedness. Yet in my heart was a calm confidence, for again I remembered the words of the angel: "Submission unto the will of God is peace, and therein alone is peace."

III

My son continued sick for some days. The household was upset. Rooms disarranged. Meals lost their

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regular sequence. Sleep was taken out of the night, while I continued to think in my heart, "Peace? Where is peace?" At the end of the fourth day, however, the fever had abated. My son looked with accustomed eyes. A smile flitted from time to time across the face of his mother; and sometimes again she sang.

Now I had more leisure in the house. My wife found less need for my services in household matters; and I considered within myself and said: "I will continue the search for peace, the search for truth, for I think they must be the same. Surely a peace not based on truth is false and will not lastingly satisfy. And a conviction comes over me that to discover truth is to discover some solid foundation for contentment. Fundamental Truth will be something good, pleasing, reassuring, not—ten thousand times not—something bitter, poisonous and destructive." Then I recalled that, in the house, I had an English copy of the Qur-án—a translation in small print, indeed, but which, if wrestled with, would yield, I thought, a glimmering of this light of peace, which had so brightly appeared in my dream and which I so ardently desired to behold even in this world of strife, hatred and ingratitude.

I found the book. I opened it at hazard and, skimming the closely-printed pages, at length I read these words: "Those who were sure that they would meet their Lord said: How often has a small party vanquished a numerous host by Allah's permission! And Allah is with the patient. And when they went out against Goliath and his forces, they said: Our Lord! pour down upon us patience, and make our steps firm and assist us against the unbelieving people!"—*Qur-an*, II: 249-250.

I ceased reading. I set the Book aside. I mused on the words I had read. "Allah is with the patient." God is with the patient. There was, I thought, some

PRAYER AND FASTING

comfort in that. "God is with the patient." Impatience and the hasty outburst of complaint and angry cursing is an alienation of God, a separation from peace. Therefore, it seemed excellent to pray for patience, for calm endurance that we might not know the alienation of God. Instinctively the wish rose in my heart: "Would that I were patient! Grant me patience, O God." And it seemed the angel stood by my side and said: "Read in the book. Have patience with the errors of translation. Be not led astray by the misunderstandings of the critics. If thou understandest not all, what matter? So much as thou canst understand will be enough to bring thee great blessing. Only read."

SIGNIFICANCE OF PRAYER AND FASTING IN ISLAM

BY A. O. R. RAHMAN, B.A. (HONS.), PATNA

The Islamic conception of religion and its attitude towards life are singularly dynamic. The message Muhammad brought for humanity is one of active endeavour, not of mere belief and contemplation. For man is a social animal and Islam teaches every one of us to strive for the betterment of social life. There could probably be no more effective inculcation of this spirit of social responsibility than we find in the institutions of prayer and fasting—very important pillars of the faith and the mainstay of the Muslims' cultural life.

Of course, the element of worship is there in every individual. Some may supplicate to trees and animals, others to stones and idols; some may even worship their own 'ego' and others lose themselves in adoration of worldly grandeur and wealth. But these

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narrow the mental horizon, hamper the high-soaring faculties and create social abuses of a serious character ranging from priestly domination to capitalistic exploitation of the worst type. In Islam, on the other hand, worship is simple, unostentatious and soul-elevating. Man is a much superior being than any of the objects of Nature. If he is to worship any, it must be the Source of all Creation—the Almighty. The worship of such a Being requires no symbols. To think of the qualities of the Maker develops a truer appreciation of His greatness and a more lasting impression of our own responsibilities than would be possible by slavish allegiance to inanimate material objects. This aspect of the Islamic prayer, moreover, creates in us self-reliance and independence of character by stressing that man is not to bow down before any but the Almighty. This gives man strength of character and consciousness of greatness—potent factors, no doubt, of progress in field, spiritual as well as material.

Of equal if not greater practical value are the other rules with regard to prayer. Every Muslim must pray five times a day at specified hours. This keeps us in touch with God in the midst of our worldly activities and thus instils a sense of moral responsibility in everything we do. It also trains us in habits of regularity and cleanliness (by requiring us to offer ablutions before prayers). Incidentally, it seems to me that the *Fajr* prayers constitute a brisk morning exercise that keeps one cheerful and energetic all day long.

It is obvious that these regulations are not intended for the solitary mystic in the closet but were designed for the regulation of general human conduct. This is all the more evident when it is remembered that the Holy Prophet laid great stress on congregational prayers. Though congregation is performed even for

PRAYER AND FASTING

ordinary occasions, it is obligatory in the case of the Friday Prayer and the Id prayers. This makes inevitable social contact among all classes and secures them in a spiritual bond which, in its turn, intensifies the will to serve our fellow-men. This democratic spirit, which the perfect equality prevailing in the mosque, produces and the sense of communal responsibility that the act of rubbing shoulders with high and low engenders, are sure indications of progressiveness in any society.

And if the Islamic Brotherhood makes use of these invaluable assets, it will present a most enviable specimen of social harmony (specially at this critical hour of world history when Muslims have to save not only themselves from onslaughts but when entire civilization is in danger). The congregational prayer has a special meaning and significance for them. By requiring us to follow almost in a military way every word and movement of the Imam, it gives training in self-control, discipline and obedience to the recognized chief—no doubt valuable assets in corporate life. That is why the Prophet once went to the length of saying that he felt like setting fire to the houses of those who avoided congregational prayers. For leniency towards such an attitude would mean encouragement to national apathy and to the violation of the spirit of equality and brotherhood.

