

# The Affinity between the Original Church of Jesus Christ and Islam

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TRUST FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT  
AND CIRCULATION OF  
MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LITERATURE,  
THE MOSQUE, WOKING

## PREFACE

DURING my tour in South Africa with Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din I never failed to emphasize two facts ; the one being that our mission was entirely non-political, and the other that our object was not the denunciation of Christianity, which in my view is the sister religion of Islam. Without going into details it is not difficult to show that the whole trend of modern thought is thoroughly averse to any dogmatism which makes salvation dependent on any particular way of *thinking* rather than on a right way of *acting*.

When we also see that the tendency of leading Christian teachers is all in favour of abandoning these dogmas, which were tacked on to the religion of Jesus some three hundred years after his time, we realize that the march of Reason is clearing the way and that the most highly educated and ablest Divines of to-day now confess that they can no longer preach and support the doctrine that what I have often called the "fripperies" of Christianity are in any way necessary to salvation.

Such being the case, it is not hard to see that this is the time of times for Islam to assert its claims and present to the non-Muslim world the simplicity and

solidity of its tenets. To bring the Truth to the front, and controvert the assertions of our over-zealous traducers, we have started a Muslim literary fund, which has for its object the collection of funds which will enable us to carry on the literary propaganda on a very much larger scale than has been heretofore attempted.

I am happy to say that we have succeeded in South Africa and Portuguese East Africa, and that the response to our appeals has been worthy of the object we have in view, and I may mention that all the contributions have been, and will be, acknowledged in the *Islamic Review* month by month.

One of the first items in our programme is the translation of the Qur-án into English, together with a commentary, to be published at a nominal price. These volumes will be sold and, in certain cases, given away when thought desirable. Then we intend to spread the truth about Islam by means of a large number of fresh pamphlets and booklets of, say, forty or fifty pages, and by this means we hope to remove doubts, which exist, as to what the Muslim Faith really is.

I am sorry to say that much of this ignorance of the Truth is due to the wilful misrepresentations of our opponents, who spread about such fictions as that "Muslims worship Muhammad," "Have to marry four wives," "Women have no souls," "Women may not enter the mosque." That much of this imparted ignorance is prevailing amongst non-Muslims in South

Africa was forced upon me by conversations I had with various friends and acquaintances with whom I spoke during the tour. I was, however, more impressed by the willingness they showed to hear the correct version, and in many cases they said : " Why, if what you say is true, I am a Muslim, for I hold exactly your views on religion."

One thing is in our favour, for, in the twentieth century, no eloquence or sophistry can be found which will persuade educated people that a belief in the Divinity of Christ, the Trinity, the Sacraments, the Atonement, and the Immaculate Conception is essential for the salvation of their immortal souls. The clergy complain of empty churches, but it is not, as has been suggested, that their sermons are bad ; it is because the materials from which they have to compose those sermons are unreliable and unsound. The priests and prelates may thunder forth the dogmas of sacerdotalism, but in these days, when people have learned to think for themselves, they carry no more weight than would the whisperings of the Delphic Oracle, could that ancient piece of jugglery be again called into play.

Science, the most valuable of all the allies of religion, is ever giving us a nearer view of the realities of life, and turning over the leaves of the wonderful Book of Nature which an Almighty and Ever-present God has given us to read. There are at the very present moment tens of thousands of people, openly professing no religion at all, who are at heart Muslims,

and I feel convinced that these—many of whom are earnest seekers for the Truth—will embrace Islam if they can only be made to see what its advantages really are. *Now*, therefore, is the time to supply these people with suitable literature, for never in history has a more favourable opportunity been presented.

As is well known there are about 230 millions of Muslims in the world, and nearly 100 millions are British subjects, and I think that as many as possible of these should be in possession of translations of the Qur-án.

It is to the masses of our Muslim brethren we would appeal, and I feel confident that if the importance of the work we have in hand could be brought before these masses by means of thoroughly efficient organization we should be able to secure subscriptions which, in the aggregate, would enable us to attain the objects we have in view. In this case the pen must be made the mightiest weapon in our armoury, and we hope with God's help to succeed in forwarding the great cause all good Muslims have at heart—the advancement and establishment of Islam in all the countries of the world.

I need hardly tell those who have listened to my many speeches in various South African towns, that I am a Muslim by conviction : the grandeur, simplicity, absence of sacerdotalism and freedom from dogmas would alone have been sufficient to draw me to the Faith ; but there were all through my life even

weightier considerations—connected with manifestations which I will not attempt to explain here—which have combined to make me a follower of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and have sustained me in times of misery, and given me strength to resist many of the forces of evil.

It was said, at the time when I openly embraced Islam, that I had become apostate, but since I had never believed in the baptisms and creeds of the Christian religion as being *necessary to salvation*, it can hardly be argued that I deserted a Faith which never appealed to my intelligence or my heart.

### MUSLIM DUTY.

It seems to me that we Muslims should endeavour to show all those with whom we come in contact, that our religion is not exactly hostile or antagonistic to what is now called Christianity: it is rather a religion possessing some six hundred years of additional enlightenment, but based, like Christianity, on duty to God and our neighbour. No broad-minded and enlightened Christian minister should object to discussing these matters with us, and even if there is no result reached there need be no ill-feeling between fair-minded men anxious to do their best for the human race.

There are, as I have often pointed out, thousands of men and women who are at heart Muslims but do

not like to openly acknowledge the fact for fear of adverse criticism.

Those who, like myself, do not find it possible to subscribe to the dogmatic teachings of the various Christian sects, will find no difficulty in embracing the simple faith which concentrates every thought and wish on complete submission to God, and God alone.

