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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
THE PRESENT UNREST IN CHRISTIANITY	275
THE DEATH OF LEKH RAM	287
NECESSITY OF DIVINE REVELATION	296

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THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS.

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AUGUST, 1904.

[No. 8.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِهِ الْکَرِیْمِ

The Present Unrest in Christianity.

The question of the amendment of Christian belief has of late engaged the attention of the whole Christian world and been a subject of serious concern among the Christian thinkers. The majority are in favor of the change but they have hardly courage enough to throw off the worn out creeds altogether, while there are some among the clergy and the missionaries who are still for sticking to the old doctrines however absurd and stupefying they may have been proved to be. This spirit of unrest is not only observable in the Christian countries, but thanks to the efforts of some candid speakers and writers, the subject is now also being freely discussed in India. To these discussions we have from time to time referred in the pages of this Magazine. We have shown that old theories are gradually giving place to new ones, which means a complete revolution in the Christian faith, as it is based upon theories and not upon facts. The signal failure of Christianity in securing converts from any class of the Indian people except the lowest strata of Hindu society, with a few exceptions, is now an open secret, and its causes are being freely discussed in Christian circles. To some of these we referred in our last, where we showed that the real cause which hindered the progress of Christian belief was that belief itself. This is practically admitted by the Rev. B. Lucas in a paper read at the Kodaikanal S. I. M. A. Conference, the subject being "The Adaptation of Western Christianity to India." The lecturer tells us in as plain words as can be

expected from a missionary of the Christian religion that the Western form of Christianity is not suited for India. He says: "What India needs is not our Western theories but our Eastern facts upon which our theories have been based. I am quite aware of the difficulty of separating the two and yet remaining an effective Missionary." And further on: "It is not our elaborate treatises on the atonement, or our carefully drawn up plans of salvation, but the love of God in the dying face of the Christ which brings peace and rest to the sin-burdened soul of man. While, therefore, we have our theories, let us realize that the facts of the Christian faith are more important than our theories about them, and let us be prepared to give the fullest liberty to the Hindu mind to formulate its own theories and construct its own theology." Atonement and soteriology are here plainly admitted by Mr. Lucas to be theories of men which having served their turn in the West are destined to be thrown into the corner of oblivion in the East, if Christianity is ever to obtain a hold here. Christianity pulled down from its very foundations and robbed of its fundamental principles of atonement and salvation is still Christianity and exactly the same old faith! However surprising this statement may appear to be, we have Mr. Lucas's word for it, and that is sufficient.

The sense of dissatisfaction with the current Christian creeds is by no means a parochial one, but prevails throughout the whole of Christendom. While in the West the new views are boldly preached from the pulpit, in the East the evangelists sent out to preach Christianity does not hesitate to suggest that it will work out for itself a form of Christianity, which should have nothing in common with the Western Christianity except the name. We do not mean to discuss the right of the Christian religion to change colors chameleon-like, because one system of doctrines may as well be designated by this name as another. We further admit its dire necessity to change itself in different ages and different climates, because the essential and fundamental part of its doctrines owes its existence, as is admitted by the Christians themselves, to human thought, human intellect and human experience of a spiritually benighted people. For, says Mr. Lucas: "How much poorer would our Western Christianity have been, but for the rich

contributions to the true interpretation of its life and thought which come from Greek and Roman and Teutonic sources! There is no need to dwell upon this point, for it is obvious to every student of history. I simply refer to it to emphasise the fact that our Western Christianity is a form of Christianity, which has taken its shape and colour from its environment, and to enforce the suggestion that what has taken place in the West, may be expected to take place in the East." And again: "The personality of Jesus Christ, however, is one thing, and our imperfect representation of him is another.
. When we have found a place for him in our little systems, and summed up his life and works in our crude generalisations, how soon do we find that our systems were but sepulchres, and our generalisations but grave clothes. The dawn of a new day brings us the tidings of those who have paid an early visit to the tomb, that the lord is no longer there, and the emptiness of our systems and the careful laying aside of our worn out creeds confirm the truth of the report. It is for this reason that I have laid emphasis on the fact that our mission is to preach Christ and him crucified, leaving India to construct for herself her own theology." This lengthy quotation from Mr. Lucas's paper shows clearly that the Trinity, Atonement, Resurrection and Ascension which were before this time universally considered as the fundamental and essential principles of Christianity, are now admitted to be theories, in the making of which Greek and Roman thought played the more important part, and a man who rejects all these as human innovations but believes that Christ lived and was crucified, may not only be a Christian but a better Christian than the other who limits Christianity to the recognition of these beliefs. These doctrines are not therefore of a Divine origin, and cannot claim permanence. That which is human must change with a change in the circumstances, and such is Christianity.

As indicated above, we do not object to the changes, however revolutionary they may be which Christianity is undergoing because such is the requirement of the occasion. But with such changes in its character, it is the height of absurdity for it to claim a Divine origin. Its doctrines have taken a rise in human thought and a change in that thought must bring about a change in the doctrines.

themselves, and this is exactly what is taking place. Christianity as hitherto understood, *viz.*, as a system of doctrines connected with the name of Christ, the chief of which are trinity and atonement, has received the nourishment which fed its stem and branches from Greek and Roman thought. These human resources were drawn upon by Paul in order to adapt the tenets of a sect of Judaism to the needs of the Roman people. In this drastic measure which was directly against the teachings of Jesus, he was strongly opposed by the apostles of Jesus Christ. It should be clearly understood that true Christianity, the Christianity preached by Christ,—or rather Judaism, because the new sect—founded by Jesus was essentially an offshoot of Judaism and was recognised not as a distinct religion, but only as one of its numerous sects, required an unqualified submission to all the ordinances of Mosaism. Not only does this fact plainly appear from the words of Jesus, that he had not come to destroy law, but the same is shown by his conduct and more particularly of his disciples. They scrupulously observed all the ceremonies and ordinances of the law of Moses, and required the fulfilment of the same from the new converts. They shut themselves up in Jerusalem, the centre of Jewish activity, and there to the Jews only preached the sectarian doctrines, not willing like their master that the bread of the children should be thrown to dogs. They were Israelities in the strictest sense of the term and fully hoped that Judaism would ultimately obtain the victory, which had been promised to it through the Messiah, and accordingly to this one object tended all their efforts. In fact, so strong was their faith in the ultimate success of Judaism that it really served as an incentive to their acceptance of the Messiah, for the final triumph of Israel was the cherished hope of their lives. Under these circumstances, which could not allow Christianity to make any conquest beyond the sphere of Judaism, there arose a man who not being one of the apostles declared himself to be an apostle on the basis of a vision. His ambitious and active spirit could not keep him contented with the slow progress which Christianity was making, and his ingenious brain hit upon the idea which did not occur even to Jesus that Christianity should be preached to the Gentiles. With the same acute intellect he further saw that for its best success among the Gentiles, the principles taught by the master and faithfully acted upon by his disciples, needed to be modified. He at once saw that