Islam encourages an international outlook and insists on obliterating racial distinctions and in this respect it has a moral for the modern world torn by racial problems and economic strife. Allegiance is not to the soil of any land, nor to the man-made gods, who represent the exclusiveness and pride of the people, but to the one God of the entire humanity—"The Lord of the Nations" as we frequently say in the prayers—Who gave us a code that should be the criteria of good

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actions. Muslims must turn their faces towards the Ka'ba, not because there is any divinity attached to it but because it is the symbol of a great achievement—the stronghold of idolatry that became the first House of God. They must also assemble there once a year for the Hajj to demonstrate the futility of national barriers. Thus principles and not regional boundaries are to claim the loyalty of the believers. Pseudo-nationalists would do well to note this.

The institution of fasting, too, has been designed for the everlasting good of mankind. For one month in a year every Muslim must touch neither food nor drink from early dawn till sunset and also avoid other sorts of gratification. This has both an individual importance and a vital social significance. Viewed in its purely physical aspect it enables us to bear hardship and sufferings and thus prepares us for moments of trial which every one must necessarily be prepared to encounter in life. It is medically and scientifically confirmed that such strain on digestion as fasting helps to regulate the system and purge it of undesirable elements. It is specially efficacious for those not inconsiderable numbers suffering from constipation.

As a means of purifying the blood, too, its value is undeniable. In these days of speed, untimely meals and improper diet, a month of fasting once a year would seem a not ineffective means of overhauling the system.

Valuable as the institution of fasting is in this respect, it is even more helpful in keeping the senses subservient to the will and thus developing self-control and self-discipline, which go a long way towards improving social conduct and public morality. But what is of profounder significance is the spiritual aid it offers to social democracy by awakening a higher sense of responsibility among the members of society, through a realization of others' sufferings brought home to them

THE FIRST CONSTITUTION

by the rigours of the fast. This moral sense can obviously be a great help in the solution of complex social problems, since the fellow-feeling so generated would mitigate selfishness and undesirable individualistic outlook.

Needless to emphasize, the discipline of these two pillars of our creed shall ever remain a perennial reminder of the realistic basis of our faith and the soul-force of our culture.

THE FIRST WRITTEN CONSTITUTION OF THE WORLD

AN IMPORTANT DOCUMENT OF THE PROPHET'S TIME

BY DR. MUHAMMAD HAMIDULLAH,
PROFESSOR OF LAW, THE OSMANIA UNIVERSITY

(Continued from page 340 of the current volume)

The helpers (*i.e.*, Madinite Muslims) had already their tribal units and now for legal and social purposes the whole body of refugees (*i.e.*, Makkān Muslim settlers) were regarded as one tribe (Section 3). It was provided that if any district association were not in a position to meet the liabilities of any of its members, it will be incumbent on other associations to lend it a helping hand (Section 12). It was further emphatically laid down that if anyone became an associate member (*Mawali*, sing. *Mawla*) through a legal or contractual bond of fraternity with a regular member of a tribe, such an associate member will have no right to disagree with the original member, whose associate he is [Section 12b]. It was further enjoined in connection with this order that no member should make anyone his brother-in-alliance (*Mawla*), if he is already in similar alliance

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with another member, without the consent of the latter. (*Ibid*, in the variant as reported by Ibn Hanbal.) The right of seeking justice was transferred from individuals to the community, *i.e.*, the central authority ; and this was a great revolution. And it was ruled that in matters affecting the administration of justice, none will be permitted to take sides or show any favouritism to one's relations or even to try to save one's own son from the course of law, and that all Muslims should give full co-operation in the matter of bringing to book every one who makes any mischief or is on the way to creating one (Section 13). An act of wilful murder was to be avenged by capital punishment. The heir of the murdered man, however, was given the power of reprieving the capital punishment in lieu of blood-money. Strong prohibition was issued against all interferences with the course of law and justice (Section 21). Although according to Imam Abu Hanifah, if a Muslim murders a non-Muslim capital punishment will be given, yet in this document Muslims were advised not to insist on capital punishment nor help any non-Muslim against a Muslim (Clause 14). This persuasion which did not amount to categorical prohibition was perhaps necessary to instil into the Muslim mind a feeling of superiority of faith which is so necessary for a rising nation to do great deeds. Similarly it was forbidden to give shelter or help to any culprit guilty of murder, and it was stated that a person who has been a believer in God and the Day of Judgment and has agreed to obey the orders set forth in this document, if he helped or gave protection to any murderer, would be under the curse and chastisement of God on the Day of Resurrection and would have no escape out of it.

Some among the Helpers (Ansar) had accepted the Jewish faith. Particularly among these were those children whose parents had made them Jews in

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fulfilment of certain vows. There was a special section dealing with such persons, saying that if they were prepared for a subordinate co-operation, they would be given rights of subjects equally with Muslims; they would be given protection and help, and no manner of oppression would be allowed against them (Clause 16).

