

THE LIGHT.

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SOME POINTS TO NOTE.

The Manager, Ahmadyya Buildings, Lahore. All business correspondence should be addressed to the manager. He is responsible for the despatch of the paper twice a month, in the beginning and in the middle. The yearly subscription is Re. 1 postage included, students will be charged 8 as. The price being nominal, **Donations** will be thankfully accepted by him, with a view to disseminating Islamic doctrines, and repudiating charges against Islam.

Correspondence of literary nature may kindly be addressed to the editor. Short articles, letters, and questions will all be welcome. Non-Muslims are also invited to send in questions to be answered.

HINDOO-MUSLIM UNION.

It is a blessing that Hindoos and Muslims be united. But the foundation on which this union is raised, will determine whether it will be temporary, or of a permanent character. It is, therefore, worthwhile to consider what is being done with regard to the confederation of these two great nations of India. Up till now, the reciprocal measures adopted to knit together the ties of the two peoples, have been to vindicate the cause of the Khilafat on the part of the Hindoos, and to have nothing to do with the killing of the cow on the part of the Muslims. Under the circumstances that are obtaining in India, these steps taken by the two communities have gone a great way to weld them together. Each nation has touched the tenderest part of the other by showing profoundest respect to the religious sentiments in respect to the "Sacred Insti-

tution of the Khilafat" and "the Sacred Animal Cow." This has contributed, as it was bound to do, to create mutual sympathy and good-will of an unprecedented nature. As Muslims, who are required to make peace with God and peace with God's creatures, we are highly satisfied with what has been accomplished, and are earnestly desirous of seeing the ties knit closer. That could be done if we were to avail ourselves of the principle, that underlies the present alliance. That principle evidently consists in cherishing and displaying reverence for the religious institutions of each other. Admitting that all the institutions of the one could not command respect of the other, we venture to suggest what is, in our opinion, better suited to bring about union of a more lasting nature. That principle is this. Believing that God is universal, His spiritual dispensation must likewise be universal. In other words, He who maintains the heavens and the earth, He who looks after the Hindoos, the Jews, the Christians, the Sikhs, the Muslims and others, must be ministering to the spiritual needs of all the nations. To deny revelation to any one nation would be to deny the universality or unity of God. The Muslims, who are not without reason proud of the doctrine of the unity or universality of God, believe as a principle of their faith that God is the God of all the worlds and all the nations (*vide* the Holy Quran chap. I-1). As a corollary to that, they are required by the Holy Prophet of Islam to believe in all the prophets, who were raised from time to time among the various nations of the world. To confine our belief to the Holy Prophet alone is to disbelieve his mission. The

Prophet, who was the first and foremost Muslim, called upon us to believe as he himself believed "in God, in the angels, in all the revealed books of God, and in all the messengers sent by Him." We are likewise enjoined to refrain from making any invidious distinction between prophet and prophet. Our belief, according to the Holy Qurans is that "There is not a single nation to which a warner was not sent"; "and for every nation there has been a guide." Accordingly we, as Muslims, believe that Moses was raised among the Jews, as Jesus was commissioned to correct them when they had corrupted. Similarly we believe that Baba Nanak Sahib was granted as a great religious guide to the Sikhs. In a like manner we believe that Lord Krishna, and Ram Chandraji Maharaj, whom we hold in very high esteem and reverence, were the most eminent religious guides who honoured the land of India. We believe accordingly that the Vedas are among those books which are Divinely inspired. Without such a belief on our part, we cannot rightly claim to be Muslims. This we think should be proclaimed repeatedly in order that our Hindu brethren may thoroughly understand us, and, appreciating our attitude towards their religions, may be attracted towards us with a force of sincerity likely to be more enduring than anything else.

On the part of our Hindu brethren we are sure that there is no thoughtful person among them who will disbelieve the mission of such a prophet as has given us the most tolerant and enlightened tenets, as described above. If the Hindoos believe in the Holy Prophet as we believe in Lord Krishna and Rama Chandraji Maharaja, our union will be effected in such a manner as does not fear any rupture in the future. We have offered that suggestion in an earnest hope that our countrymen will give their best attention to it, and will not fail to crystallise the alliance already achieved.

SADR-UD-DIN.

CHRISTMAS.

In the Christendom there are three most important festivals, Epiphany, Christmas, and Easter. The origin of these feasts and festivals not being known to most of the Christians, much less to Non-Christians, it will be of interest to explain what these feasts and festivals are. As we are writing in Christmas days, we shall confine our remarks mostly to the origin of this festival and reserve the treatment of others for other suitable occasions.

These festivals never existed in the time of Jesus or his apostles; nor is there any indication of the observance of Easter, or Epiphany or Christmas in the new Testament or in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. The ecclesiastical historian Socrates states that neither the Lord nor his Apostles enjoined the keeping of any festival. "The Apostles had no thought," says he, "of appointing festival days." The early Christians of orthodox ideas held that such feasts were not in accord with their faith.

Christmas, or the Mass of Christ, is the festival in commemoration of the nativity of Jesus. As pointed out above it was not observed in the time of the Holy Prophet Jesus or his Apostles, or early Fathers. In fact, they abhorred and condemned the idea of such feasts which seemed to them hardly better than earthly enjoyments. As late as 245 Origen, in his eighth homily on Leviticus, repudiates as sinful the very idea of keeping the birthday of Jesus Christ "As if he were a King!"