the ceremonials and rites of the Mosaic law could never be accepted by the non-Jews, and justifying the means by the end, which he may have thought to be a good one, (we need not question at present his sincerity in this respect), he began to preach a Christianity of which Christ had never dreamt, and with characteristic boldness declared the law to be abolished for ever with all its ceremonials and ordinances, and gave quite a new touch to Christianity, filling up the gaps which were left by the abolition of law, from his own active imagination aided by Roman thought and Greek philosophy. This death-blow to the radical principles and fundamental doctrines of Christianity, could not be watched with silence by the apostles. They were terrified at this great deviation, and they sent emissaries from Jerusalem to the centre of Paul's work, who told the new converts that except by a faithful obedience to the law and a scrupulous observance of its ordinances, they could not be saved. Violent and hot discussions accordingly followed and the apostles denied that Paul had any authority either to call himself an apostle or to bring about radical changes in the primitive principles of Christianity. But Paul supported his pretensions by a vision in which, he alleged, he had received a direct commandment from Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. By this time his work had made a great progress and it was almost impossible for the apostles to check it. On the other hand, the progress of Christianity among the Jews was very slow and they were more and more despairing of any victory of Judaism to be effected through Jesus. A compromise was effected on the understanding that Paul should preach to the Gentiles only and not require the fulfilment of law from them, while a minute observance of the ordinances of law should be obligatory for the Jews. Paul again over-stepped the limits thus set to his activity and preached an entire abolition of the law for the Jews as well as the non-Jews, and substituted in its place faith in the blood of Jesus. This radical departure from the true principles of Christianity was not, it can be easily seen, based on any Divine authority or Divine revelation, but was simply introduced by the active intellect and ambitious spirit of one man, who pleaded expediency and the success of a religion named after Christ as his chief reasons for his heresy. Gradually this easy religion, which can strictly be called Paulinism, but is erroneously termed Christianity, became more predominant and ultimately swept

off every trace of the principles taught by the founder of Christianity.

The old experience of Paul is now tempting bold and active Christians to try a similar chance again. Christ taught the due observance of the ordinances of Mosaism, and his early followers faithfully followed in his footsteps, but Paul saw that a religion limited to a tribe could not make a great progress, and accordingly while retaining the name of Christianity, he changed its very essence and substituted faith in the blood of Jesus as an atonement for the sins of man in the place of the principles taught by him whom he called his master. This device served an apparently useful purpose, though actually doing immense harm and mischief to humanity, for several centuries, but it now fails to satisfy reasonable men, and its progress in foreign countries is now practically nothing considering its triflingness in comparison with the mighty efforts made. But though Paul's plan fails to serve the purpose now, his spirit is not yet dead and the Christian world is bent upon trying another chance to keep the name of Christianity alive. Another plan is set in motion of which a brief idea can be had from the above quotations from Mr. Lucas's paper. The feeling voiced there is almost universal. Thus the famous Dr. Cuthbert Hall, whose lectures most of us heard only a short time ago, thus sums up his impressions of his journey to India: "If only the essence of Evangelical Christianity can be set before the oriental mind, without the limitations and impediments imposed by occidental controversies, institutions and customs, there would surely come a fulfilment of our lord's promise, 'I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me.'" All the doctrines which usually passed in the name of Christ, but which were actually innovations of his followers, are now divested of their importance, while Christian experience is given a prominence. But all that we can see of Christian experience is only this that Christian belief is changed at the will of men while a Divine source is boldly claimed for it. The name is constant, while the principles are ever changing, and hence its adaptation to any desired form at the will of its followers.

Odd justifications are advanced to support the view that Christianity, though keeping the name, must change its nature in different ages and different climates. As the lecturer quoted above puts it: "The religion of Jesus Christ, just because it is universal in its

character, needs for its full interpretation, the contribution of every nation," and more expressly still: "The success of Christianity in India will mean an Eastern form of Christianity, in which the highest Hindu thought and the noblest type of Hindu life will have been the moulding forces." A strange universality this! A universal religion must mean a religion which can supply the needs of all ages and every people, and this is a distinctive characteristic of Islam. But Christianity is universal in the sense that its needs are supplied by different people in different forms! Again the question is, Does human thought mould Divine truth, or should Divine truth mould human thought? Let the advocates of Christianity ponder a little over their position. If Christianity contains Divine truth, it cannot be moulded by human thought, and if it is moulded by human thought, then there can be no Divine truth in it. The different systems of philosophy that prevail in the world, are the outcome of human thought, and no one had ever the impudence to claim for them a Divine origin. The system of Christian doctrines then stands on a par with the philosophical systems. As they have grown with the growth of human thought and intellect, so has Christianity. As they differ in different ages and with different peoples, so does Christianity. The Christianity that prevails in Europe is not suited for India. Why call it Divine then: it is plainly human and of human making. Christ preached one sort of Christianity and his apostles followed him. Paul saw that Christ's Christianity was not suited for the Gentiles, so he taught another sort of Christianity. After eighteen centuries of human progress, it now transpires that Paul's system is not suited for the advanced people of the twentieth century and that it is not suited even for India or China. As Paul devised a system for the Romans and Greeks, so India and China must devise systems of Christianity for themselves. Where are we to look for the Divine in Christianity then? If the theory that men are saved by the blood of Jesus, can be conveniently put aside, all the Christian doctrines, original sin, atonement, Divinity of Jesus, &c., drop away one by one, and Christianity in the sense in which it can have any significance as a religion is brought to naught. As a philosophical system it may exist as long as it likes to assume the same name for heterogeneous sets of doctrines, but as a religion it vanishes the moment it substitutes one set of doctrines for an opposite one. To say that

it is the same truth expressed in different forms, is to hide the real fact and to cast a veil over the truth. The question is plain enough. Has the blood of Jesus the efficacy of taking away the sins of the world? The answer must be plain too, either in positive or in negative. There is no other alternative. If it has such efficacy, there is no Christianity without it, and to talk of a Hindu Christianity, "in which the highest Hindu thought and the noblest type of Hindu life will have been the moulding forces," is nonsense. If it has not such efficacy, then the present day Christianity is the most dangerous error that ever prevailed in the world. Mr. Lucas tells us that neither the "elaborate treatises on atonement," nor the "carefully drawn up plans of salvation" are of the essence of Christianity, but it is "the love of God in the dying face of Christ which brings peace and rest to the sin-burdened soul." If the true meaning is sought from under this cloud of words, it would only be this that we should not regard the death of Jesus as having the efficacy of taking away the sins of the world, but only as suggesting a beautiful idea of self-sacrifice. But what has such an idea to do with Christianity or what has Christianity to do with it?

