

## THE PRESENT WAR AND THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.—I.

### THE WOKING MOSQUE SUNDAY LECTURE SERIES.

(Delivered by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, on August 10<sup>9</sup>, 1914.)

THE other day, only a few weeks ago, when I was speaking of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his life as the best specimen of humanity, I was asked, in after-lecture questions, if Muhammad as a warrior was also a desirable model for human imitation? The grim development of the events of the last fortnight have amply supported what I then said in reply. The mad dogs of war are unchained, and the world unfortunately is going to see the most disastrous havoc ever wrought upon humanity since its creation. No one desires the state of war. It retards civilisation, and cripples human advancement. It creates misery, and endangers all comfort and happiness. Yet, with all our boasted civilisation and refined ideas, we are to-day within the iron clutches of war. We may blame the Kaiser or the Tsar as the immediate cause of this Western conflagration ; but can one, even with a semblance of honesty, find fault with the action the British Government has been compelled so reluctantly to adopt in this unfortunate situation? We cannot admire Sir Edward Grey too much for all he did to avert or to localise the War ; but he failed in all his noble efforts, and the events were so electric in their speed that within forty-eight hours a nation averse to war was dragged into it. The Foreign Secretary could not do better than to advise the course now so reluctantly adopted by the nation. It is in self-defence and for self-preservation, and could not arouse censure from any quarter. Even those members of the Cabinet who did not see their way to support Sir Edward were not so keen in their disapprobation of his measures. The Socialists have also seen the necessity of militarism at this juncture. It is a necessity : a question of life and death. It is an urgent call for a duty of sublimest character. Could religion say anything against the noble response which the English nation has given by resorting to arms? A creed is not worthy the name if it teaches otherwise. The Church is here alive to the situation. The clergy come forward in unison with the laity to help the furtherance of national existence, and bless the arms with their benediction, though perhaps at the cost of their Christian conscience. Was not the Holy Prophet Muhammad placed under similar and more unfavourable circumstances when he was driven to arms in order to protect his life and that of his followers? For fully thirteen

years they were subjected to the direst kind of persecution, which they bore with marvellous meekness and patience. A plan was started then to murder the Prophet, and, to thwart this heinous scheme, the Prophet fled from his native city. He found refuge in Medina for himself and his followers, but the enemy would not leave him even there. They wanted to pursue him to death. They came with arms towards Medina. They inflicted their first blow while the Prophet was at Mecca, and they came with the second after him. The "right cheek" had already been struck, and the left one was aimed at. Should he remain inactive, and turn his left cheek to the enemy? Protected under the happy wings of peace, one perhaps might not realise the situation of the Prophet when the enemy had finished nine days out of twelve days' journey from Mecca in their march against Medina, where the Prophet's clan lived; and he was thus forced to leave his city with his little band to meet the enemy at some distance from the city.

But the present war perhaps supplies us with an apposite illustration. The Germans did not leave Berlin to invade England, nor as yet have they reached the English seas. If they violated Belgian neutrality, it was done to work out their strategy to attack France from the north-side. And yet all this has been thought—and very rightly—to endanger English safety. A step to secure self-preservation has been thought to be necessary. It has been taken with the whole nation's support. It meets the approval of the Church as well; but is it consistent with the teachings of Christ, either in words or in spirit? I say no. History has repeated the events of thirteen hundred years ago, and the English nation has retraced the footsteps of the Holy Prophet of Islam. The Blue Book has been laid down on the table of the House of Commons in justification of the present step, and Sir Edward Grey and the Prime Minister, in their historic speeches to vindicate their actions, have simply vindicated the Holy Prophet Muhammad (glorified be his name!). Mr. Asquith, with all his Nonconformist conscience, has been forced to put the Sermon on the Mount behind his back and follow the Lord of Islam. Yes, it is a truism that to wage war in self-defence and for self-preservation is a necessity, an essential virtue and true righteousness. Religion is practice and not theory. Human vitality is the only criterion as to the sanity of its teachings.