There are many who, finding it impossible to agree with any religion placed before them up to now, have practically become atheists, and I think that to these—seeing that happiness, without some belief in Divine assistance and a future state, is almost impossible—Islam will appeal with great force.

Attention and a fair hearing is all we want, and it is gratifying to realize that the people of England are beginning to free themselves from the misunderstandings which have existed for so many years past. It has been the habit of many Europeans to look upon Muhammadanism as barbarism, but now that they are learning all that the Holy Prophet did to mitigate the savagery and barbarism he met with in Arabia, a much fairer conception has come to life.

Islam stands on a solid foundation and is a religion which appeals strongly to the intellect as well as to the natural sentiments engrafted in human nature, and we should, I think, give most careful attention to the delicate and difficult task of showing that a universal adoption of the Faith by

Western nations is *possible* without seriously interfering with the manners and customs of the West or the spirit of the teachings we find in the Qur-án. There is so much adaptability in Islam that we may hope in the end to surmount the difficulties which are sure to arise. Manners and customs are not Islam.

Most of the conditions of life in the East and West are different, and the habits and customs of thirteen hundred years ago were not like the present-day habits and customs either in the East or West ; but the grand fundamental principles laid down over and over again by the Holy Prophet are as correct and applicable to-day as they were in his day. Light and darkness, as well as right and wrong, were apparent thousands of years ago : they exist to-day and will probably be in evidence to the end of time—nothing changes *them*.

We must therefore draw a distinction as follows : When we are told that absolute belief in and submission to God and beneficence to all our fellow-creatures are necessary to our salvation, we are not asked to subscribe to any dogmatic teaching, and we have no difficulty in recognizing Islam, and there is nothing an intelligent Westerner need take exception to ; but if an attempt is made to insist on the rigid observance of certain forms and ceremonies intended for certain people thirteen hundred years ago, in different climate and different conditions, and it is insisted that these forms and ceremonies are VITALLY



IMPORTANT, we shall find it very hard indeed to make much headway, and we shall, moreover, lay ourselves open to the accusation of doing exactly what we find fault with the Christians for doing, that is to say making Baptism, belief in the Divinity of Christ, and the Sacraments, NECESSARY TO SALVATION.

The strongest and most convincing argument we can bring forward to support our claims and win Western sympathy is that *no idea of atheism or idolatry can possibly exist in the mind of the true believer*; and this fact should go far to mark Islam as the great Religion of the future and of the world.

In advancing our arguments we should, I think, point out that many religions obscure the view of Heaven by introducing dogmas which are nearly always traceable to priestcraft. The Muslim feels that, *wherever he is*, there also is Allah; the All-seeing and All-powerful God is approachable by him individually. The key to Heaven is always there, and can be turned by the humblest or most miserable human being without any help from prophet, priest, or king. It is like the blessed air we breathe, free to all God's creatures, and those who try to make mankind think otherwise are probably guided by interested motives.

I do not think I can too strongly recommend the policy of advancing the *essentials* of our religion before touching on minor matters of detail. We want people to see for themselves the beauty and simplicity of Islam—matters of form and ceremony which are of no vital importance should, I think, be left for future consideration.

## LITERARY PROPAGANDA.

I should like to see translations of the Qur-án in every Muslim house where English is spoken. Unfortunately the translation, side by side with long commentaries, leads to considerable cost. We want something well within the reach of the people—say 2s. 6d. or 3s. a copy: short books or pamphlets, fifty or sixty pages, which can be published at a low cost. My dear brother the Khwaja has this matter under his most earnest consideration, and I doubt not that we may soon see a move taken in the right direction. In England the Bible—Old and New Testaments combined—is produced at a very low figure, but of course no attempt is made in popular editions to give the Hebrew or Greek original text. It has always struck me that Europeans make a mistake in giving out the whole Bible for general reading. It is a collection of various books written at widely different times, and much of it is entirely unfit for children to read. In this respect the Qur-án takes a great lead, for it contains nothing like the revolting and debasing stories which disfigure the earlier books of the Old Testament. It is quite true that there are thousands of excellent people who have been brought up to read the whole Bible from cover to cover and from earliest childhood, but that does not prove that it is desirable to put horrible ideas into children's minds.

Possibly some apology may be due to my readers for quoting so freely from other works, e.g., the

*Sources of Christianity, A Western Awakening to Islam, Thoughts of the Future*, etc., but one very good reason is that my dear Brother the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din has so ably dealt with certain important subjects—vital to the present work—that I felt I could not do better than quote his actual words.

With regard to the excerpts from my own works, written some fourteen or fifteen years ago, I have in many cases given the original text in order to show that my views have not materially altered since I openly embraced Islam.

In the Chapter on "Spiritualism and the Occult" I have taken the liberty of quoting several passages from the works of Sir A. Conan Doyle and the Rev. W. Tweeddale, who have for many years past made a study of spirit phenomena.

Somewhere away in the remote Dark Ages it was the custom of a certain tribe of primeval savages to feed up a youthful member of the tribe for a whole year until he was in what we should call "prime condition." Then on a certain date, probably connected with the stars or the moon, they escorted him to the top of a mountain, where they bound him tightly to a stone altar. The sacrificial priest then advanced upon him with the sacrificial flint knife and cut the heart out of the living victim, and then held the bleeding and almost palpitating trophy up to the sky shouting: "Now is the angry god propitiated."

Thinking over this and the records of even greater

cruelties, which seem to have clung like wax to Christianity and certain other religions, I wrote the following lines in 1918 :—

## THE SACRIFICIAL VISTA.

To pacify an angry god  
The primal savage poured out blood,  
From victims, innocent and young,  
And deemed such murders right and good.