* * * * *

So far we have discussed such matters as are written in the first part of the document and as concern the Arabs of Madina. The second part, as I have already said, concerns the Jewish tribes.

It has been discussed above whether this document concerning the Jews was prepared at the same time as the rules relating to the Helpers (*Ansar*) and Immigrants (*Muhajirin*) or after them. In furnishing a brief analysis of this part, I should like to submit that its first section is common to both documents, *viz.*, in the event of a war if a Muslim and a Jew entered into an agreement of conjoint action, each party should bear its own expenses of war. This provision has not only been set forth in Section 24 but has been repeated in Sections 27-A and 38. Perhaps the rather obscure text of Section 45-B means the same thing. The text literally translated will read: "For each party its share the side which faces them"—

على كل اناس حقه من جانبهم الذي قبلهم

of which the term *حَقِّم* has been quoted by Abu 'Ubaid as *حَقِّم* من النفقة *i.e.*, its share of expense. Most probably the reason for this repetition was that in monetary dealings the Jews had a very bad name. It was the unsatisfactory manner of their dealings that had drawn such Quranic denunciations as:

Among the people of the scripture there is he who, if thou trust him . . . with a *dinar* (piece of gold), will not return it to thee unless thou

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keep standing over him. That is because they say: We have no duty to the Gentiles. They speak a lie concerning God knowingly. (3 : 75.)

When they were responsible for the expenses, it is evident that they had the right to get a share of the booty, as has been clearly narrated by Abu 'Ubaid in his comment.¹ The Jews had acknowledged the authority of the Prophet ; and also acknowledged his decision as final in every matter of dispute, as has been very clearly stated in Section 42 of the document. But it strikes one as rather strange that despite Section 25 announcing religious freedom and tolerance by the phrase "The Jews following their own faith and Muslims following their own faith," in Section 42, the Prophet has been referred to as " Muhammad, Messenger of God " in Ibn Ishaq's version and as " Muhammad the Prophet" in Abu 'Ubaid's version, and in Section 47 of Ibn Ishaq's version the phrase " Muhammad the Prophet " is again used, although it has been dropped in Abu 'Ubaid's version. It does not seem advisable to ascribe this fact to any possible acceptance by the Jews of the Prophethood of the Prophet. It is safer to conclude that these words are the addition of some respectful scribes of these books of history, for in Ibn Ishaq's version in both places the phrase " Blessings and peace of God be upon him " have been super-added and this does not seem probable to have been done under the instructions of the Prophet. Or maybe the words " *Nabi* " (Prophet) or " *Rasul-Alláh* " (Messenger of God) were written under the instructions of the Prophet and the Jews could not gather courage enough to protest against it in view of the dangerous political and war situation of the time. As for the phrase " Blessings

¹*Kitab al-Amwal* by Abu 'Ubaid, p. 517 ; *Rawdzatul Unuf*, by Suhaili, Vol. 2, p. 17.

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and peace of God be upon him," it appears from *Sirat Ibn Hisham* (p. 992, line 3), that the Prophet himself used to use it for his own self as a kind of prayer in his sermons and other utterances. But leaving aside this incidental discussion, the Jewish tribes have been mentioned in this document individually and by names, and their rights to equal treatment have been explicitly admitted. The object of this seems to be to emphasise the fact that the Jews did not join this federal city state of Madina as a community and that every tribe entered in the pact as a separate unit. It was due to this fact that when the Muslims went to war against some Jewish tribes or ordered their expulsion from the city of Madina, not only that the rest of the tribes remained quiet, but on certain occasions they rendered military help to the Muslims; and this treaty or constitutional Act was not considered as repudiated in so far as other Jewish tribes were concerned, but was regarded as still in force. Thus in this document the people of a tribe and its "*Mawáli*" (or clients) have been regarded as jointly responsible for the payment of blood-money; and the Holy Prophet, after the expulsion of Banu Qainuqa, had demanded subscriptions from Banu Nadzir on one occasion on the strength of the provision made in §§25 and 31 of the document.* The Jews have been given equal political and cultural rights with the Muslims in the clearest terms (§25); and the allies of the Jews, who have been variously called "*Mawáli*," "*Batan*" and "*Bitana*," have been given equal status with original Jews in general, in the matter of rights and responsibilities (§§32, 34, 45 and 46). Of course a protected person cannot extend this protection to another person, without the permission of the protector (§41). In reality it was a military alliance which was made with the