That Muhammad fought in self-defence when all other peaceful means to preserve his very existence became impossible appears from the verses of the Quran under which he first took to arms by the order of God. The verses run thus:—

"A sanction is given to those who, because they have suffered *outrages*, have taken up arms; and verily, God is well able to succour them: Those who have been driven forth from their homes

wrongfully, only because they say 'Our Lord is the God.' And if God had not repelled some men by others, cloisters, and churches, and oratories, and mosques, wherein the Name of God is ever commemorated, would surely have been destroyed."

—The Quran 22 : 40, 41.

Muhammad and his followers "had been driven forth from their homes," they had "suffered outrages," their only crime being that they believed in one God. God must repel some men by others if the former intend to destroy the life and the property of the other. The very locality of the first three battles between the Prophet and his enemies decides this vexed question, and shows that the militarism of the Prophet was of a defensive kind and a necessity. The first battle took place at Bader, which stood at three days' journey from Medina, the seat of the Prophet, and nine days' journey from Mecca, the city of the enemy. The second battle was at Ohud, at one day's journey from Medina and at eleven days' journey from Mecca. The third was at Medina itself. The enemy came from Mecca while the Prophet was at Medina. Is it, therefore, difficult to ascertain who was the aggressor and who the defender?\*

It is all very well to preach passive morality from the pulpit, but it is a dead letter if it has not seen practice. We need not impeach the soundness of what has been taught in the name of Christ. Suffice it to say that His followers never cared to obey Him in His teachings. Christianity was meek and gentle when in serfs and slaves, but no sooner did she reach the very first step of the ladder to ascendancy through the royal conversion of Constantine than she forgot the teachings of the Master. But she could not do otherwise ; what was taught was impossible,† and, there being nothing as its substitute, she had to use her own discretion, and reaction followed.

(To be continued.)

---

\* Elsewhere we reproduce an extract from an able article from the pen of Maulvi Muhammad Ali, M.A., LL.B., Editor of the *Review of Religions*, which appeared in 1906 under the heading of "The Muslim and Christian Holy Wars."

† Here it would not be out of place if we reproduce the following article from the pen of "Philosophus," which deals with what has been said in the concluding portion of the above:—

IS THE PRACTICAL PORTION OF CHRIST'S RELIGION PRACTICABLE IN ITS ENTIRETY?

Jesus, as we know, was not only the founder of a religion, but also of a kind of socialistic republic. He despised riches himself, and impressed upon all His followers to do the same. Under His rule individual riches became common property. After His death His disciples endeavoured to perpetuate this republic. We read of Ananias and Sapphira being punished for keeping back part of the proceeds of

## AN APPEAL AGAINST WAR.

---

DEAR WOMEN OF THE WORLD,—

The horror of war is again upon us, war of such nature and magnitude as the World has never seen ; its cost in lives and treasure will be unparalleled.

War in any form is a crime against humanity, and modern warfare is a game fit only for demons.

For thousands of years man has talked of Peace, and is still talking, but if in the face of this world-catastrophe he is silent, it is time for women to come forward and say : There shall be no more war, we demand a truce *now*, and that, at once, an International Parliament be formed, to settle, now and always, all conflicting questions. Till a better plan of election be found, the members can be considered as already elected : the Kings and Rulers, the Viceroys and Governors ; from each Cabinet or its equivalent—the Lord Chancellor, the Premier, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and an equal number of members of the Oppositions who have held similar offices. Automatic election causes no delay. This Round Table will right every wrong. An International Army could as easily be formed.

Down the centuries woman has acquiesced in war, giving the sons born in agony to slay and be slain, as if that edict from Mount Sinai were not the unqualified "Thou shalt not kill" but its reverse. Woman would still give her nearest and dearest, still would enter into the fighting ranks herself, but with eyes open, knowing the path to be evil, and the halo of war the crown of shame of humanity. Man talks of heroic deeds done in war ; yes, we have heroes, many of them in our daily life. But place in one column the heroic deeds of war, their influence and consequences, and in another that dread catalogue of crimes which man, turned demon by war, has committed. War ! with it those dread school-masters Famine and Pestilence ! and lurking behind these terrible forms which appal the most callous imagination.