Then idols rose and priestly power  
Increased, and Moloch's victims cried—  
The altars reeked from hour to hour  
As "substitutes" in torture died.

Then, later still, we find the rack,  
The thumbscrews, pincers, red-hot knife,  
Applied to make men change their faith  
In God, the Author of our life.

This avenue of senseless crime  
Is trod to-day, just as of yore—  
Men laud that murder as sublime  
Which killed the Being they adore.

With ruthless pertinacity  
The pagan cult still holds its sway ;  
And death and blood on Calvary  
Alone for us could win the day.

To make "wrong" "right" by added wrong  
Is tried at every point adown  
The sacrificial vista long  
With craven fear, lest God should frown.

O God, whose mercy shineth forth,  
Wilt Thou wreak vengeance on Thine own ?  
Can murders foul appease Thy wrath ?  
Can cruel deaths for sin atone ?

The man-made dogmas of the past,  
In many forms still hold full sway—  
We pray that change may come at last,  
When darkness meets the light of day.

It is sometimes urged that the case is altered when the victim is a "willing" victim; but surely brutal cruelty is equally loathsome in either case?

Possibly I may not have the right kind of brain to discriminate, but at present I fail to detect any very great difference between the angry god of the early savage, and the angry god of the educated twentieth-century Christian, who persists in believing that nothing but the murder of the poor Carpenter's Son could save mankind from everlasting damnation, and propitiate the Great Creator of all things in Heaven and on Earth! As a child I always resented the idea that the "Eternal Father, strong to save," could be in need of a sort of propitiatory bribe or "sop to Cerberus"; as a man I am lost in wonder that a large proportion of the human race have been induced to nurse the absurd figment for so many centuries, and that even now the Christian God is but a copy of the ancient Moloch.

A distinction must be drawn in the case of punishments for the commission of crimes. For instance, we hang or shoot a murderer simply as a deterrent, and to prevent the recurrence of the crime. The laws must be enforced and it is necessary for the good of the whole community that the guilty should suffer; it is quite another matter when we kill an innocent

person because someone else has done wrong, for, in this case, we emulate the principle of the "whipping boy" in a school, which is an absurdity. How can it be held that there is any fairness in a Being who will first of all create mankind in His own Image ("in the Image of God created He him") and place the created in situations also of His own making, and well aware of all the pitfalls and temptations, and then in consequence of a few failures in the course of an infinitesimally short period (the span of human life), pass a sentence of everlasting damnation! Such a deity would have to be approached by the suppliant, "hat in hand," with some such remarks as the following: "I know that you are cruel and vengeful, and for that very reason I cannot respect or love you, but I am told that if I satisfy your lust for blood and sacrifices, you may to some extent mitigate the severity of the tortures you have prepared for me in the next stage of my existence." It is a healthy sign of the times that all such miserable ideas concerning the Almighty are rapidly fading away.

Modern Christianity has failed to keep the churches filled, because education and enlightenment have advanced by leaps and bounds during the past century. More inventions useful to mankind have come to the front within that short span of a hundred years than in all the previous ages since the first appearance of man upon the earth. Only think of it: over one hundred millions of years have passed by before men found out the use of steam and electricity, the existence of

## 20 ORIGINAL CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

the atom and the electron, radium and the Hertzian waves, and countless other previously unsuspected phenomena, and all these giant strides have been taken within the narrow compass of the concluding century of the enormous period named !

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	7
CHAPTER	
I. HEALTHY SIGNS OF THE TIMES . . . . .	23
II. ISLAM'S OPPORTUNITY . . . . .	47
III. THE ORIGIN OF TRADITIONAL CHRISTIANITY . . . . .	75
IV. THE SPREAD OF KNOWLEDGE UNDER ISLAM . . . . .	87
V. THE BISHOP OF LONDON AND ISLAM . . . . .	102
VI. INTOLERANCE AND AGGRESSION . . . . .	122
VII. SPIRITUALISM AND THE OCCULT . . . . .	134
APPENDIXES . . . . .	150



# The Affinity between the Original Church of Jesus Christ and Islam

## CHAPTER I

### HEALTHY SIGNS OF THE TIMES

THERE are indications from all quarters that superstition is losing its power in the world. Ignorant and unreasoning dread of the unknown can no longer be relied upon by the crafty as a means to an end. In the earliest days of his pathetic simplicity, primitive man, finding himself surrounded with things he could not understand, and harassed by misfortunes and incessant struggles for bare existence, was prone to fly to something he knew something about—or thought he could understand. Thus he knew about the river or the sea, and might be found drowning his children or his friends, to propitiate the river-god or sea-god, or to stop floods, or send more rain, as the case might require. He could feel the heat of the sun, and knew that light and darkness were brought about by the rising and setting of the great globe of fire. In his ignorance our poor savage ancestor groped his way about this earth in company with prehistoric animals

millions of years ago ; but he was in possession of an intelligence which had been denied to all other animals and it led him to reason things out. One of the results of his reasoning was that, by means of a bribe, certain deities might be smoothed down and rendered friendly instead of hostile. Give the god enough blood to drink and enough burnt-offering to smell, and protection from any special evil would result.

All through the Old Testament—which is, of course, very modern history compared with the times I am dealing with—there is abundant evidence of the way in which a certain class of men, called priests, made use of mysteries and “ signs ” to hoodwink the ignorant ; and no doubt these sacerdotal powers were the outcome of past ages of trickery and deception. It is a system which is probably as old as human nature—that strange medley of good and evil instincts. Even as there are now certain men who are knaves and a vast number more who are fools, so, then, in those prehistoric times, the priests found that they could by means of tricks bring all the terrors of the unknown to bear on, say, 99 per cent. of the community and feather their own nests into the bargain. Small wonder that they made the bid for power and still less that they completely succeeded.

