

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE LIGHT.

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

NOTES.

Islam and Christianity.

It is gratifying to note that the muslims of every part of the world are now awakened to the importance of the propagation of Islam. They have, after all, begun to realise the necessity of combating the activities of the Christian Missionaries. Of Java we are told that :—

The muslims at present are alarmed at the progress of Christianity and are taking measures to strengthen their propagandism. They are publishing new journals in Malay and Javanese. There is an intellectual revival accompanied by the usual unrest.

The New Method of Preaching.

It is an open secret that doctrines of the church cannot stand the searchlight

of reason. They can only be couched in an emotional language to appeal to sentimentality. That is why the christian missionaries have now abandoned the controversial methods in preaching, because in a controversy we have to argue, and this is the thing which goes directly against the faith of church. Dr. Eddy has recently made a short appeal "to abandon the polemic method, which has been tried and found wanting." The most effective way in the opinion of Dr. Eddy is the "positive presentation of Christ as the saviour without mention of the points wherein moslem doctrine of Christ or any other tenet of Islam differs from the Gospel." The same principle is now going to be applied to Literature, as we read the following in the Moslem World :—

A group of workers which met at the close of the month of meetings advocated the application of the same principle to literature, including the maxim : "Mohammed will have to be left severely alone"; they added : "The only literature for Moslems which should be suffered to remain is literature of a suasive informatory type, e. g., invitations to read the Bible, studies of aspects of the redemptive work of Christ."

We must admire the ingenuity of the christian workers, and quite appreciate the standpoint with which the new plan is inaugurated; yet we do not think that it will be conducive to any good for the propagandism of Christianity. The Bible is a book which is obsolete for this age; and no thinking mind will have any inspiration from it. It is, therefore, no good to ask people to read the book. Besides it does not support the novel doctrines of the church, and one who reads it carefully is bound to condemn Christianity as Paulinity or Churchiniaty.

THE LIGHT.

Dated the 1st January 1923.

Miracles of the Holy Prophet.

III.

It should also be borne in mind that this transformation, which began with Arabia and gradually enfolded the world was due to the divine book revealed to the Holy Prophet. The Quran is a living miracle of Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The very name of the book contains a wonderful prophecy and the world has seen its fulfilment. Literally it means that **which will be frequently read**. And it is an undisputed fact that the Quran is the only Book that is most widely read. There are hundreds and thousands of men who have learnt it by heart, and can recite it from memory. Every Muslim commits at least a portion of it to memory. It is recited on every occasion of rejoicing or mourning. Marriages are solemnised with its recitations. It is read out on the burial of the dead. In the month of Ramazan the Quran is read or listened to by almost every Muslim. Its first chapter, which forms an essential part of a Muslim prayer is read at least 32 times a day by Muslims in their five daily prayers all over the world. I am sure all mathematical figures cannot adequately represent the number of the Quranic reading. Early in the morning from every Muslim house comes the sweet vibration of the verses of the Holy Book. In fact no heavenly or earthly book is so widely read as the Quran; and the mighty prophecy contained in its name which is given to it by the All-Knowing Allah, is pre-eminently fulfilled. Again the Quran is a unique book. It has given an open challenge to the world:—"If you are in doubt as to what We have revealed to Our servant then produce a chapter like it" II: 24. And in (17: 8) the whole world is declared to be unable to produce a book like the Quran. It is admitted on all lands that the Quran is a unique production of Arabic literature. The Arabs were poets and were proud of their eloquence. The master piece of their poetry were, as a token of recognition, hanged with the door of the Kaaba. The "Saba' Muallaqa the Seven hanged verses" are called so because they being the finest production of literature were hanging with the door of Kaaba. The Holy Prophet Muhammad was illiterate; and yet the book he presented surpassed in eloquence and dictum the whole Arabic

literature. Even the unbelievers were constrained to admit the superiority of the Holy Quran from the literary point of view. It was the charming influence of its language that won so many hearts to Islam. Omar, subsequently the great Caliph happened to listen once to the recitation of the Quran, and embraced Islam forthwith. It is impossible that an illiterate man should produce such a beautiful book. This establishes the fact that the Quran is not the product of Muhammad's brain, but it is the word of God.