Possibly the most eloquent message the science of to-day has given us is that there is no waste—no waste but in the greatest asset of the World, human life. With most inimitable logic, man places checks on waste of life by ignorance or crime, and approves of methods which cause its wholesale destruction ; and on the battlefield it is not he who has rifled the treasure-house of its jewel who is killed, but he who steals some tawdry trash, for which the poor body has no further use.

Why we have been given this life we know not, we can only read the evidences before us, and feel assured it must be for some great purpose. If we have descended from the heights, or

risen from the slime, it matters not ; but, if it be the latter, none dare say that this Present is the summit of life. Whatever the *purpose*, war is its enemy, for war and its preparations hinder that great civilisation which we are so slowly approaching: when misery shall be no longer the portion of any of the sons of man, when the poor and the wretched and the skin-tortured shall tread the path of happiness. Even the finest man or woman placed in such surroundings, without hope, would sink into nothingness.

The responsibility for war is not on the Governments, not on Man, but on Woman, who for weighty reasons has been made the dominant factor in life, and aught she asks for in reason she is given without stint. There is no reason in war, it is made up of inconsistencies and the fruits are bitter even to the conqueror.

Women of the world, arise ! and in the name of the Great God Whom by many names we all worship, and in the name of that great Civilisation which is awaiting us, and which this terrible war would put back for many years, demand that war shall cease and that the nations shall make a lasting peace.—  
Yours in hope and faith,

KATHERINE HALKETT.

London, August 8, 1914.

ISLAMIC REVIEW.—The sentiments thus beautifully expressed evoke our commendation ; but, from the Muslim point of view, it was obviously necessary for Great Britain to declare war. Self-preservation is a natural instinct, and the very existence of England was threatened: thus we Muslims must support England to the utmost of our ability. Islam teaches that the use of arms in self-defence is perfectly legitimate, but not for aggressive measures. We invite the attention of Muslims and all others to the teachings of Islam upon these points. A Muslim must be loyal to the rulers, even should they be of a different race or creed. They are our natural guardians and protectors, they give us prosperity and security, and the free exercise of our religious beliefs ; and therefore it is our bounden duty, as the Holy Quran has so eloquently pointed out, to support the Government to the utmost of our ability. Muslims all over the British Empire are ready, and, should the necessity arise, will offer their lives, their property, and serve the State in any capacity that should be necessary, showing gratitude and at the same time performing their duty to the State. Great Britain is the greatest Muslim Power of the present age, and is referred to as such by Muslim writers: therefore, in supporting Great Britain we support our own Muslim Government.

## MAXIMS OF WAR.

---

ABU BAKER, THE FIRST MUSLIM CALIPH,  
AND  
LORD KITCHENER.

---

THE following instructions were issued by Lord Kitchener to every soldier in the Expeditionary Army, to be kept in his active service pay-book :—

You are ordered abroad as a soldier of the King to help our French comrades against the invasion of a common enemy.

You have to perform a task which will need your courage, your energy, your patience. Remember that the honour of the British Empire depends on your individual conduct.

It will be your duty not only to set an example of discipline and perfect steadiness under fire, but also to maintain the most friendly relations with those whom you are helping in this struggle.

The operations in which you are engaged will for the most part take place in a friendly country, and you can do your country no better service than by showing yourselves in France and Belgium in the true character of a British soldier.

Be invariably courteous, considerate, and kind. Never do anything likely to injure or destroy property, and always look upon looting as a disgraceful act.

You are sure to meet with a welcome, and to be trusted. Your conduct must justify that welcome and that trust.

Your duty cannot be done unless your health is sound, so be constantly on your guard against any excesses.

In this new experience you may find temptations, both in wine and women. You must entirely resist both temptations and while treating all women with perfect courtesy you should avoid any intimacy.