In the present day, men of science, besides being far more learned than their fellow-workers of a hundred years ago, have spread out before them an enormous field of established facts from which to select materials when engaged in working out some fresh marvel. In

other words, *the potentialities of to-day's scientist are enormously greater than those of their predecessors of a few years back.* Remember, also, that every fresh advance, every turning over of the leaves of Nature's Book, brings us nearer the Truth, and that is why I have so often stated that Science is the greatest ally to true religion. Everything which tends to remove darkness and ignorance may be regarded as a milestone on that path which leads to a truer understanding of the Glory of God. So that it almost follows that when, by the healthy use of our intelligence, we have definitely cast aside all pagan ideas about atonement and washing out of sins by the blood of the innocent, we shall have divested ourselves of the impedimenta with which true Christianity has been hampered and swathed for so many centuries.

Less than three hundred years ago "witches"—poor old women merely suspected of necromancy and enchantment—were burnt alive or drowned in horse-ponds in our own happy land of England! At one time it was unsafe to express an opinion about the shape of the earth, or what the sun did in the night. The Holy Inquisition stretched on the rack, mangled, tore out with red-hot pincers the eyes of those refusing to express a belief in certain religious dogmas. Martyrs to their faith were burnt at the stake by the score, for similar obstinacy in mere matters of human belief!

Now look at the healthy signs of the times—look at what science has done for us in a few years, and how it has helped us along that road which leads to

the citadel of Truth, which cannot be far removed from the Throne of God.

Everything which makes for Truth must be healthy, but the devil—the tempter—whether in the loathsome form of Beelzebub or in that of the more beautiful and refined Satan or Lucifer, is ever on the watch. He is the father of lies, he hates the Truth and is ever on the look-out for our downfall: but, when hard pressed by the fiend, we have only to say,

Dear Father, Thou art very near—  
I feel Thy Presence everywhere,  
In darkest night and brightest day  
To show the path—direct the way,

to feel that blessed assurance that Allah, our Almighty and Ever-present Sustainer, is indeed with us—nearer than our jugular vein—and the devil will instantly depart.

It was as recently as 1913 that I openly declared my faith in Islam. It was no sudden conversion, because from childhood's earliest days my whole nature had been in revolt against the ruthless cruelty of the Supreme Being as represented by the Christian God—an Almighty and Omnipotent ruler of the Universe, who was so like a human tyrant that He required heavy bribes before He would save one from perdition. I was fond of my parents and bitterly resented being told that I was "born in sin" and was a "child of wrath." Both my father and mother were good and God-fearing people, that is to say, they were

not afraid of Him, but they feared to do anything they felt might be contrary to His wishes, and so they taught me to speak the truth and never to do dirty, mean or dishonourable acts ; and so far so good. But later on, there came the time when I was expected to confirm all that my Godfathers and Godmother had promised for me at my baptism. Here was a definite step to be taken one way or the other. Either I was to back up my sponsors and please my father by being "Confirmed," or I was to obey the dictates of my own conscience and intelligence and refuse to ratify what I felt was but a figment of idolatry and superstition. It was a severe struggle, since on the one hand I had the desire to do what my father wished, and on the other I had to go in a line diametrically opposed to my own knowledge and belief. At eighteen years of age one is apt to follow the line of least resistance, and it is not to be wondered that, in order to prevent a row and much unpleasantness, I agreed to attend the Confirmation Class at which my three sisters were already receiving instruction at the hands of a High Church priest. As soon as I began to attend the class I found that this individual had provided my sisters with little books in which some of the sentiments were far from orthodox according to the Protestant ideas. For instance, the Virgin Mary was constantly alluded to as the "Mother of God," which seemed to me to be rank blasphemy, and I said so to the instructing priest and asked him for definite information as to the authority for such expressions.

He replied that "the Church" sanctioned it, and when I said "Which Church?" he replied: "The Anglican Church." He then wrote to my father and said: "I am very much pleased with your daughters' progress, but your son shows a spirit of controversy." My father showed me the letter, and I explained that I presumed I was attending the class to gain information and that for that purpose I had asked questions. Well, to make a long story short, I gave in to my father's wishes partly because I wished to avoid a lot of quarrelling and bother, which would have ensued if I had refused; and partly because I honestly wished to obey my father. The result was, I freely admit, most unsatisfactory, for I have never forgiven myself for the deception I practised before God in Putney Church on that day when I knelt down at the altar-rails and the Bishop of London laid his hands on me and I received my first "Holy Communion." I despised myself as a cur, for had I not presented myself in the House of God and stated my belief in what I well knew to be a made-up ceremony which meant nothing and could have no possible effect upon the God I loved, and to whom I addressed my thanksgivings and prayers?

It was not till my own sons began to grow up that I realized fully the unwisdom of trying to force young people into any form of religious belief against their will. They should *from the very earliest* date be taught the Commandments, certain prayers of a non-sectarian character such as the Muslims' Fatiah and the Christian

Lord's Prayer, and they should be strongly imbued with the *necessity of doing to others as they would wish others to do to them*. Nothing else is needed for their salvation, and I always say I shall love my children just the same whatever faith they embrace, *provided they are quite honest in their conviction that it is the best*. As a sufferer from compulsion I can speak feelingly, and I will never try to influence anyone to go against his conscience and so lay up for himself nothing but regret and remorse.