**Ibn Hisham*, p. 652; *Ibn Sa'd*, Vol. 1/2, pp. 40 and 41; *Tarikh Tabari* (printed Europe), pp. 1449-50.

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Jews. Thus in §§37, 44 and 45 it has been made quite clear that they shall have to fight against all those people against whom the Muslims will have to fight ; and shall be in peace with whomsoever the Muslims may be in peace, and shall take an equal part in the defence of Madina ; and that the Jews should help the Muslims were the latter attacked by anyone and similarly Muslims should help the Jews if these latter were attacked by anyone. Of course, the Jews would not be obliged to help the Muslims if the latter were involved in any religious war (§45). It was also stipulated that joining the forces with the Muslims in an expedition would have to be with the permission of the Prophet (§36-A). The text of this section is a little obscure in its meaning and may also yield the sense that the Jews themselves were not to independently declare war against anyone without the permission of the Prophet. If that is so, it indicates an additional width of political power acquired by the Prophet. It is possible that the Quraish of Makka were the people most affected by this important stipulation, as they were deprived of the help of a very important ally, *viz.*, the Jews ; for in §43 of the document it has been clearly laid down that the Jews should not give any protection to the Quraish or the helpers of the Quraish, though unfortunately this stipulation was not honoured in practice, and the Jewish chiefs kept on conspiring with the Quraish ; and once these intrigues started after the battle of Badr, they did not stop till the unconditional surrender of Banu Quraiza.* In any case, peace and war have been regarded as an undisputed central question of this Federation. And the command of the war was obtained by the Prophet and this was a great political success for him.

*Ibn-Kathir, *Bidayat*, Vol. IV, p. 6 ; *Ibn Hisham*, p. 681 ; Torrey, *Jewish Foundations of Islam*, p. 130.

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The Prophet did not at all interfere in social and internal affairs and institutions like ransom, blood-money, asylum or quarter, membership of a tribe by treaty agreement and other customs were left untouched (§§25, 31 and 40). The result of this wise political step was that no one felt the slightest hesitation or embarrassment; and the Jews gladly agreed that the Prophet should discharge the functions of the final court of appeal even for themselves (§42). From the records of precedents it appears that in the case of Jews the Prophet used to give judgment according to their personal law. Like the question of peace and war, the administration of justice to Jews also was clearly held up as a central question; and consideration of relationship, etc., was absolutely banned from interfering in matters of justice and the endless chain of vendetta or retaliations and counter-retaliations of olden times was completely put an end to. The acquisition by the Prophet of the supreme judicial authority over the Jews was an additional major political victory for the Muslims. The Jews not only accepted the Prophet as their sovereign but also agreed to regard the city of Madina with the neighbouring regions as a sacred territory (§39). Makka was already a sacred land; the sanctity of Taif was recognised and maintained in the Treaty of Taif in the year 9 *Hijri* (See *Kitab al-Amwal* by Abu 'Ubaid, §506). In fact, it was one of the political achievements of the Prophet to have a semi-Arab city like Madina recognised by the Jews as a sacred territory. Thus a small town with some twenty wards in it was organised into a city-state; and its small but heterogeneous population was united round one central, elastic and practicable constitution and with their aid a political system was inaugurated in Madina, which made that city in later times the headquarters of an extensive and powerful empire, extending over three continents of Asia, Africa

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and Europe, without any difficulty. There should be no surprise at my referring to the Continent of Europe as well. Long before the days of Banu Umayya, in the time of Caliph 'Uthman, in the *Hijri* year 27, Muslim garrisons actually marched into Spain and, in spite of lack of reinforcements, settled down in that country and remained in possession of a part of it, till after a very long time Táriq arrived on the scene and completed the conquest. This event of the reign of 'Uthman has been mentioned by Tabari* as well as Gibbon† and, as everybody knows, up to the time of 'Uthman, Madina did remain the headquarters of the Caliphate.

There is also the use of the word "*Din*" in this document. This word simultaneously stands for *religion* and *government* both, and it is a fact of such great importance that if we lose sight of it we shall fail to understand the religion and politics of Islam in a proper way.

In §25 there is mention of what has been interpreted recently by some as a recognition of composite nationality by Islam. There is hardly any justification for it. The perusal of the whole constitution will reveal that a federation of the Muslims and non-Muslims of Madina was established ; and although Jews were given internal autonomy, they did not share in the foreign policy of their newly constituted city-state, and this, in spite of the fact that the Jews formed a majority community at the arrival of the Prophet in Madina. The Jews could not declare or wage war independently ; they could not join city militia without the permission of the Prophet who was also their supreme court of appeal.

(*To be continued*)

*P. 2817.

†*Cf. Decline and Fall*, V 555 (ed. Oxford University Press).

A MYSTICAL READING OF ISLAM

BY KHAN BAHADUR B. M. K. LODI

(Continued from page 295 of the current volume)

Let us next glance at the expressions that have emanated from a few exalted souls who have actually sunk their lower *self* and travelled in the realm of the Higher, though they may not be very interesting to an ordinary intellect. To begin with *Islam*. On his return from the night journey (*Mi'raj*)¹ they inquired of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be with him!): "What hast thou seen?" and he replied: "I ask myself the same question—What have I seen?"² That "who knows God his tongue is tied,"³ that "The tongue of the man is dulled who has known God,"⁴ and that "he who knows God his tongue becomes defective in power to describe Him"⁵ are also the reported sayings of the Prophet. "One who understands God does not utter God."⁶—(*Báyazid Bistámi*.) That if one in a million ever became blessed with the enlightenment of Divine secrets, the rest could not become cognizant of the same, whatever effort they make, is the purport of an Urdu couplet of *Háli*:⁷ "He who sees himself sees Him and yet to whom shall he show Him?" is a still clearer verdict of *Khwaja Banda-Nawaz*.⁸ What an outspoken expression of the inability of the enlightened clothed in a simple language but straight to the point!