**Do your duty bravely.**

**Fear God.**

**Honour the King.**

Commendable words, worthy of their author. A fine tribute to Islam and its whole maxims of war. One can easily trace the influence of Lord Kitchener's touch with Muslim life. War is, after all, war. It has its justifications, though in rare cases, and man as yet has failed to banish it from the surface of the earth. We, however, do need some maxims to regulate martial activities, and Islam does not fail to supply them to us. Comparisons are not necessary, but for the enlightenment of our readers we are tempted to reproduce here the charge with which

Abu Baker, the first Caliph, sent a Muslim campaign against Syria :—

“When you meet your enemies in the fight, comport yourself as befits good Muslims, and remember to prove yourselves the true descendants of Ishmail. In the order and disposition of the host, and in all battles be careful to follow your banners boldly, and be ever obedient to your leaders. Never yield to, or turn your backs on, your enemies ; it is for the cause of God that you fight. You are incited by no less noble a desire than His glory ; therefore, fear not to enter into the fight, nor let the numbers of your foes alarm you, even though excessive. If God should give you the victory, don't abuse your advantages, and beware how you stain your swords in the blood of him who yields ; neither touch ye the children, the women, nor the infirm old men whom ye may find among your enemies. In your progress through the enemy's land cut down no palms, or other fruit trees ; destroy not the products of the earth ; ravage no fields ; burn no dwellings ; from the stores of your enemies take only what you need for your wants. Let no destruction be made without necessity, but occupy the city of the enemy ; and if there be any that may serve as an asylum to your adversaries, them do you destroy. Treat the prisoners and him who renders himself to your mercy with pity, as God shall do to you in your need ; but trample down the proud and rebellious, nor fail to crush all who have broken the conditions imposed on them. Let there be no perfidy nor falsehood in your treaties with your enemies ; be faithful in all things, proving yourself ever upright and noble, and maintaining your word and promise truly. Do not disturb the quiet of the monk or hermit, and destroy not their abodes, but inflict the rigour of death upon all who shall refuse the conditions you may impose upon them.”

These maxims of Abu Baker have always been adopted by later Muslim generals. “Tarik, the first invader of Spain, commanded that no offence should be offered to the peaceable and unarmed inhabitants ; that only those who bore arms should be attacked ; and that plunder should be confined to the field of battle and to towns carried by assault.”\*

The following is another piece of war instruction which El Hakim Bin Abdurraluman, the Moor king, gave to the Saracen generals in 963 :—

“If the enemies of the Law be not twice as many as the Muslims, he who turns his back upon them in the battle hath proved himself to be a vile coward ; he sinneth against the Law and hath offended against our honour. When taking possession of a city, let no man slay women, children, or old men ; neither shall any man attack monks vowed to a life of

---

\* Dr. Abdul Majid in the January number of *The Law Quarterly Review*, 1912.

solitude save in cases where the latter are making a defence injurious to the Muslim cause. Do violence to none to whom you have given promises of security, but be careful to keep all engagements and fulfil all contracts.

“The safe conduct granted by the generals shall be respected by all; none shall disturb or offend any who have obtained such.”

We cannot fail to appreciate the value of these human injunctions, but they all emanated from that large soul, the fountain of everything noble and good in humanity, who came into this world to give a perfect code to humanity, suiting all its ups and downs. The noble Prophet of Islam never failed to say the following to his Band of the Faithful when an expedition was sent against an enemy :—

“March in the name of God, and by His aid and by the religion of the Prophet; don't kill an old man who is not able to fight, nor young children, nor women . . . Be good to one another; because God loves the doer of good.  
Do not kill any woman and do not kill any labourer.”

---

## THE ARAB WAKES.

---

### “LE GHALIB ILLA ALLAH.”

---

AS has often been pointed out, great and epoch-making movements in the social realm are preceded by numerous minor changes of thought. These are accompanied by many minor movements, the whole series of currents, mental and material, finally uniting and bringing about a revolution with its vast and striking changes. Those changes themselves become the starting point of future events. The past is the great ocean on which floats the galleys of to-day; the present is only a continuance of the past. What we are we owe in general to all those who have preceded us. Small events, or what at the time seem unimportant, are often the leading factors in the general movement, sometimes culminating rapidly at others after a long course of variations.

In the early decades of the seventh century of the present era one of those revolutions was in progress in Arabia, itself the precursor of a further movement, with which it is my purpose to deal. This revolution was, in its first stages, a mental one—religious in its basic principle. An Arab of the tribe Kurayish, called Muhammed, raised his voice in defence of the pure religion of the “One God” Allah, as against the system of idolatry at that time prevalent among the people. By moral courage,