<sup>1</sup> In this fast-moving age religion is looked upon as rather a bore, and men are either atheists or blind followers of dogmatic lines of thought which their reason rebels against, but which they outwardly profess because they think it looks well and they find it pays. One of the best men I ever knew—an excellent husband and father—assured me he was an atheist, and that he looked forward to nothing but annihilation. Yet he was perfectly happy, and nothing I could advance had the slightest effect in making him change his terrible belief. Another man I heard of took religion in quite a cheerful spirit. He was very rich, and a friend once remonstrated with him on his rather free mode of life, and asked him if he ever thought of the future state, and what would become of his soul in the next world. He replied: "Not I. Why should I worry about such things? I pay my doctor so much a year to attend

<sup>1</sup> *A Western Awakening to Islam.*

to my physical health, and the priest gets about £600 a year for looking after my spiritual wants. Why should I bother my head ? ” This man, too, was quite happy in his own way, and had reconciled himself to the payment of a certain annual sum, for which he was relieved of all “ bother.”

So much has been written, thought, and spoken for ages past on the all-absorbing and all-important subject of religion, that it may well be that there is nothing fresh to be advanced from any human quarter. That there is good in *all* religions must be admitted ; as also that some forms are better than others.

If it were only possible to get a sound “ non-professional ” opinion in the selection of our religion, it would be a grand step in the right direction. If we go to the priests or monks, or others, who make it their business to supply a particular kind of article of which they approve, we cannot get much assistance, because the various tenets or dogmas are so diametrically opposed to one another.

Take the Christian Church alone—we shall have such bewilderingly different directions to Heaven from the Church of England, the Church of Rome, and the Nonconformists, that we shall gain nothing at all. What we want is the assistance of some *outside* and *unbiassed* onlooker who has had opportunities for contemplation, and who has nothing whatever to gain by an openly expressed and honest opinion.

What we should have is a religion which will recognize and support the just laws of the country. In



these days the law is constantly brought into ridicule : there is abroad an unhealthy and maudlin sympathy with nearly every form of wrong-doing and crime. A just sentence has but to be pronounced and it will call forth shrieks from the sentimentalists for remission or reprieve. Let there be full justice in religion ; as it is, the backbone of the country is being softened by this soppy sentimentalism, which is not by any means humane or likely to improve the character of the nation. " Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill," applies to all this sympathy with wrong-doing, and though we may feel the deepest sorrow for the criminal whose bringing up and miserable environment have led up to the trouble, we must punish in order to deter others and prevent repetitions. It is often the most cruel action to " turn the other cheek "—cruel because it encourages the evil-doer in his course of crime, and other members of society suffer through our misplaced kindness. Unless I am much mistaken, the milk-and-water justice we often see dispensed in the present day in this country is responsible for half the evils we so bitterly complain of. It would be far better to go back to the old *Lex talionis* than go on as we are now doing.

We cannot quite look upon Christ as a Lawgiver. He presented to the world gentle and beautiful precepts ; but the Devil, as he walks abroad to-day, will not be put down by soft answers and turnings of the other cheek : nothing short of the strongest measures should be used with all emissaries of the Evil One.

Moses was a lawgiver, and Muhammad was a lawgiver, and we now need something of the firmness and absolute justice of the Holy Prophet—stern but altogether *free from the savagery of Old Testament vengeance*.

The laws we have are good enough if they were only enforced. Truckling to vice only leads to further vice. We don't want any return to the methods of torture or of any form of cruelty, nor would we shed one drop of blood to enforce our views on religion or politics, but we should like to see the laws obeyed and justice meted out to all. I firmly believe that if the teachings of Muhammad through the Qur-án were carefully followed there would be far less difficulty in governing the country, and it would not be very strange either, since so many of His Majesty's subjects in his vast Empire are Muhammadans. The age has altogether passed when it will be sought to establish any religion by force of arms, and, even if they had the power to do so, I am certain that the Muslims—who are all loyally inclined—would never attempt to establish Islam by any violent methods. *Sedition and rebellion are absolutely forbidden by the Qur-án*. "Let there be no violence in religion" is one of the maxims of the Muslim Faith.

To secure attention and fair hearing is all the Muhammadans want; and I feel certain that, if the people of England fully grasped what Islam really means—common sense, and the natural desire we all possess to have appeals made to our reasoning side, as well as to our feelings—would help to put away the

shameful misunderstandings which at present exist. Europeans very commonly look upon Muhammadanism as barbarism—when they learn all that Muhammad did to subdue the profligate licentiousness he met with in Arabia, they will alter those opinions. It is the Christian missionaries who have spared no pains to misinterpret the Muslim Faith: this is greatly to their discredit, though according to their lights they may mean well, and it has often occurred to me that if they would talk a little less about salvation and a little more about the importance of veracity, they would meet with more favour and be more respected. What a contrast there is between this wilful *suppressio veri*, and the manner in which the Muslim missionary approaches his work !

The Governments of this country have often been sadly harassed by having to accede to the demands of religious bodies. The Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, the Nonconformists, and many others, all have to be considered, for they all have power, and all want more.