Had Christianity a Divine authority for its principles, it would never have been thought that it is in the power of mortals to change them at their will. This is by no means the characteristic of a Divine religion. Look at the noble principles of Islam and mark the permanence of their character. Its doctrine of the Unity of Godhead, which is the fundamental basis of the religion of Islam stands for ever, and even the Christians are obliged to admit a unity in their supposed trinity. In fact the unchangeableness of this principle is evident from the fact, that it is in accordance with human nature and the Divine laws of nature, and therefore, since these two remain unchanged, the doctrine of Unity also remains unchanged. Its second great fundamental doctrine as against the Christian doctrine of atonement, is to the effect that salvation is to be obtained by attaining a purity of life, by shunning evil and doing righteous deeds. The reasonableness of this doctrine cannot be questioned in any age or any country. The more the world advances in learning and civilization, the more convinced it will become of the truth of this sublime principle. Another great fundamental doctrine of Islam is that relating to Divine revelation. Islam does not hold that God has ceased to

reveal Himself to His righteous servants or to show the wonderful signs of His existence, power and knowledge. The same living God who revealed Himself to the prophets and righteous servants of God in the past, who appeared to Moses, Jesus and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon them, reveals Himself even now to such as seek Him, so that attaining to certainty they may eschew every evil, avoid every way of the displeasure of God and walk in paths which lead to salvation. It teaches that not only are prayers accepted by God, but also that His righteous servants are informed beforehand of the acceptance of their prayers. It does not make signs and miracles a tale of the past, but promises them even now to such of His servants as walk perfectly in His ways. In fact it is a living religion and its blessings are living also. Its principles do not require a modification in any age or any country. If at one time people have objected to any of its principles on account of their ignorance, they have soon discovered their error. Take for instance the permission of divorce in Islam for other causes than adultery, which seriously affect the marriage contract. The truth of this doctrine is now recognised in all civilised countries, and divorce is permitted in most Christian countries for various causes for which the Gospels do not afford us with any authority. In fact, the principles of Islam are so universal and of such a permanent nature, proceeding as they do from an all-knowing and Almighty Power, that they do not need any adaptation for men of different countries and different ages. They have not been moulded by human thought, but have been revealed by God Himself. Their richness is not due to this or that nation like that of Christianity, but proceeds from the Divine source. The veriest tyro in history cannot deny that instead of being moulded by human thought, they have influenced and moulded the thoughts of the people by whom they have been accepted, and instead of being enriched from human sources, they have enriched humanity. The knowledge of God is by far superior to the knowledge of man and hence the principles of Islam, the most perfect religion revealed by God, disclose treasures of hidden truths which it is far beyond the power of mere mortals to discover.

There is another aspect of unrest in Christianity which like the unrest caused by the dissolution of Christian belief is a sign of the times. This is due to the strong hopes, or rather the failure of the hopes, of

the second advent of the Messiah. It has been looked forward to with earnest longing from the earliest period of the existence of Christianity, but never was the hope so strong and universal as in the latter part of the last century. This eager expectation of the near approach of the Messiah's advent was by no means the sole result of computations based on the Biblical data. On the other hand, apart from such calculations, there is a well-nigh universal feeling that the Messiah is coming, nay even that he is at the doors and knocking. Both calculations of time and the general feeling of eager expectants point to the present as the time of the Messiah's advent, and there are no two opinions on the point, that if he does not come now in the expected manner, all hopes of his second advent must be given up, for every sign of his advent has been fulfilled. All expectations of his advent in the near future are, therefore, so many forces for the overthrow of the Christian belief. Many years have already passed away in these vain expectations, and when a few more will have elapsed, it would become apparent to those whose eyes are looking up eagerly to the clouds, that their hopes were only delusions. If the hope of Christ's personal second advent can possibly be fulfilled, it is best fulfilled in the person of Mr. Pigott who claims to be the very same Christ and Lord of earth and heavens who lived and died before. But people do not believe him, though if Christ can be God, there is nothing strange in the announcement he makes. But he is laughed at, though it is really the doctrine of personal second advent which ought to be laughed at.

It is in Islam again that the true explanation of this doctrine is to be found. The Holy Quran, which is the sacred book of this religion, tells us in plain words that one like Jesus Christ, and not Jesus himself, would come. It moreover mentions certain signs as indications of his advent. One of these which could point with certainty the right man even to the dullest understanding, and which could be witnessed by every man for himself, was that relating to a peculiar combination of the eclipses of the sun and the moon in a particular month, and this took place in accordance with the prophecy about ten years ago. Similar other signs have been manifested by Almighty God in accordance with His promise, and about them there is not the slightest degree of vagueness—a defect which is to be met with in the determining

of such signs as the occurrence of earthquakes, the raging of wars, &c., mentioned in the Gospels. In fulfilment of these signs and in accordance with the promises made of old, the Messiah has made his appearance just at the time when all eyes looked eagerly for him. But for his appearance the whole world would for ever have despaired of the fulfilment of the promises of God. He has come at the right time and in the right manner. The dissolution of the erroneous Christian belief, is also an evidence that the Promised one has come, as this had been foretold 1,300 years ago. In fact, heaven and earth both bear witness that the promises of God have been fulfilled. Almighty God has moreover manifested thousands of heavenly signs, in support of His Messiah, and has furnished every proof of his truth which He furnished of the truth of the former prophets. Freedom from the bondage of sin, which is in other words salvation, can only be obtained by following him, for through him is seen the face of the living God, which is desired by many, but seen by few. Through him is obtained the certainty regarding the existence of God and His power and knowledge which only can keep a man back from sin. Through him does a man become an heir to the spiritual blessings and perpetual bliss which have been granted to the righteous ones before.

It should be borne in mind that even the promise of Jesus in the Gospels that he would come back, is fulfilled by the advent of his like. In the first place it is not impossible that Jesus misunderstood the meaning of his second advent, which was intended to be spiritual, but was mistaken by him to be physical. Such error in judgment is not incompatible with his office of Messiahship, and there are examples of such errors on his part in the Gospels, though soon afterwards the error was corrected. For instance, it appears that Jesus at first misunderstood the meaning of the establishment of the kingdom of David. He at first took it to be a temporal kingdom and accordingly advised his followers to sell their raiments and buy swords. But soon afterwards he was informed of the error and corrected it by declaring that his kingdom was not a kingdom of this earth, but a kingdom of heaven. In the same manner he might have at first misunderstood the meaning of second advent and been informed of his error afterwards. State-

ments like this that he would suffer like Elijah in his second advent, and that he would come like a thief (who comes in disguise) seem to lend a support to this view. Secondly, it is well-known that the Jews on the basis of their heavenly books knew the second advent of Elijah the prophet, to be the most certain sign of the advent of the true Messiah, and accordingly regarded every claimant false whose advent was not distinguished by this sign. When Jesus claimed that he was the Messiah, the same objection was put forward by the Jews, *viz.*, that their prophet Elijah had not come back before him. To this objection, the only answer which Jesus gave, was that the promise regarding the advent of Elijah was fulfilled by the advent of his like, for, he said, John the Baptist had come in the spirit and power of Elijah. On one occasion when asked, where was Elijah, he pointed to John, indicating that he was the very Elijah whom they expected. Now the Bible does not mention a single example in which any one should have personally come into the world a second time after being once removed from it. The only example it relates of second advent was interpreted by Jesus himself as meaning the advent of a like and not of the promised person himself, and hence when he spoke of his own second advent, he meant exactly what he himself stated on the occasion of Elijah's second advent. Thus there is not the slightest doubt that the promise of Jesus' second advent, as found in the Gospels, has been fulfilled by the advent of his like. The Holy Quran has thrown further light upon this point, by stating in plain words that the like of Jesus would be sent. If in spite of this clear evidence and the strong proofs afforded by the Promised Messiah of his truth, men still look to the personal second advent of Jesus, their fate will be the same as that of the Jews, who in spite of the explanation afforded by Jesus, continued to look forward to the personal second advent of Elijah the prophet, and thus were for ever deprived of recognising the true Messiah.