¹Holy Qur-án, XVII: 1. The journey of the *Soul* of The Prophet Muhammad into the Unseen World, while in a state of Cosmic-consciousness, a Heavenly blessing granted for the purpose of showing him some of God's signs as referred to in the verse.

² } Futúhat Makkyah: By Ibn Arabi.

⁴ } Fath Rabbáni, p. 100. By Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani.

من عرف الله لا يقول الله

جو لاکھ میں اک پر کہیں کچھ کہلا بھی قسمت سے بہید نیوا
ملا نہ کہوچ اس کا پھر کسی کو ہزار دوزا ہزار دیکھا
جو اپنے کو دیکھا وہ دیکھا اسے - ولیکن دکھائے کو اما کسے

⁸A reputed saint whose shrine is in *Gulbarga* within the Dominions of H. E. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad on the Bombay—Madras line.

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While in a state of ecstatic transportation a Shaikh (gnostic) exclaimed in the presence of his disciples and companions: "Lo! I have now seen God!" Moved by the intensity of a desire themselves to enter into that vision, they requested him to explain the vision and to enlighten them too and he replied: "You ask me not," and, when pressed, he said: "My position is like this: All of a sudden I found myself transported to a garden of charming and sweet-smelling roses. I hastened to gather some of the flowers in my mantle to show you, but the perfume was so intense and so intoxicating that I forgot myself and let go the border of my mantle with the result that all the flowers I had gathered slipped and dropped down, so that I have brought none for you! Brothers! with other eyes must we behold the roses¹ of that tree." What a pitiable plight it is of a person, though illumined, becoming inarticulate as it were! Yet it is soul-stirring! The reply is quite illustrative of the mystic nature of the spiritual visions of these enlightened persons and of their inability to express to others what their soul enjoys in the presence of the Highest.

The actual position seems to be this: While in a state of ecstasy in which the Divine love consumes in the 'Arif all that belongs to *human* nature, his soul is with God; it then belongs to God and is one with Him; "like two concentric circles, they are *one* when they coincide and *two* when they are separated." But when the person resumes his original state of a mortal he does not retain the idea of the past state because he has again become man. In fact one can thus remain absorbed in God only for a short time, that is, in the

¹In the mystic language of the *Sufis*, the *rose* is "the symbol of that Divine beauty which is the object of the soul's love," while the *bulbul* (the nightingale) stands for the lover.

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temporary moments of one's illumination and ecstasy, when he is no more "human."

There was a group of schoolmates and friends² who often discussed Freemasonry and expressed their anxiety to know the secrets of the same while they had no inclination themselves to become members thereof. One of them hit upon a ruse. He said he would go and join the institution as a member and discover for himself all the secrets and then divulge them to the rest. Accordingly this enthusiastic deputy of the group applied and got himself admitted. While he was passing through the initial stages and ordeals of initiation, his friends were approaching him at every stage for the promised information and he was telling them: "Wait! Wait! They have not yet taken me to the final stage!" And when all the formalities of his admission and probation were completed and when he became a full-fledged Freemason himself, what he said to his friends was: "Please don't approach me any further on this subject. I am unable to disclose to you anything connected with the sacred organization which I have joined and to which I am pledged and dedicated. Ask of me anything else, but not this."

²The late father-in-law of the writer of these lines was a member of the group.

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THE OXFORD GROUP MOVEMENT

[*AS A MUSLIM SEES IT*]

By MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

(Continued from p. 356 of the Current Volume)

SHARING

“ And He it is Who accepts repentance from His servants and pardons the evil deeds, and He knows what you do. . . .”—*The Holy Qur-án*, Ch. 42, V. 25.

Another peculiarity of the Movement is its emphasis on the need for confession and apology. So important is it regarded to be that it takes the shape of an institution. This particular institution, known by the term “Sharing,” affords a very interesting study. It involves a confession but not immediately to the person wronged. It is a spiritual fellowship with some suitable person, with whom one can share one’s spiritual struggle in a frank and sympathetic way. The fellow-pilgrim with whom you thus enter into a bond of confidence and co-operation in your spiritual journey should possess understanding and the capacity to guide you just as he should expect similar services from you. One of the chief objects of this fellowship, however, is to bring about confessions and apologies to the aggrieved parties, by a gradual process, and this without involving any third party. So far as I can grasp it, this confession has a special reference to conjugal fidelity and, as such, peculiarly applicable to conditions prevailing in the West. The idea with its various implications affords a sidelight to the tragic condition obtaining in a civilised world reared on unscientific marriage laws. Perhaps a Muslim community true to its own laws will never stand in need of confessions of this particular brand. But going back to the question of sharing and of confession, as they are, we as Muslims