The festival of Christmas, which cannot boast its origin in Christ or in the New Testament, is an invention of latter times. For centuries there have been speculations even about the date of Christ's birth; and according to Encyclopedia Britanica "before the 5th century there was no general consensus of opinion as to when it should come in the calendar, whether on the 6th of January, or the 25th of March, or the 25th of December. These three were selected out of several

dates, which had been condemned as spurious element of Alexandria, who himself set the birth on the 17th of November 3 B. C.

One of the votaries set it on the 28th of March. For he maintained that "the world was created perfect, flowers in bloom, and trees in leaf, therefore in spring; also at the equinox, and when the moon just created was full. The 28th of March suits all these considerations. Christ, therefore, being the Sun of Righteousness, was born on the 28th of March." The same symbolical reasoning led certain Romans to transfer his birthday from the 6th January to the 25th December, which was according to their ideas the birthday of the unconquered Sun. While on the other hand, those Syrians and Armenians who clung fast to the 6th of January rightly charged the Romans with sun-worship and idolatry. The idolatrous conception of this date of the 25th December originated in the West, regardless of reality and of general belief in the East. It is an irony of fate that a wrong and ridiculous day has been adopted throughout the Christendom for the observance of Christmas.

There being no religious directions as to the keeping of Christmas, the West has not only dictated the date, but also the manner in which the festival should be celebrated. The celebration is no less heathen in origin than the idea underlying the fixing of its date. It is in fact a survival of the old teutonic mythology. The words yule-log and yule-tide bearing it out. Father Santa Clause who fills the stockings hanging in the chimneys of English children on the Christmas night with gifts, the carrol-singers, and the indulgence of kissing young ladies who happen to pass through door-ways cunningly hung by young men with the lucky mistle-toe, all point to the superstitious and heathen origin of the festival, ill-appropriated by Christianity.

"In Britain the 25th of December was a festival long before its conversion to Christianity. In 1644 the English Puritans forbade any merriment or religious services by

act of parliament, on the ground that it was a heathen festival, and ordered it to be kept as a fast. Charles II revived the feast, but the Scots adhered to the Puritan view," (Ency. Brit.) In a word, the festivities that attend Christmas are as foreign to Christianity as the celebration of the birthday of Jesus itself. The early Scripture-writers like Mark, do not attach any importance to the incident of the birth of Jesus, and in consequence have not taken any notice of it. In their opinion Jesus rose to ecclesiastical importance when he was baptized. It is therefore with Epiphany i.e., the presentation of the babe Jesus to the Temple, that their scriptures open. We see then that there was as little room for Christmas in the original scriptures as is left for it just now in the world, that has been distracted by Christian potentates in adoration of the goddess of Lust and Avarice.

SADR-UD-DIN.

ISLAM REPLACING CHRISTIANITY IN THE WEST.

In spite of the passionate endeavours of the Christian nations to annihilate Islam and the Khilafat, in spite of the invidious literature which is disseminated in the West with the object of prejudicing the masses against Islam, Islam is making headway and enlisting the dissatisfied Westerners at the very centre of its opposition, exactly as Moses was once being brought up in the very palace of the Pharaoh. The faith is indebted for this wonderful success to the soundness of its teachings. The creed, free as it is from all traces of dogma, is so reasonable, that it cannot command allegiance. Its principles are of universal application not only in the sense that they are in perfect harmony with the human nature, which is the same all the world over, but also in the sense that they are as easily understood by the illiterate as by the learned. God is one is the chief principle, round which all interest, and all institutions must centre. God is one means that all the lands and all the nations have the same supreme. Being to look to; the Indians have their wants

ministered by the self-same God as looks after the Europeans, the Americans, and the Africans. The whole universe indeed falls within the jurisdiction of one and the same Governing Being. The administration of the universe with so wonderful an efficiency as we are admiringly aware of, cannot be attributed to more than One Mighty and All-knowing Sovereign. If there were more than one God in existence, the heavens and the earth must long have collapsed. "If there were several Gods in them (*i e.*, the heavens and the earth), they must have gone wrong"—(The Holy Quran). What is said in the Holy Quran finds a tragic and sorrowful illustration of it in the late War. The Christian Kings of Europe, possessed as they were with the passion of domination and self-assertion, have destroyed the peace of the world.

The unity of God implies unity of purpose throughout the administration of the universe, as is met with in its diverse spheres. This unity of purpose must also be exhibited in revealing God's will and word to the various nations. The teachers, who have been commissioned from time to time for this sacred task, must strike the chord of the Oneness of God. All of them having been sent by the self-same God, must be accorded profoundest respect, and no distinction be made in the acceptance of them. This has been urged in the various texts of the Holy Quran. "We do not make distinction in any of the prophets." Islam, as propounded in the Holy Quran, demands that we should believe in one God, who is the Cherisher and Evolver of all the worlds, and that we should believe, as a result of it, that spiritual dispensation has been as universal as the human creation itself. Accordingly a Muslim believes in Moses, Jesus, Lord Krishna, Ram Chandraj Maharaj, Baba Nanak Sahib and others, in the same way as he believes in the Holy Prophet of Islam.

With regard to practices, we reproduce what was observed by the Holy Prophet in reply to a question. "Islam," said he, "con-

sists in cherishing profoundest respect for God, and tenderest love for His creatures." Our sympathy with God's creatures is a fruit, which our love of God should bear. Unless we exercise kindness without distinction of race and creed, unless our charity be shared equally by man, bird and beast, we cannot claim to be good and rightful Muslims.

These conceptions and practices, reasonable and beneficial as they evidently are, cannot fail to make a successful appeal to the mind and heart of man, in whichever clime he may be residing. No wonder then that the Westerners are giving up their untenable and superstitious religion in preference to Islam.

SADR-UD-DIN.

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