This point is not to be ignored, for it determines the true interpretation of the second advent of Jesus Christ. Let any Christian explain to us that if the promise of the second advent of Elijah could be fulfilled by the advent of his like, why is not the promise of the second advent of Jesus fulfilled in like manner. Let him state that if in spite of the clear promise of Elijah's second advent, they were

in error who remained firm in the belief of his personal second advent, why are they not in error who in spite of such words that the son of man would come like a thief, are firm in the belief of his personal second advent, and do not consider this promise to be fulfilled by the advent of one who has come in his spirit and power? If the Jews were in the right in rejecting Jesus Christ, then are also the Christians in the right in rejecting the Promised Messiah, but if they were in the wrong, then are also the Christians in the wrong, and this conclusion is inevitable.

The Death of Lekh Ram.

FULFILMENT OF A GRAND PROPHECY.

“The Secretary, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, has issued a circular,” says the *Arya Patrika* of Lahore, “to the Arya Samajes in the province, informing them that Lala Keshub Deva has been appointed by the Sabha for collecting material for the biography of the late lamented Pandit Lekh Ram, Arya Musafir, and that all possible assistance should be rendered to him when he calls for their help Now that Lala Munshi Ramji has undertaken to compile the biography from the material so collected, the Samajes and the Samajists will, it is hoped, make it a point to see that no stone is left unturned to supply the material.” This circular of the Sabha and the note of our contemporary give us great pleasure in as much as the object desired to be effected, is one which would freshen a wonderful sign which the world witnessed more than seven years ago. The death of the Pandit with its manner and date was foretold four years previous to its occurrence by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. The exact fulfilment of this prophecy in all its details was a clear and conclusive proof of the erroneousness of the religious views of the Arya Samaj, upon witnessing which it ought to have benefitted, but the excitement caused in the Samaj by the death of its foremost advocate, was so strong that it disregarded even the agreement made by their “martyr.”

His death was a warning to the Samaj of the falsehood of its principles, for he as its leader and representative had agreed to regard this prophecy as a conclusive proof of the truth of Islam and falsehood of the Arya Samaj if fulfilled, and *vice-versa* if unfulfilled. As it is likely that Lala Keshub Deva who undertakes to collect the materials for the Pandit's biography or Lala Munshi Ram, his biographer, may overlook this agreement and the subsequent facts relating to the publication of the prophecy and its fulfilment, and as even the Samajes may not turn over this stone which would only crush them, we give a brief summary of all these facts below, hoping that the Arya Samajists will ponder over them with a cool mind, and consider if it can be within the power of a mortal to disclose such deep secrets of the future long before their actual occurrence. We have not any personal dispute with them, and would have even refrained from referring to incidents which bring before their mind the loss of one of their greatest leaders, but as the relation of these events manifests the glory of God, His mighty power and deep knowledge, and brings about a certainty about His existence in this materialistic age, we would be guilty of a grievous error in concealing them. We hope the biographer of the much lamented Pandit, will do full justice to these events in the Pandit's life which have been the most important instrument in assisting the cause of the true religion. The Arya Samajists think that the Pandit devoted his *life* to the cause of the true religion, but the fact is that it was his death which served the cause of truth. His life may be memorable for his ardent preaching, but his death is immeasurably more memorable than his life, as it would preach with silent lips to future generations that the God of Islam is the living and powerful God, who controls every particle of this universe and directs it according to His will, and that Islam is the only true religion whose followers can claim to be the recipients of the heavenly signs and blessings to the exclusion of the adherents of all other religions. The facts connected with this prophecy are briefly as follows :—

The fourth part of the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya* by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Chief of Qadian, was published in the year 1884. Besides containing a powerful refutation of the hostile religions including the Arya Samaj, this book announced to the world the fulfilment of certain

heavenly signs at the hands of its author, one of which related to the founder of the Arya Samaj, being a prophecy foretelling his death. The book moreover contained an invitation to hostile religious leaders to see the heavenly signs manifested at the hands of its author or to show the manifestation of similar heavenly signs in their own religions. Some time after the publication of this book, Pandit Lekh Ram, an Arya Samaj leader and a famous preacher, came to Qadian at the close of 1885 to hold a controversy with the author of this book and to see the heavenly signs which he claimed to show. At Qadian the Pandit stayed for about a month, but terms for a controversy were not agreed upon. He importunately demanded a heavenly sign concerning himself and repeatedly spoke insultingly of the claims of the Mirza Sahib, and of the power of God to bring down punishment upon him. After several days' correspondence, an agreement was come to between the parties, by which a prophecy was to be published by the Mirza Sahib concerning his opponent. If it turned out to be true, it was to be a sign of the falsehood of the Arya Samaj; if false, an indication of the erroneousness of Islam. The Mirza Sahib further published an announcement on the 20th February 1886, in which he addressed Lekh Ram, in connection with the prophecy which he had demanded and expressed his willingness not to publish the prophecy if he, (Lekh Ram), thought that it would injure his feelings. Though by the terms of the agreement, he was entitled to publish any prophecy that was revealed to him, yet by way of precaution lest the feelings of his opponent should be injured, he again sought Lekh Ram's consent. This announcement was answered by the Pandit with his usual insolence, and he wrote saying that he considered the prophecy an absurdity, that he was not afraid of it and that he gave his full consent to its publication. Still the Mirza Sahib refrained, hoping that he would mend his ways. But the Pandit's hatred against Islam and the violence of his attacks upon it, increased day by day. So ultimately on the 20th February 1893 was published the first prophecy concerning his death. The notification issued on that date was headed by some Persian verses, describing unmatched excellences and unintercepted blessings of the Holy Prophet. The closing four verses contained a plain reference to the death of Lekh Ram and the manner of his death. Below is given a literal translation of these :—

" O thou enemy, who art ignorant and in error,
 " Fear thou the sharp dagger of Muhammad,
 " The path of the Lord which men have lost,
 " Come and seek among the followers of Muhammad;
 " O thou who deniest the excellence of Muhammad,
 " And deniest the manifest light of Muhammad,
 " Signs, rare though they be,
 " Come and see from the servants of Muhammad."