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do recognise their value in our spiritual struggles. In a different and a safer form it is also found in our own traditions. The idea of a *Shaikh* or *Mard-i-Kámil* embodies a similar principle. If a person can release his mind to a God-realised living guide and obtain any guidance from him, the struggle becomes miraculously easy and the quick attainment of the goal assured. But even in such a case the confession need not entail the details of the affair; a general statement of the weakness may be quite enough. The person so approached, however, must, according to the Islamic tradition of Mysticism, be a perfected man, a man who has reached the goal of spiritual struggle. The reason is that unless a person is as high as that, rather than helping his fellow-pilgrim, he gets weakened as a result of the secrets communicated to him. However much our Oxford Group friends may pride in the achievement of unshockability in the parties, in this kind of fellowship, human psychology will support the Islamic view that both the parties, if none of them is a perfected soul, are liable to a deterioration of their moral strength in this process. Perhaps the dangers of such a process are not discernible in a decade or two, but that they will make their appearance in no distant future can be easily prophesied. Even in Islam, in spite of its great cautiousness in the matter, the idea of a living guide has so often degenerated into a system that has ruined the spiritual prospects of innumerable well-meaning and earnest souls. The fact is that although living God-realised persons capable of absorbing the shocks of the disclosure of the secret sins of others and of imparting to the confessors their own spiritual strength together with necessary guidance, are extremely helpful to struggling spiritual humanity, they are of very rare appearance and still rarer recognition. And the millions and billions of normal

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men and women who are not lucky enough to discover them or enjoy their company when discovered are expected to walk in the light of revealed guidance to be found in the authentic Scriptures and of the trails of personal character preserved in the traditions of these recognised God-realised persons.

The greater the personality of such God-realised leaders, the more likely are they to be misunderstood in their own time. Persecution at the hands of their contemporary fellow-beings is the common lot of all these persons. So the only reliable and handy confidant for a sinner is God Himself. Even the living guide, if one is fortunate enough to find one, does not more than kindle in one's heart a strong urge to repent before God, and it is this repentance alone that brings about the necessary transformation. He, indeed, is a false guide who undertakes to absolve anyone of his sins. The idea of fellowship which is implied in the term "Sharing" is distinctly an Islamic idea and is embodied in the relationship between a true guide and his disciple. Let us quote here, as an instance, the words which a great saint of Islam prescribed as a pledge of spiritual bond for his disciples :

“That binding himself with me (*i.e.*, the saint) in a *fraternal bond* in the way of God, he will obey me in everything good. . . .”

This affords a very interesting study indeed. Whereas in Roman Catholicism the bond is between a supposed plenipotentiary of God and a follower who is absolutely a layman in matters spiritual and in the Oxford Group Movement it is between two persons, none of which is better than the other, in Islam it is between two persons both of whom stand in need of God's mercy but one of whom is in possession of the knowledge of the way. The Islamic bond is one of fellowship as it is in the Oxford Group Movement,

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with this difference that the Islamic method precludes the dangers of both losing their way in the wilderness. In Islam the necessity of the assured knowledge of the path is very much emphasised, so much so that it is considered impossible to reach the goal without such a knowledge being in the possession of one of the parties in the fellowship. In view, however, of the fact that a living guide is of rare availability, an average Muslim is contented with a guide who is physically dead but spiritually alive, such as Prophet Muhammad. As for living guides, there are so many false ones about at any given time that it is very unsafe for an average person to rush in for one. Thus a great authority on Islamic mysticism says :

اے بسا اباس آدم روئے هست

بس بہر دستے نبايد داد دست

“Beware, too many devils have human faces. Hence it is not proper to place one’s hand on every hand (*i.e.*, take the pledge of spiritual following).”

It may be added here that the devils assuming human appearance, *i.e.*, posing as spiritual guides, are, as often as not, unintentional. In other words, many a time quite well-meaning persons assume the task, not knowing that they are unfit for it. When it is so unsafe in the case of persons with more or less plausible qualifications for helpful fellowship, it must be much more dangerous to enter into any such fellowship with one who is in no way better than ourselves in the conquest of the flesh. Thus an assured guide, even though he may have lived in the past, is better than thousands of these plausible but untested living guides. Fellowship between two blind men does in no way help a clearer vision of the way. Islam insists that such fellowship must be with a God-realised person. Such a person, though holding a very exalted position in

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relation to the other party, is still a party in fellowship. Thus Prophet Muhammad holds the position of a spiritual father in his relation to the believers, and yet the latter have to pray for him in the following words in every ritual prayer :

“ Peace be on you, O Prophet, and the mercy of God and His blessings! Peace be on us and the righteous servants of God! . . . O God! make Muhammad and the followers of Muhammad successful, as Thou didst make Abraham and the followers of Abraham successful, for surely Thou art Praised, Magnified! O God! bless Muhammad and the followers of Muhammad, as Thou didst bless Abraham and the followers of Abraham, for surely Thou art Praised and Magnified!”

The words clearly indicate a bond of fellowship even with the Prophet himself. In fact, the Prophet gave the title “companions” to his immediate followers, thus making it clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that true discipleship is, at bottom, fellowship in spiritual striving.

Approaching the question historically, we find that any pursuit in life, religion included, involves a kind of discipleship. There is mastership and pupilship everywhere. Particularly is this clearly indicated in religion, where persons appear from time to time claiming to have been inspired by God to lead people in His way. Such persons thus prove to be the highest teachers of religion and the safest ones at that. They leave elaborate instructions for their disciples to follow. These instructions have the stamp of an expert's knowledge. To sit at their feet is, to use a Quranic phrase, to “catch hold of the firmest handle.” But even the masters have not exhausted the whole store of the knowledge of God and His blessings. The spiritual destiny of humanity, being a corporate and a progressive thing, both the master and the disciples are to have a bond of fellowship between them—each can and should help the other in his own way and to the extent of his capacity. This combination of

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discipleship and fellowship is a thing which the people of the West have always missed in their comprehension of religious life, and it is exactly here that a true solution of the spiritual problem of humanity lies.