There is, as far as one can see, no class in the Muhammadan religion or Church which bids for the temporal power. The grandeur of Islam is uninfluenced by any such sordid considerations. Every true follower of the Holy Prophet looks to a reward which is as far above mere mundane advantages and riches as the light of the sun is above that of the *ignis fatuus*. There are no popes, no bishops, and no ministers requiring large endowments and emoluments,

for God Himself is the Head of this Church of the Spirit. History tells us of Christian Churches making heavy bids for the temporal power, and we can point to the sale of indulgences, and the not always impartial distribution of fat livings, to show how terribly matters which should only be connected with the highest aspirations of the soul have been mixed up with sordid considerations of purely worldly profit. It is not going too far to say that the vast majority of so-called Christians regard "religion" as a good, respectable, Sunday institution, which offers exceptional opportunities for showing off their best clothes and talking about their neighbours. This curious religion is also going to take them to some heaven—the position in that heaven depending in many cases on the amount paid, just as certain coins admit to the boxes and stalls, and others to the pit and gallery of a theatre.

Much of the religion of the West is the outcome of the superstitions of mediæval times—a relic, indeed, of the Dark Ages, and not much in sympathy with the teachings of Moses or Christ. In those cloudy and troublesome times—say between the third and fifth centuries and later—when Europe was the vast arena over which hordes of wild and warlike races vied with each other and spread terror and desolation on all sides, the great rulers of States, like the warlike barons or lords in England, were often men more conspicuous for their prowess with sword or battle-axe, wielded in defence of their estates, their hearths and homes, than they were for any book learning and culture. In

order to keep things going at home they had to employ clerks or clerics, who were able, by means of their superior learning, to maintain a sort of stewardship over the establishments, to keep records of current events, etc., etc. These clerics in time became necessary adjuncts to large establishments, and exercised great power, and had great influence. Opportunities then often occurred for increasing this influence by using the mysteries of the unknown as a fulcrum against which to place those astonishingly long levers—dread of hell and terrors of future punishment. Skilful handling of these terrors produced in the minds of the credulous a feeling not far removed from panic, which was, however, soothed and smoothed down by the assurance that, on embracing a certain form of religion and swallowing some craftily evolved dogmas, salvation might be gained. But it was somehow contrived that absolute security as regards a safe and high place in the next world could not be obtained unless by very handsome gifts to “the Church,” and these gifts took the form of large grants of land, palaces, cathedrals, and rich endowments. Here we saw the growth of sacerdotalism, and the determined bids for temporal authority have been very noticeable ever since, and right up to the present date. The advent of Muhammad, some six hundred years after Christ, exposed the unreality of all such ideas as atonements, priestly interventions, supplications to the saints, and those other cumbersome and involved methods of approaching the Almighty. However grand the Mosaic laws,

however beautiful the gentle and forgiving precepts of the Holy Prophet of Nazareth, it must be admitted that the Muhammadan teaching contained the most sublime message, overriding by its very simplicity all obstacles in the way of the believer on his path to God.

In chapter ix. of the Qur-án lines occur which leave no doubt as to their meaning and applicability to all who are under sacerdotal domination and insist on taking human beings for their guides :—

“ They take their priests and their monks for their lords, besides God, and Christ the son of Mary,<sup>1</sup> although they are commanded to worship one God only : there is no God but He ; far be that from Him which they associate with Him.” . . . “ O true believers, verily many of the priests and monks *devour the substance of men in vanity, and obstruct the way of God.*” [The italics are the writer’s.]

The religion of Christ is not quite the religion of St. Paul, who seems to have added to it and altered it very considerably ; and various authorities have interpreted these later teachings and varied them from time to time. There is, in fact, not much uniformity in so-called Christianity ; but we find in Islam that which should satisfy the longings of the created to be at one with and return to the Creator—the ever-present and omnipotent Protector of all creatures. According to Islam there is only one God

<sup>1</sup> Jesus said to the young man who asked what he could do to inherit eternal life : “ Why callest thou me good ? There is none good but one, that is God.”

we may worship and follow. He is before all, above all, and no other, however holy and pure, may be named in the same breath. Indeed, "it is surprising that human beings with brains and intelligence should have been so foolish as to allow dogmas and the tricks of sacerdotalism to obscure their view of Heaven."<sup>1</sup>

My chief object is not so much to attack any particular branch of the Christian religion as to point out the beauty and simplicity of the Muslim Faith, which, in the writer's humble opinion, is free from the objections so apparent in many other religions. Granting, for the sake of argument, that Islam is free from sacerdotalism with its attendant dogmas and greed for power, we must concede that the government of a nation or empire would go on more smoothly if such a peaceful religion were universally adopted. It seems impossible even to imagine the government of, say, the British Empire under such conditions, though 'tis "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

It is, indeed, a much to be deplored fact that "religion" has been responsible for more bitterness, cruelty, and shedding of blood than any other cause we know of. Is it possible, then, that a religion can be found which can ever bring all mankind to be unanimous in the simple worship of the One God who is above all and before all? Imagine for a moment if everyone in the British Empire became a true Muhammadan in heart and spirit—an Utopian

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts for the Future*. By "A. W." (Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., Felling-on-Tyne, Durham.)

idea, indeed ! Government would be much easier, because men would be actuated by true religion and there would be no Church parties to consider, no dissenters to conciliate, and no heavy bills to pay the tolls on the path to Heaven. There is some simplicity in religion as taught by Moses, Christ, and Muhammad, but the confusion which has been brought about by others who have tried to improve on God's Holy Revelations is inextricable and hopelessly bewildering to the single-minded and earnest inquirer for truth.