Under the words " sharp dagger of Muhammad " is drawn the figure of a hand pointing to the following heading printed in bold characters under the verses : " A prophecy concerning Lekh Ram of Peshawar." It is to be noted here that though the prophecy is contained further on in plain words as is indicated by the heading in the prose portion of this notification, yet the slightest reflection on these verses and the finger of the hand pointing to Lekh Ram, is sufficient to convince the reader that there is here a plain reference to the mode of the Pundit's murder who is the person addressed in the verses. It was the dagger which was to bring about the end of his life and through which Divine punishment was to be inflicted upon him, and thus his murder was to be the sign spoken of in the last verse, which was to be manifested at the hand of a servant of the Holy Prophet as the verse indicated. The announcement further stated : " Almighty God has granted me the following revelation with respect to him (*i.e.*, Lekh Ram) *عجل جسد له خوار له نصيب و عذاب* *i.e.*, this is only a lifeless calf who utters a detestable cry; for him is decreed punishment and torture on account of his insolence and abuses. After this when I prayed God to make known the time of this punishment, He revealed to me that from this date, which is the 20th of February 1893, within six years severe punishment will overtake him as a retribution for his impudently abusing the Holy Prophet of God." A foot-note was added here : " It is incumbent upon the Aryas now that they should all in one body pray that this punishment should be averted from the head of their representative." This announcement was widely circulated and freely discussed in the press. Further explanation of it was rendered necessary on account of some objections in certain newspapers that it was ambiguous. During those very days, Sir Syed Ahmad

Khan had written a treatise on prayer in which he had questioned its efficacy, and the Mirza Sahib was writing a refutation of it in a pamphlet named *Barakdt-ud-Dua*, (*i.e.*, the Blessings of Prayer). At the end of this pamphlet he wrote some verses in the last two of which he said addressing the Syed :--

“ O thou, that sayest that if there is any efficacy in prayers,
where is it ?

“ Run to me that I may show thee it as the midday sun.

“ Ah ! do not deny these mysteries of the power of God ;

“ Be brief and see at my hands the manifestation of an accepted prayer.”

Under the last verse which promises an example of the acceptance of prayer is given a note referring the reader to pp. 2, 3 and 4 of the title-leaf. The heading given at the pages referred to is: “ An example of an accepted prayer,” and under this heading is given an account of the prophecy concerning the death of Lekh Ram, refuting at the same time certain objections put forward by a newspaper in commenting upon the prophecy. These facts clearly show that the example of the acceptance of prayer which the Messiah promised to show to Sir Syed, was his prophecy concerning the death of Lekh Ram, and this one example was to determine the truth or falsehood of one of the parties to this controversy on the acceptance of prayer, because as he stated in the first circular, the prophecy was revealed to him upon the acceptance of his prayer that a sign may be manifested upon the person of Lekh Ram. In this second announcement of the prophecy, which was made in the beginning of April, the Promised Messiah wrote: “ I confess that if, as the objectors think, the outcome of this prophecy (concerning Lekh Ram) is no other than that he is attacked with fever or cholera or some other ordinary disease and then recovers, it should not be looked upon as a prophecy at all and I will in that case deserve the punishment which I have spoken of in my notice as to be given to me in case the prophecy turns out to be false. But if the prophecy is fulfilled in a manner in which the signs of Divine wrath are clear and manifest, then know it for certain that it is from God. Personally I do not bear enmity to any body, but this man (*i.e.*, Lekh Ram) is an enemy of truth and speaks abusively and contemptuously of a perfect

and holy man who is the fountain source of all truths. Almighty God has, therefore, willed that He should manifest the glory of His beloved one."

On the last page of the same book, the " Blessings of Prayer," is contained another prophecy in a marginal note casting still more light upon the end of Pandit Lekh Ram. It runs thus: "Another prophecy concerning Lekh Ram Peshawari. To-day which is the 2nd April 1893, corresponding with 14th Ramazan, 1310 A.H., I saw in a vision at morning that I am sitting in a spacious hall and some of my friends are also with me. While in this state, a strongly built man with a dreadful appearance and his face red with blood, came and stood before me. When I raised my eyes and saw him, I found that he was of a strange creation and disposition, as if he were not a human being, but one of the fierce and terrible angels whose terror overawed all hearts. I was looking at him when he asked me, Where is Lekh Ram? And then named another man and said: Where is he? I then came to know that he was appointed for the punishment of Lekh Ram and that other person. I do not remember who the second man was, but this much I am sure of that the second man named by him was one of those concerning whom I have published notification. It was on a Sunday and the time was 4 o'clock in the morning."

The book in which these prophecies were announced, was published some less than three months after the first notice and in the same year, *i.e.*, 1893. They all declare with a loud voice that Lekh Ram was destined to meet with his death in the prophesied period and that this was to take place by means of his murder. The mention of the dagger, the negation of the ordinary diseases, the awfulness of the punishment and the appearance of the terrible angel with a blood-red face, all spoke in clear words of the event which was to take place several years afterwards and pointed to a terrible end of Lekh Ram's life. In the year 1894 was published another book, the *Karamat-us-Sâdiqin*, (Miracles of the truthful ones), the last page of which again gave information concerning the end of Lekh Ram in the following words: " And of these (*i.e.*, of my signs) is what my Lord promised to me and accepted my prayer with respect to a mischievous person, the enemy of God and His Prophet, known as Lekh Ram Peshawari, and my Lord informed me that he would be one of the dead, because he

used to abuse the Prophet of God and speak of him in contemptuous and impure language. So I prayed against him and my Lord gave me the glad tidings of his *death within six years*; verily in this there are signs for the seekers." No plainer prophecy than this can be shown in the whole record of prophecies. Again referring to the time of his death, it was written in the same book: "And my Lord gave me the glad tidings and said, thou wilt recognise the day of 'Id (*i.e.*, the day of pleasure when Lekh Ram would meet with his death) and the 'Id, (*i.e.*, the Muhammadan festival) will be very near to it." Here it is pointed out that the day of Lekh Ram's death would be next to the 'Id, the holy festival of Muhammadans. All these facts were widely known among the Hindus and Muhammadans long before they came to pass. Even the Aryas knew well enough that the prophecy spoke of Lekh Ram's murder within six years on a certain day next to the 'Id. This is apparent from the remarks of Arya newspapers after Lekh Ram's murder. For instance the Punjab Samachar wrote in an extra dated the 10th March 1897 (four days after Lekh Ram's murder) referring to the Promised Messiah: "He used to say that he would kill the Pandit and that within such and such a time on such and such a day, (*i.e.*, one day after the 'Id) he would die a fearful death." The attribution to the Promised Messiah of an intention to kill the Pandit is a base calumny, for nothing was said besides the publication of prophecies and that on the importunate demands of the Pandit himself. We have here not a single prophecy but a number of prophecies announced successively, each giving additional particulars regarding the predicted end of Lekh Ram's life. Mark now the fulfilment of these prophecies. On the 6th of March 1897, *i.e.*, about four years after the date of prediction and thus within the period prescribed, Lekh Ram fell a victim to the dagger of a murderer in broad day light, the Muhammedan festival of 'Id having taken place on the 5th of that month. He was living in a thickly populated quarter of the city of Lahore, and it was about 6 o'clock in the evening, that the murderer's dagger had done its work. He continued to breathe for a few hours more and at last gave up his ghost in severe anguish and torture about midnight. Thus was one of the grandest prophecies brought to fulfilment with the clearest proof that can be desired. It is not a tale of the past; hundreds of thousands of those who have witnessed with their own eyes the publication and, later on, the ful-

filment of the prophecy are still alive, and hundreds of Hindus and Muhammadans who were not among the followers of the Promised Messiah, gave written testimony to the effect that considering all the facts relating to this prophecy, it certainly proceeded from a Divine source and was beyond the power of a mortal. Who the murderer was, remains a secret to this day, notwithstanding that no stone was left unturned by the Arya Samaj to discover any trace of him.