There is, however, another unique feature of the Quran which should not be ignored. The wonderful transformation which the Holy Prophet accomplished was in fact due to this book, and what is still more wonderful is that it was all fore-told in the very commencement of the Quran. In its very beginning it is clearly laid down that this book is meant to be guidance for the people and those who will abide by it shall prosper. Thus it was clearly foreshadowed that the Quran is to fulfil a great mission and that mission was duly fulfilled. The wild children of Arabia who in the words of Firdausi, the great epic Poet of Persia, "were brought up on the camels' milk and lizards' flesh rose to such an eminence that the Persian and the Roman Empires crumbled down under their feet. And it was not the brutal force through which they achieved this greatness; but it was the moral and spiritual force" This characteristic of the Quran makes it peerless in the whole literature of the world. There is no other book which can claim equality with it in this respect.

I have already said that Prophecy is the miracle which has no resemblance whatsoever with trickery or legerdemain. The surest criterion which even a man of very ordinary intelligence cannot fail to apply consists in the revelation of the deep secrets of the future to the Prophet. It is this circumstance which establishes beyond the shadow of doubt that the source of the Prophet's revelations is super-natural; while all other miracles have some sort of resemblance with trickery or legerdemain, and therefore can be explained away. Besides, such miracles are often local and have their value in their own time. But prophecy has a record to which we can always refer, and therefore its sphere of influence is wide enough. The Prophecies of the Holy Quran for instance have got still the same value as in the time of the Holy

Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). We do not stand in need of an eye-witness to corroborate their statements; as they are reduced to writing and the whole world has been their fulfilment. The only consideration in regard to a prophecy should be whether it reveals any secret which is in the lap of future. If it does, and is subsequently fulfilled, then it is the sure sign of the truth of a prophet. The Holy Quran is full of such prophecies. I will quote here a few of them.

The 5th chapter, the Moon, is admittedly one of the early Revelations. In it the enemies of the Holy Prophet are warned by citing the examples of the fates of the previous people, and in the conclusion they are directly addressed:— Are the unbelievers of yours better than those, or is there an exemption for you in the scriptures? 54: 43. The Holy Quran itself gives the reply in these words:—they say we are a host allied together to help each other. Soon shall the host be routed and they shall turn their backs” 54; 44, 45. Here we have a clear prophecy about the future, and it consists of two parts:—(1) Firstly the Muslims and the allied forces of their enemies shall meet in a battle.

(2) Secondly the allied forces shall be routed; and they turn their backs.

Now these words were revealed at Mecca, when there was no fighting and the Holy Prophet was in a most helpless condition. No one, could tell by foresight at that time, that Muslims and the unbelievers shall meet one day on an open battlefield and the allied forces shall be defeated. But the Divine word came out exactly true. The Muslims met the enemy at the battlefield of Badr and defeated the allied troops of the unbelievers. That the Holy Prophet understood these Divine words in the same way and in the same light is established by the following report mentioned by such a trustworthy authority as Bukharee:—

The Holy Prophet prayed within his tent on the day of Badr, saying O Lord! I beseech Thee according to Thy **covenant**, and Thy **promise**; O Lord if such is Thy will, Thou mayest not be worshipped after it. Abu Bakr took his hand and said Allah is sufficient for you, O Prophet of Allah. So the Prophet went out while he was reciting:—Soon shall the hosts be routed and they shall turn their backs, but the hour is their promised time and the hour shall be most grievous and bitter. The words “Thy covenant” and Thy promise clearly refer to the prophecy

of the Quran quoted above; and the Holy Prophet's reciting the same words gives further proof of the fact that he understood the words of the Quran as the prophecy of victory in a battle. This promised victory was of course granted to the Muslims on the battlefield of Badr.

Correspondence

“Burial of the Dead,”

Dattapara,
10th November 1922.

Dear Maulvi Sahib,

Would you be good enough to publish the following lines in the next issue of the “Light.”

In the “Light” of the 16th September you wrote “Islam orders the burial of the dead and it is the best method.” In my view it is quite the contrary, as it is a scientific truth that the gas arises from the grave, impures the air and thereby contributes to the outbreak of various epidemic diseases; but it is not with the case of burning. Hence it is clear that the Hindu practice of burning is better than that of burial which you practise. Please throw light on the query.

Thanking you in Anticipation,
yours fraternally,

Chowdhury Raj Birendra Narayan,
(Student).

Dattapara, Nonkhali.

(I beg leave to differ from you. In burning the dead the particles of the body fly in the air and make it impure. But in burial the body is laid down deep in the grave and the earth consumes every thing. Further don't you see that to put the body of a dear one in burning fire is very trying for refine sentiments. It is simply horrible, whereas a grave is only a resting place for the dead. It does not seem cruel to repose the body there. Besides we can visit the tombs of our past friends, strew them with flowers, and thus keep their memory green Ed. L.)