As for the moral value of confession as it is, which, in the last analysis, means repentance, there can be no two opinions about it. Honesty with one's own self is the prerequisite to any moral purity and spiritual life. But the question is, how far this confession before human beings is helpful in developing that honesty in us. Of course, there are cases in which confession and even restitution is quite a practical and a necessary step towards self-reformation: but there are certainly others where, far from doing any good to the party wronged or one's own self, it will make the matter worse for the parties and for the world in general. To make an absolute rule out of it will be extremely unwise and impractical. The thing that really matters in this connection is a sensitive conscience which no amount of external arrangements can vouchsafe and which no mere intellectual thinking can develop in man. It is only by a constant contact with the All-seeing and All-hearing God that man can attain to this alertness of conscience with requisite courage to act upon its directions. Cultivate the habit of calling on God in solitude and of laying bare your hearts and all the motives that arise in them. That way alone lies the development of conscience and of moral courage to sincerely repent for your sins. God alone can accept repentance. Repentance before a human being, no matter whether it is the aggrieved party or a third person, is efficacious only in so far as it reflects one's repentance before God.

As it is, however, the emphasis on confession is an advancement on the prevailing mentality in Europe, particularly in English Society. Adherence to mock morality has filled the atmosphere there, particularly in the higher circles, with a kind of hypocrisy uncongenial to any spiritual culture.

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SOME GEOGRAPHICAL POINTS
IN THE QUR-AN

BY SYED MUZAFFAR-UD-DIN NADVI

(Continued from p. 314.)

The Qur-án and the Queen of Sabā.—The Qur-án describes the Queen of Saba as follows :

“ And he (Solomon) reviewed the birds ; then said :
How is it I see not Hudhud (Lapwing), or is it
that he is of the absentees ?

“ I will most certainly chastise him with a severe
chastisement, or kill him, or he shall bring to
me a clear plea.

“ And he tarried not long, then (Hudhud) said :
I comprehend that which you do not com-
prehend and I have brought to you a sure
information from Sabā.

“ Surely I found a woman ruling over them, and
she has been given abundance and she has a
mighty throne :

“ I found her and her people adoring the sun
instead of Allah ; and the devil has made their
deeds fair-seeming to them and thus turned
them from the way, so they do not go aright.

“ That they do not make obeisance to Allah, Who
brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and
the earth and knows what you hide and what
you make manifest :

“ Allah, there is no God but He : He is the Lord
of mighty power.

“ He (Solomon) said : We will see whether you
have told the truth or whether you are of the
liars :

“ Take this my letter and hand it over to them ;
then turn away from them and see what (answer)
they return.

“ She (the queen of Saba) said : O chiefs ! Surely
an honourable letter has been delivered to me :

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL POINTS

- “ Surely it is from Solomon and surely it is in the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful :
- “ That ye exalt not yourselves against me and come to me in submission.
- “ She said : O chiefs ! Give me advice respecting my affair : I never decide an affair until you are in my presence.
- “ They said : We are possessors of strength and possessors of mighty prowess, and the command is yours ; therefore, see what you will command.
- “ She said : Surely the kings, when they enter a town, ruin it and make the noblest of its people to be low, and thus they (always) do :
- “ And surely I am going to send a present to them and shall wait to see what (answer) do the messengers bring back.
- “ So when he (the messenger) came to Solomon, he said : What ? Will you help me with wealth ? But what Allah has given me is better than what He has given you. Nay, you are exultant because of your present :
- “ Go back to them, so we will most certainly come to them with hosts which they shall have no power to oppose, and we will most certainly expel them therefrom in abasement, and they shall be in a state of ignominy.
- “ He (Solomon) said : O chiefs ! Which of you can bring to me her throne before they come to me in submission ?
- “ One audacious among the Jinn said : I will bring it to you before you rise up from your place ; and most surely I am strong (and) trusty for it.
- “ One who had the knowledge of the Book said : I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye. Then when he (Solomon) saw it settled

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beside him, he said : This is the grace of my Lord that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful ; and whoever is grateful, he is grateful only for his own soul, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely my Lord is Self-sufficient, Honoured.

“ He said : Alter her throne for her ; we will see whether she follows the right way or is of those who do not go aright.

“ So when she came, it was said : Is your throne like this ? She said : It is as it were the same, and we were given the knowledge before it, and we were submissive.

“ And what she worshipped besides Allah prevented her, surely she was of an unbelieving people.

“ It was said to her : Enter the palace ; but, when she saw it, she deemed it to be a great expanse of water, and prepared herself to meet the difficulty. He said : Surely it is a palace made smooth with glass. She said : My Lord ! Surely I have been unjust to myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.” (XXVII : 20—44.)