The Arya Samaj being unwilling to attribute the wonderful fulfilment of these events to Divine powers sought to take a refuge in the childish explanation of a pre-arranged plot on the part of the prophet. A more absurd explanation could hardly be suggested. One glance at the circumstances and position of the Promised Messiah, is sufficient to convince a man of common sense that such a plot is an impossibility. His religious position has divided the community into two parties, *viz.*, his followers and opponents. That a plot in which the latter should be concerned is impossible, is clear on the face of it. As regards the former, it is evident that the connection of a follower with his religious guide is a most delicate one. Righteousness, purity of life and probity of conduct are the necessary requirements of a spiritual guide, and they form the basis on which the belief of the disciple is formed. When a person enters into discipleship, he first satisfies himself that the person whom he has chosen to be his spiritual guide, has a close connection with God and has no deceit or guile in his heart. Let every conscientious man think if a person can have any faith in one, who concocts false prophecies of death, and then begs his assistance to effect his diabolic purposes by assassination. Will he take him for a religious guide whose example he should follow in righteousness and piety or for an infernal villain, the enemy of God and man? And if such a one assumes the character of a religious guide and then asks one who is ostensibly one of his followers to do such an inhuman deed which none but the wicked of the deepest dye can perpetrate, will he not tell him in return that he had not taken him for a guide to learn wickedness? Nay we ask, will he risk his life for an evil deed in obedience to a wicked man from whom he has nothing to gain. No one ever accepted a messenger or a Prophet of God knowing him to be a deceitful and wicked plotter. It is a very delicate connection which the follower

has with his master, and the smallest suspicion destroys the whole fabric of faith. It is for this reason that some men have stumbled at certain deeds of prophets which they have not been able to understand. In Islam particularly every deed of a person is judged by the standard of righteousness and piety, and when a deed is devoid of these qualities, its doer is shunned and hated instead of being loved and followed. How can the followers of a person be faithful to him whom they see to be engaged day and night in cunning guiles and plots and innocent shedding of blood only to fulfil his prophecies which he offers as signs of his truth? No one purposely destroys his own faith, and, therefore, the existence of a mean plot on the part of a religious guide and his followers, and that for the purpose of fulfilment of prophecies, is simply impossible. A dacoit may with the assistance of other dacoits perpetrate such deeds of violence, because the avowed object of all of them is the same. But where a person claims for himself perfect righteousness and piety and asserts to be a teacher of truth and virtue, and invites men to accept him as such, as a prophet of his time, as the Messiah and Mahdi whose soul is in communion with God, his followers expect to see in him an exemplar of virtue and a model of righteousness. Can he consistently with his position as a guide and reformer and as a claimant of a heavenly mission, tell his own followers to fulfil his false prophecies by doing such diabolic deeds? And if he does, will he be taken as a guide by holy men? Among the followers of the Promised Messiah are respectable gentlemen, highly educated, men of high position, learned, venerable and sacred men, who are held in honor and respectability among their companions, and whose conduct is unimpeached and stainless among friends as well as foes. Can it be conceived for a moment that they form a class of knaves and rascals who commit murders to fulfil the prophecies of their Master? We declare with a loud voice that this is a most preposterous supposition. Let that accursed and unholy member of the Ahmadiyya sect speak out who was commanded by its founder to murder Pandit Lekh Ram. Such a leader and such followers are more unholy than dogs. The Promised Messiah teaches his followers to be sympathetic to all men so much that he writes: "If any one of you sees that the house of a Hindu neighbour has caught fire and he does not at once get up for his assistance, he is not of us. If any one of my followers sees that a

Christian is being murdered and he does not do any thing to release him from the murderer, he is not of us." Can he say to those very followers whom he gives these philanthropic teachings to commit murders to fulfil his prophecies? Nay, the very moment he utters such a word, the relation of master and disciple is completely broken.

Necessity of Divine Revelation.

Deism, as our readers are aware, is a name given to the belief of those who acknowledge the existence of one God but deny Divine revelation, and admit those truths, in doctrine and practice, which they allege can be discovered by man by the light of reason independent of any revelation from God. In India this sect is known as the Brahmo Samaj. The same causes have brought this sect into existence in two different parts of the world, *viz.*, the defectiveness of the Biblical revelation in the west, and that of the Vedic in India. That this is a fact, is amply borne out by history. A similar consideration is leading people to atheism in Christian countries to a very great extent. They are asked to believe in a God whose defects and weaknesses are too evident to make any sensible person consider him a God for a single moment. The result is that along with the rejection of the divinity of Jesus, the very existence of God is denied, for besides Jesus no other God is presented to them. The denial of revelation has been brought about in a similar manner. The Bible and the Vedas could not command a belief in the truth of revelation, while an ignorance of the true and perfect revelation of God further weakened the belief in the truth of revelation. The *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya* written by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Chief of Qadian, in 1880, being the work of a living recipient of Divine revelation, contains a most powerful and strong refutation of the arguments of the Brahmo Samaj, and an able exposition of the truth of the doctrine of revelation. Under the heading which we have chosen for this subject, we, therefore, give translations of passages from this famous book:—

There is no doubt that a certainty with regard to the existence of God and His omnipotence and a future state of existence, involving reward and punishment of good and evil deeds, is the only way to a

happy end of man's journey upon this earth and the certain realization of salvation. Such certainty, however, cannot be brought about by a mere contemplation of the works of nature, but can only be attained through a revealed book, the like of which it is beyond the power of human beings to produce. To make it clear, it is necessary to discuss two points. Firstly, why does a certain hope of salvation depend upon a perfect certainty with regard to the existence of God and a future life? Secondly, why cannot such perfect certainty be obtained from a study of the created things? As to the first point, perfect certainty with regard to a belief requires an absence of every doubt or suspicion and a complete satisfaction and contentment of the heart, resulting from realization of its truth. Any belief which falls short of this, is a doubt or at best a probability. Now, a man's salvation depends upon this that he should give preference to the side of God above the whole world, above every ease and comfort which is within his reach, his wealth and all that belongs to him, and all his connections, nay his very self. True salvation lies in the predominance of a man's love towards God over every other love and attraction. But it is a great evil which affects almost every man that he cherishes fond love for things, which must necessarily estrange him from God. So strong and passionate is his love for the things of this world, that he considers his highest bliss and supreme delight to lie in his worldly connections and material comforts; nay, he actually tastes of this bliss and realizes this delight, so that not the slightest doubt lurks in his mind as to the happiness which he can find in his worldly connections. With respect to the things of this world, therefore, there reigns in his heart a certainty which is free from every doubt. It is clear from this that it is impossible for a man to turn to God with true and ardent zeal unless his heart is full of the same perfect certainty with regard to the existence of God, the bliss and delight of His union, His reward and punishment of good and evil deeds, and the blessings which He bestows upon His servants, as it is with regard to the wealth which he possesses, the money which is locked in his box, the gardens which he has planted, the property which he has acquired or inherited, the delights which he has tasted, and the friends who are dearest and nearest to his heart, for the weaker attraction can not overpower the stronger. It is undoubtedly true that when a person who has greater certainty in the things of this world than those of the next,

is about to depart from this world and sees that the hand of death is about to remove him away from the delights which he enjoyed in this world, and to part from him his dearest friends and to snatch away from him all his wealth and property, it is impossible that at that critical moment his ideas should turn to God. Unless a man's heart already overflows with an amount of certainty regarding God, His union and His retribution, far greater than the certainty which he has in material things, there is little hope of his good end, for nothing but a certainty in belief can repel the worldly attractions which engross the ideas at the moment of death.