One form of religion incited the Crusades, in which our ancestors sacrificed tens of thousands of human lives—for what ? An unseemly quarrel over a sepulchre in which it is believed Christ laid for a short time. Was it worth while ? Another form of religion taught us to burn alive and otherwise torture those who did not agree with us on quite minor points of religion. Was it worth while ? Another very common form is that of those whose intolerance is so great that they consign all their fellow-creatures to everlasting perdition if they will not swallow certain dogmatic ideas. Is it worth while ? Is it desirable to show a want of charity which must be hateful to the God of Mercy, and which either Christ or Muhammad would condemn in no measured terms ? General Gordon said : “ I do not see the sect of Pharisees among the Mussulmans. Whatever they may think, they never assume, as our Pharisees do, that A and B are doomed to be burned ; and you never see the unamiable features which are shown by our Pharisees.” Gordon had



lived long amongst the Muhammadans in the East and the beauties of Islamic teachings had not escaped his notice, and there seems to be no doubt that, in writing the above, he truly felt that there was more real Christian charity in Islam than there was at home. In much the same spirit, he wrote: "No comfort is equal to that which he has who has God for his stay, who believes not in words but in facts, that all things are ordained to happen and must happen. He who has this belief has already died, and is free from the annoyance of this life."

In reply to the above it will probably be advanced that Eastern ideas do not blend with Western ideas, and there can be no "fusion," so to speak, and that to attempt to govern the nations of the West whilst an Eastern religion was recognized and influenced men's minds and actions would be quite incongruous and out of the question. Well, in reply, the writer wishes to point out that for nearly two thousand years every country in Europe has been governed under the religions of the East—i.e. Jewish and Christian.

The spirit of Islam soars far above petty jealousies and the racial distractions of East and West, and if Eastern Christianity led by the great Prophet of Nazareth has gone so far towards enlightening mankind, there seems to be no valid reason why the more extended and simpler Islamic Faith expounded by the great Prophet of Arabia should not continue the good work. There is a great similarity between the

characters of the leaders, as anyone will find out on inquiring into Muhammad's life. Also a study of the Qur-án will reveal the fact that there is nothing antagonistic to previous revelations—Muhammad's instructions, as laid down in the book, completely back up the Bible teachings, extending them to suit the requirements of the time. On the principle that it is unfair to condemn a man unheard, so it is unfair to do what ninety-nine out of every hundred Christians do—i.e. condemn the Muhammadan Faith without even finding out the meaning of the word "Islam." The *laissez-faire* principle is often applied by those who do not want to be enlightened; being enlightened means being worried, and they would rather remain in darkness than stretch out a hand to open the door letting in light. "What I've got is good enough for me, I don't want to look at anything else," they say in effect, thus refusing to make an effort to advance even in the knowledge of God and His messages to mankind.

For years past one of my chief thoughts has been: How can the Muslim faith be "Westernized" so as to bring it into practical touch with the nations of Europe? Or, in other words, How can we Westerns apply ourselves so as to gain a better comprehension of what Islam really means? Then followed a second thought: How is it that we do not complain about the nationality of Christ, who we must believe was a swarthy Asiatic? His mother, the Virgin Mary, was an Asiatic, and Moses and nearly all the inspired

Prophets were Easterns. The Holy Prophet Muhammad was, like the others, an Eastern, and was given his instructions from on high: the Holy Qur-án contains the Word of God like the Bible and other inspired works, and confirms the Bible and previous revelations. The Qur-án gives additional teachings, emphasizing the importance of those teachings, and *above all* insists on the abandonment of all that savours of idolatry; the SPIRIT of the revelation being that no other name should be even mentioned along with the holy name of Allah our All-Mighty Father—the All-Seeing, the All-Merciful.

Then Mahomet, Thy chosen son,<sup>1</sup>  
Inspired by fire Divine,  
Laid down the law, the greatest one,  
Which must for ever shine.

That Thou alone most merciful,  
Our Father dear dost reign,  
And that we must all time throughout  
From other gods refrain.

No other must approach to Thee,  
However great and pure,  
No savour of idolatry  
Can Thy dear heart endure.

Thy ways are not our ways, O God,  
Tho' near Thy mercy seat  
Are many souls of purity  
Thy loving eye to greet.

<sup>1</sup> The word "son" is not here used as the Christians use it when alluding to Christ. Muhammad claimed *Divine inspiration*, but never claimed *Divinity*. He was a man and, as such, a son of God—God's creation.

The spirit of praise is the essence of the Muslim creed—the main supplication is for Divine direction and guidance. Though my gratitude for God's favours and loving care has been profound from my earliest youth, I cannot help observing that within the past few years, since the pure and convincing faith of the Muslims has become a reality in my heart and mind, I have found happiness and security never approached before. Freedom from the weird dogmas of the various branches of Christian Churches came to me like a breath of pure sea air; and on realizing the simplicity, as well as the illuminating splendour, of Islam, I was as a man emerging from a cloudy tunnel into the light of day.

For Moses, Christ, and Mahomet  
 Did each Thy love proclaim,  
 And we must not their words forget,  
 Or judge them not the same:

For though their words have twisted been  
 By those who Thee profess,  
 Their revelations can be seen  
 In simple blessedness.

Of human birth they all proclaim,  
 In happy language clear,  
 Thy one Eternal glorious Name,  
 Which is to us so dear.

Contention should not rise between  
 The followers of these,  
 The greatest prophets ever seen  
 Who lived but Thee to please.

They gave in all humility  
 Thy messages of love,  
 That all mankind might clearly see,  
*Nor from Thy precepts rove.*

The above quoted simple lines were written many years ago by one who was always at heart a follower of Muhammad, though at the time of writing he was almost entirely ignorant of the main features of Islam.