The Old Testament and the Queen of Sheba.—The following account of the queen appears in the Old Testament :

“ And when the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones : and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

“ And Solomon told her all her questions : and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL POINTS

- “ And when the Queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built ;
- “ And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, his cupbearers also, and their apparel ; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord ; then was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, *It was* a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom :
- “ Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came and mine eyes had seen *it* : and, behold, the one-half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me : *for* thou exceedest the fame that I heard.
- “ Happy are thy men, and happy *are* these thy servants which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.
- “ Blessed be the Lord thy God, Which delighted in thee to set thee on His throne, to be king for the Lord thy God : because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore, made He thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.
- “ And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance, and precious stones : neither was there any such spice as the Queen of Sheba gave King Solomon
- “ And King Solomon gave to the Queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides *that* which she had brought unto the king. So she turned and went away to her own land, she and her servants.”—(II Chronicles, IX : 2—12.)

ISLAMIC REVIEW

The two accounts of the Queen of Sheba (or Sabā) do not differ materially. A detailed account of the queen is found in the Targūm also, which is the Aramaic translation or commentary of the Old Testament. Here, however, we find that some new elements have crept in as a result of interpolations. The Qur-án, which has marvellously defied the ravages of time and successfully resisted all kinds of adulteration, has no place where the fictitious elements can enter. The method of the description in the Targūm is romantic, not becoming a man of Solomon's position, whereas the style of the Qur-án is quite in keeping with his position as prophet, king and philosopher.*

*The Qur-án does not support the erroneous view found in the Bible, *viz.*, the country of Sabā is situated on the east, with Kaitura as its capital where pearls are lying in streets like pebbles, etc.

CORRESPONDENCE

MAIDENHEAD, BERKS.

8th January, 1941.

DEAR SIR,

May the peace of Allah be on you !

I thank you for your very kind invitation to be present at the celebration of the Festival of 'Id-ul-Adzha. I am very sorry to have to refuse this very kind offer, for it is with all my heart that I should like to be with you. I trust you will excuse my inability to attend.

I also enclose the declaration form you sent me some time ago. I have considered this question of changing my faith carefully and am decided in my own mind that Islam is the only one to follow. I thank you for the considerate attitude you have displayed towards me and I sincerely hope our relations may always be of the best.

I shall be writing soon but in the meantime I tender my best wishes for your personal safety.

May Allah keep you in peace !

Yours faithfully,

J. W. WAGON.

STRATFORD, E. 15.

15th February, 1941.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

I have just arrived back home here after the beautiful experience I have been privileged to enjoy in visiting the Mosque and meeting you and others of my brethren-in-Islam. All I can say now is that your hospitality has touched me very deeply. The experience itself (the blissful fulfilment of plans long made) was one of priceless value to me. It has undoubtedly been one of the most important days of my life. The books I now have as a result of to-day's visit will satisfy and occupy me now to my heart's content. I brought home with me also a postcard of the Mosque itself. This is now framed and standing on my desk before me. May I assure you that I shall now do more than ever to uphold my Faith in the face of everything. Every moment of thought brings the Faith nearer and dearer to me and so shall it always be.

For a beautiful experience, for all your kindness, to you and my other brethren-in-Islam, are all my gratitude and profound thanks.

I shall soon write again to you and meanwhile peace be with you all, my dear brethren !

With deep gratitude,

GILBERT E. SMITH.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

22nd February, 1941.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

A week ago to-day it was my very great privilege to visit you and meet some of my fellow-beings who God has ordained should be my brethren in Islam. The most beautiful experience of all was, of course, to enter the Mosque with you all, and with kind and sympathetic help to be able for the first time to offer my devotions in the proper manner. The Mosque itself made a deep and lasting impression on me as it is bound to on every one who has entered it. The atmosphere was one of deep and profound reverence with nothing to disengage the mind from the Divine Purpose of our presence there.

My first visit has left me with a profound desire to repeat it again as soon as I can. Of course, as it is by God's will, this will perhaps not be possible for several months but my desire will most certainly not diminish. I do not remember the actual names of all whom I met at the Mosque but all made a deep impression on me. Your own sympathy and interest in me personally was not the least of all I appreciated. The books I brought away with me have already given me much valuable knowledge and information. The fact that you have presented me with the Holy Qur-án, my greatest need, has indeed filled me with an intense gratitude to you. It is a large book but I had no hesitation in providing it with a cover and bringing it back with me for it is essentially a book to be read and studied day by day, and its inspiration and guidance are my greatest necessities.

The real purpose of my present kind of life is clearly apparent to me. I must live and act in God's sight and do my duty to Him and my fellow-beings, and it may, by God's mercy, be but a preparation for a fuller and greater kind of life on this earth. I am fully convinced that the greatest bar to the spread and development of Islam in this country is the complete ignorance of its true values and I know that even in my present circumstances I can find many opportunities. If it is possible, therefore, when you again write to me, could you possibly enclose a few of the "Islam—the Religion of all" pamphlets I saw in the Mosque. If you can do this I can at least sow a few seeds in suitable places. This is indeed a duty for me to perhaps help others to realize with me and experience the Divine Truth of what is written for us at the beginning of Chapter 48 in the Holy Qur-án.

I shall close here now, sending my sincerest regards to you all and hoping you will perhaps write to me soon.

The peace of Allah be with you all !

Yours truly,
G. E. SMITH.

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