As to the second point, *viz.*, that a mere contemplation of the works of nature cannot produce the requisite certainty, it is clear that in the book of nature it is nowhere written in bold characters which everyone should be able to read that God is the Creator of this universe, that He really exists, that true bliss and perfect felicity consist only in His union, and that He would certainly reward the good and punish the evil-doers. The deduction of reason from the consummate order and perfect arrangement displayed in the universe does not rise higher than this that it should have a Creator. But this deduction does in no way amount to the assertion that that Creator actually exists, nor can it produce the conclusive certainty which is produced by the latter, for after all it leaves a man in doubt as to the actual existence of God. When the only conclusion which a person can arrive at is that a certain thing should exist, he goes no further than assert that the existence of such a thing is necessary in his judgment, but as to whether it actually exists or not, he cannot say anything. This is the reason that those whose conclusions are based on a study of the nature have never agreed in their conclusions, nor is it possible that they should ever agree. Had it been written in a conspicuous place on the heavens in a bold type that there is but one God who has created this universe, and who will retribute all men for their good and evil deeds, perfect certainty would, no doubt, in that case have been obtained from a study of the nature as to the existence of God and retribution. In this case it would not have been necessary for Almighty God to bring into existence other means of producing certainty. But no such writing is to be seen on the heavens and accordingly the inference drawn from

the creation as to the existence of the Creator has never been considered by thinkers and philosophers as a conclusive testimony of the existence of God. This inference amounts at the utmost to a probability concerning the Divine existence, and that too in the judgment of a person who considers the self-existence of the universe to be an impossibility. With an atheist, however, such an evidence does not carry the slightest weight, for he considers the universe to be self-existent and eternal. If the self-existence of anything is impossible, argues the atheist, then God also cannot be self-existent, and if it is possible, then the universe itself may as well be considered to be self-existent and without an author, for no one can state or guess when it was brought into existence. It can be easily seen that the contention of the atheist as to the authorlessness of the universe is a clear testimony of the inconclusiveness of the evidence, drawn from a contemplation of the works of nature, as to existence of God. The argument drawn from nature does not put an end to doubt and dispute, and thus furnishes a room for the atheist to deny its force altogether.

Reason, it is evident from this discourse, shows only the necessity of the existence of God and does not prove His actual existence. Between these two, however, there is a very great difference. The deductions of our reason cannot be a conclusive proof of the existence of God, for the utmost they show is that there should be a God and not that there is a God. The knowledge of God based on this defective testimony must also remain defective, as its very foundations are laid on shaky ground. There is no certainty in one's mind, for the utmost that one can say is that there must be God, and that too if one does not turn towards atheism. This is the reason that most of the early philosophers, who trusted only the deductions of their reason, were ultimately involved in serious errors and passed away in doubts and misgivings of various sorts, becoming atheists, materialists and heretics. The boat which they prepared from the papers of philosophy could not take them to the shore, for their love for the world, on the one hand, and uncertainty as to what was to happen after death, on the other, kept them quite in the dark, and the light of certainty never shone upon them. Their journey, therefore, ended in great perplexity and they remained farthest away from the realization of certainty. In support of this statement we have their own admission

that their knowledge of God and after-life is not the outcome of certainty, but has a tinge of dubiety in it. They admit that their comprehension of these things partakes more of the nature of a conjecture than genuine knowledge. Their opinion favored a certain view on grounds of probability and hence their belief in Divine existence was not built on any firm basis. Their mind never rested with the complete satisfaction that the existence of God was a certainty, and their feeble hearts always wavered in doubts. Some of them denied that God directed the management of the affairs of this world according to His will and intention, others set up matter and soul as co-eternal with and self-existent like God, as the Arya Samajists do even now, while others still denied the immortality of soul and retribution of good and evil, or regarded nature and its laws as having real efficacy, or denied an all-comprehensive knowledge of God, or offered sacrifices to idols, or worshipped artificial gods and goddesses, and many of them denied even the existence of God.

If then, as is clear from the above, mere study of nature does not lead a man to certainty, one of the two things must be true, *viz.*, either God did not intend that man should ever reach the stage of certainty regarding His existence, or He did so intend. The first of these alternatives is evidently false and no sane person would advance such a proposition. The second alternative must, therefore, be taken to be true, *viz.*, that God has provided means by which a man can attain to certainty regarding His existence. But since the study of nature is not such a means nor does it claim to be such, it is only too evident that Divine revelation is the only means of bringing about certainty in the existence of God. Nor do the deductions of reason lead us to any satisfactory conclusion, for we do not obtain from this source perfect certainty or perfect knowledge. The only remedy for all kinds of doubts and mis-givings which arise in the mind, is revelation from God. Even if creation be considered an argument of the necessity of a Creator, there is nothing besides revelation to show that that Creator actually exists. It is true that when we see a building, we are certain of the existence of the builder, but that is because we actually see the builders with the same eyes with which we see buildings. But who can show the maker of heaven and earth unless, of course, He is seen through revelation granted by

Himself? Even if reason takes us one step to the recognition of a Maker of earth and heavens, it is itself puzzled at the next inasmuch as it is unable to discover any trace of Him and hence remains in serious doubt as to the truth of its own inference. It takes us by the hand at first but soon leaves us in the dark. It may be said that reason points, however dimly it may be, to the highway which leads to a belief in the Divine existence, but the question is, is it not reason which acts as the highwayman in robbing men of their faith in God? Is it not reason which makes some atheists and others materialists? An inference suggested by reason but not supported by actual facts, cannot be convincing, and there is nothing which can give the assurance that such inference is free from every error.

On a deeper reflection the need of Divine revelation becomes still more clear. If reason is a sufficient guide, why does it leave us in the way and refuse to take us to the goal? Is it the highest stage of our knowledge of God that we should rest contented with the weak idea that there should be a God? Can such guesses make us heirs to the eternal bliss which has been promised to those who have a perfect certainty regarding the Divine Being? If the perfect certainty which our soul thirsts after can be obtained through reason only, our denial of the need of revelation is then justifiable indeed, for the goal will then be attained without the assistance of revelation. But if being sick, we do not seek the remedy for the restoration of perfect health, it is an indication of great misfortune. The truth is that the attainment of perfect certainty, freedom from error, firm adherence to the doctrine of pure Unity and suppression of carnal desires and passions, are simply impossible without Divine revelation. It is revelation by which the world recognises the truth of Divine existence. It is revelation which has been inspiring the hearts of men from the beginning with the enthusiasm that there is a God. It is from revelation that true happiness flows to the worshipper of God and that satisfaction is granted to the faithful. It is a blessing of revelation that hundreds of thousands of the righteous servants of God departed from this world with perseverance and enthusiastic Divine love. It is revelation whose truth has been sealed with the blood of thousands of martyrs. Ay, it is this whose magnetic power has caused monarchs to don the garments of *darveshes* and the rich to

spurn at riches. It was nothing but a blessing of revelation that millions of unlearned men and women breathed their last in sincere faith. It is this bark which has drawn thousands out of the vortex of creature-worship and unbelief and landed them on the haven of safety and perfect bliss. It is the great helper at the critical moment and the companion of the last hour. But reason independently of revelation has done lasting harm. It has made many philosophers deny the creation of the universe by God and the immortality of soul and made others to bow down in worship before idols.