Questions and Answers.

Mr. Abdul Ghani:—

Q. 1. What is the difference between **Farz** and **Sunnat** namaz?

A. **Farz** (obligatory) is an essential part of the prayer and should necessarily be said, while **sunnat** is, sometimes as in the case of combining two prayers, dispensed with.

Q. 2. Can we omit **Sunnat** Namaz in the time of urgency and say only **farz**?

A. Yes, in the case of **Journey** when we shorten the prayers, the **sunnat** is dispensed with.

Q 3. If the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sabib was himself an Imam what necessity was there for him to follow Hazrat Abou Hanifa?

A. Every man, however great he may be, is bound to follow his predecessors to some extent. Even the Holy Prophet is enjoined in the Quran to follow the guidance of the previous prophets.

Q 4. If an individual follows Holy Quran and Hadis and not the mujaddids can he be a pucca (staunch) muslim?

A. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: one who does not recognise the Imam of his age, will die a death of ignorance. Hence one who follows Hadis is supposed to follow the mujaddid of his time.

Q 5. Can you name the mujaddids of 6th to 12th century Hijra?

A. I am afraid the answer to this question is too long for these columns. I should therefore request you to peruse Mirza Khuda Bakhsh's Asl-i-Musuffa which has fully dealt with this question.

Mr. Inam Ullah Shah :—

Q 1. Is it lawful to eat the Kunka or Kurah of a Gurdwara or the sweets of Arya or Sanatan Mandar?

A. The general principle is, that any eatable which is dedicated to the name of a god or any person except Allah or is associated with any kind of Shirk is unlawful.

Q 2. Was Guru Nanak a Muslim?

A. Yes, the chola (cloak) which is the relic of Baba Guru Nanak and is held in great reverence has got the inscriptions of the verses of the Holy Quran, one of which is that surely (true) religion with Allah is Islam. It follows then that Baba Sahib was a muslim at heart. There are also other facts which point out to the same conclusion.

Q 3. How many Sikh Gurus have been muslims and why?

A. None except Baba Nanak.

Q 4. Do not the Vedas contain the name of human being.

A. I have not read the Vadas, but I think they contain the names of human beings and even of lower species such as birds or trees.

Q 5. Have the Vadas undergone any change? What light the research throw on the purity of the text?

A. Sanskrit in which the Vedas are, is now a dead language and there is hardly any research about the Vadas.

There is no trustworthy translation of the Vedas, and the followers of the Book some time assert with pride that there is none who can understand the Vedas. In these circumstances it is very difficult to say something definitely about them. But some of the teachings, which the Arya Smaj attribute to the Vedas are apparently repugnant to human nature and hence should not have been emanated from Divine Being. Besides common sense demands that a Book of such an antiquity as is claimed by the followers of Vedas should not be free from corruption. The book itself does not guarantee its purity as the Quran has done.

Q 6. Is it lawful for a muslim to attend the meeting convened in honour of Swami Daya Nanda?

A. If the meeting is conducted on the principle of religious toleration and respect for every religion, there is no harm in its attendance.

But if it is intended to make hostile and unwarranted attacks in it on the Holy Prophet and Islam, then it should be avoided as participation in such gatherings often results in mischief.

Mr. Rashid Ahmad :—

Q 1. Why is a man born blind? Is it due to rebirth?

A. There is a cause for every effect, though we may or may not be able to ascertain it. A child is born blind owing to something, say sometimes owing to a disease or irregularity of parents. It has nothing to do with rebirth theory.

Q 2. What is destiny?

A. Destiny, predestination or more properly premeasurement (Taqqdir) in Islam is the Divine law, which is obtaining in the universe. It is predetermined, for instance, that the sun must give us warmth and light. Similarly it is predetermined that our actions must have their fruits according to their merits. Thus it is the law in general that is predetermined, and not the fate of every man. The individuals are of course governed by that law, and thus their fates are moulded.

Q 3. Is killing of goats or birds a crime, if so why we the muslims do so, and do not take pity on the dumb, innocent animals?

A. Every thing in the world has got a purpose to serve, the goats and the birds have to supply food for man. Besides the law of nature is that every lower life is sacrificed for a higher life and it is a sort of evolution. Man is the lord of creation and all things are created for him.