There is no validity in the objection that even those who followed inspiration set up for themselves new gods and partners with the Divine Being. These errors have not arisen out of true inspiration. It is the fault of those who mixed up truth with error and followed their own desires instead of obeying God. Not only has not revelation misled them, but it has pointed out to them their errors and their departure from the truth. On the other hand, it is not true that the errors which are laid at the door of reason, are due to an imperfect reason, and that perfect reason is not to blame for them. Reason by itself cannot do any thing, and we cannot discuss its sufficiency or insufficiency independently of the individuals in whom it is manifested. But no one can point out a perfect individual whom deductions of reason only should have led to an infallible conclusion in spiritual and theological matters. Where is the philosopher whose belief regarding the existence of God and the reward and punishment of good and evil deeds reached the stage of perfection known as certainty, who confessed a Unity free from every mixture of *shirk*, and whose connection with God became so strong as to totally mortify his carnal passions and sensual desires? Nay, it is admitted by the philosophers themselves that unaided and unguided reason can never reach the stage of certainty, and that doubt and uncertainty always attend its conclusions. But in this state they can never be free from errors. To say that such errors can be removed on a deeper reflection, is also an error. Human reason is not infallible especially in matters beyond the material world, and the removal of error by that which is itself fallible is an absurd supposition. The removal of errors can only be effected by an infallible guide, by that which is itself free from every liability to error.

We have already said that a man cannot be established on the firm rock of pure and absolute Unity except through revelation, and that a denier of revelation is not free from the taint of *shirk*. The truth of this assertion becomes at once clear if the nature of Unity is kept before the mind. The principle of the Unity of God requires that we should not set up with Him aught in His person and attributes, and should not consider anything to be done by the power of others which should be done by His power only. Fire-worship, element-worship, idol-worship, &c., arise out of a denial of this principle, for such men ask their gods to grant them gifts which God only can grant. Now it is clear that those who deny revelation ascribe the attributes of the Creator to the creature, and consider human beings to possess the power which belongs to the Almighty alone. For, they allege that God was discovered by them and in the beginning it occurred to human beings to appoint a God for themselves. What a foolish idea that God was in a corner of oblivion and that He was found out only by human efforts, but for which He would never have been known or worshipped! According to them, the Creator of the universe would have remained unknown for ever had the philosophers not been born. This belief regarding the Divine Being has no superiority over the belief of an idol-worshipper. If there is any difference, it consists in this that the idol-worshipper looks upon other things as the givers of gifts and the bestowers of blessings while the denier of revelation looks upon his own imperfect reason as his guide and the true bestower of all gifts. Deeper reflection shows the error of the latter to be more serious than that of the former. It is true that the idol-worshipper believes that Almighty God has charged his gods with special powers and granted them a control for the management of the affairs of the world, and that accordingly the idols grant their worshippers whatever they ask of them, but he does not go so far as to assert that the existence of Almighty God has been made known through the idols, and that this highest of all blessings is a gift of the gods. The strange idea of including God in the list of human discoveries belongs only to the Brahmo Samaj. Ignoring Divine revelation, the Brahmos exclaim in the height of absurdity that Almighty God did not reveal His existence to mankind, but that the deductions of unassisted human reason have found Him out, as if He were like a sleeping or dead man, whom reason traced out from the midst of His

creation. According to their contention, it is not the obligation of God upon man that He disclosed Himself to him, but an obligation of man upon God that he has found Him out by his own efforts. What greater obligation indeed than that without any clear knowledge of the existence of God or certainty about the reward and punishment of good and evil deeds, man has bowed the head of submission before Him ! A strange view that God was so weak and helpless as not to be able to make known His own existence, that He was hidden and men discovered Him, that He was unknown and his own creatures made Him famous, and that He was silent and they did His work ! A God brought to light only since a short time and that through human efforts ! Every sensible person can understand the absurdity of these and such-like beliefs which are worse than the beliefs entertained by idol-worshippers. The deniers of revelation pay much more reverence to the goddess of reason than is paid by idol-worshippers to their gods. Not only are men under an obligation to their goddess, but they consider God Himself to be under an obligation. A denial of revelation is not, therefore, productive only of the harm that men's faith in God is weakened and rendered doubtful and that various sorts of errors creep into their beliefs, but it causes the still greater mischief of depriving men of perfect Unity and involving them in *shirk*, because it requires that the blessings which are granted by God, should be attributed to reason.

It may be said by the upholders of this theory that they look upon their reason also as a blessing from the most High and that they thus admit that all favors proceed from the Divine source, but this is only a delusion. It is in human nature that whatever is gained by man by his own efforts, is attributed by him to his own power. It is on this principle that the rights of man with regard to property and possession have come into existence. If the owner of the house were to think that all his property belongs not to himself, but to God, why should he catch the thief or require the payment of the debts from his debtors. This law prevails universally, and it is strongly impressed upon human nature. The laborer works hard for the day and regards his wages as his due. If a person wakes for the whole night long and works hard to water his field, hungry and shivering with cold, it is impossible that he should feel as thankful

to God as he would in case cloud were to come during the night and water his field while he lay asleep in his house. In short, the person who does not believe that finding man to be weak, defective, ignorant, under the control of passions and a prey to forgetfulness, Almighty God Himself showed him the right way by His revelation and thus displayed His abundant mercy for the sake of mortals, but thinks on the other hand that God has not shown any such mercy to man, and that man himself has done everything and spent his efforts to discover God—such a person can never have his heart overflow with thanks like the one who is conscious of his own weakness and ignorance, and of the grace and mercy of God in having taken him by the hand and set him in the right path without the least effort on his part, who knows and realizes that he was asleep and God only awakened him, that he was dead and God restored him to life and that he was helpless and God only assisted him. From all this, it is clear that the deniers of revelation do not believe in the unity of God and it is impossible that their soul should ever exclaim like the truly faithful : الحمد لله الذي هدانا لهذا وما كنا لنهتدي لولا ان هدانا الله :
 “ All praise is due to God who guided us to salvation and eternal bliss, and had He not out of His mercy extended His helping hand to us, we should never have been guided by our own efforts.” How low do they appraise God who ascribe the Divine attributes and powers to human reason whose glory only do they declare and not that of God. Of them the Holy Quran says : وما قدروا الله حق قدره :
 “ The deniers of revelation have not known God as they ought to have known Him because they say that Almighty God has not sent down any revelation upon any man.”

(To be Continued.)