Having definitely decided that no comfort could possibly be obtained from dogmatic teaching, the thought came to me that God certainly watches and controls every desire and every action. He has always done so, no doubt, but the teaching gleaned from the pages of the Qur-án have enabled me to grasp that wonderfully comforting thought in a way previously impossible. If every move in life is directed by the Almighty, there may be true comfort for those who are not only sore let and hindered in running the race of life, but are heavily weighed down by sorrow for their many foolish and evil actions. All such may have hope that God will—in His infinite wisdom and goodness—use them as an example for others, showing them what to avoid. It is a rather terrible thought, but the true believer will face any trial, any disgrace, or any degradation in God's service. His ways are not our ways. The spirit of Islam points to salvation for the unfortunate, the unhappy, and the wicked when there appears repentance, and obedience, and resignation, and desire to assist our fellow-creatures to the greatest possible extent. Even through the greatest suffering we should feel happy in having been allowed to be the instruments to carry out Divine instructions.

Bigotry and fanaticism have wrought havoc in the

contending Christian Churches, but this cannot be said of Islam, which is an united church, save only for some minor disputes as to the descendants of Muhammad. How much better, then, would it be if we in the West made up our minds to abandon the complicated forms of religion at present obtaining, and to adopt Islam ?

Some years ago the rulers of a very enlightened nation in the Far East had serious doubts as to whether their form of religion was the right one or not, so they appointed certain wise men to examine all the leading religions of the world and report thereon. The wise men deliberated and came to the conclusion that their own religion was as good as any of the others, and they therefore declined to advise any changes. Following up this idea I firmly believe that if all the best intellects of Europe could be brought into play in a search for a religion which should be based on worldly reason or common sense, no less than on the inspired writings of Divinely inspired prophets, the unanimous selection would be in favour of Islam, the simplicity and grandeur of which is quite without question. Is it not a blessing for which to be very grateful, to have the chance of embracing a religion which appeals to the reason as well as to the heart and inward longings of mankind, and is at the same time free from sacerdotalism and other complications ?

There are those at present living on this earth, both in the East and in the West, to whom revelations establishing the truth of Islamic teaching have been made in the clearest manner ; and it is possible that

the time may not be far distant when God will allow these revelations to be made clear to all His children on earth ; but this is a matter for Divine guidance, for no man knows the appointed time of God.

In an age of scepticism like the present, if one of the divinely inspired Prophets were to now reappear in the person of any ordinary individual and repeat the statements or utter truths at all similar to those he uttered when on earth hundreds of years ago, he would be immediately regarded as insane, and possibly be either imprisoned or placed in an asylum.

The many " Churches " of Christianity are so much at variance one with the other, and their " Divines " have made such an inextricable tangle of Christian teaching, and the dogmas are so hopelessly bewildering, that the clear reasoning mind and open ingenuous heart of man both crave for a religion which is tangible and convincing, as well as simple.

" The dogmas of the Christian Church—I care not whether Roman Catholic or Protestant—have repelled me ever since earliest childhood, and I do not know whether my boyish distrust of the Creed as laid down by St. Athanasius was less strong than is my contempt to-day for the man who lays down the law from a pulpit and consigns millions of his fellow-men to everlasting perdition because they do not agree with him. It has always seemed to me very remarkable that educated gentlemen should be found who, in order to get into the Church, will cheerfully subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles and that horrible Creed, well knowing in their hearts that they do not and cannot

## 46 ORIGINAL CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

believe one half they put their names to. After forty years of thought and prayerful effort to arrive at a correct view, the dominant idea in my mind is that the whole fabric of so-called religion is of man and not of God. I must also confess that visits to the East have filled me with a very deep respect for the simple faith of the Muhammadans, who really do worship God all the time, and not only on Sunday, like so many Christians."

The above extract from a little book entitled *Thoughts for the Future*<sup>1</sup> probably finds an echo in the more inward feelings of many who consider the question of religion and the future state.

Islam is the religion of grand simplicity ; it satisfies the noblest longings of the soul, and in no way contravenes the teachings of Moses or Christ.

It is certainly a very healthy sign that modern scientific thought has had such an influence on the religious world. I feel confident that the day is not far distant when the blind acceptance of weird dogmas will be looked down upon as foolish and unworthy of intelligent beings. The Modernist views, openly expressed by Church authorities, go far towards demonstrating a realization of the affinity between the original Church of Jesus Christ and the Muslim Faith, which has in no respect altered in its principles since the days of the Holy Prophet of Arabia.

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts for the Future*. By "A. W." (Walter Scott Publishing Co., Felling-on-Tyne, Durham, 1913.)



## CHAPTER II

### ISLAM'S OPPORTUNITY

EVER since 1912 there have been murmurs of dissatisfaction at the condition of the Christian Churches, and the discontent has since that time swelled into what may fairly be called a revolution in religious ideas. At the time of my declaration (1913) my friends and relations assured me that salvation was impossible for me outside Christianity; and I told them that though I was prepared to admit that I might deserve to be damned for my sins, I could not believe that God would be unjust, and condemn me to such punishment for merely being honest and telling the truth to Him "to whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and *from whom no secrets are hid.*"

Over twelve years have passed since that time, and it is curious to note that during the period many of the most prominent members of the Anglican and other Christian sects have admitted that they almost see eye to eye with me regarding those beliefs which I rejected. I am informed that many of them accept Jesus, not as God but as man in every sense of the word. They call him "Divine" in a sense in which they take every man as such potentially. They have

rejected the theory of "Sin in Nature" and regard every man as born sinless. They seem to be weakening in their belief in the Atonement and Immaculate Conception and have also come to realize that the Bible is replete with "folk-lore" and that a man's salvation depends on his actions and not on his belief in this or that dogma. In the beginning of the present century a prominent German divine, Dr. Euguen, pointed out the need of drastic reforms in the camp of the Church and the danger of further delaying such improvements. He considered that her existing condition was unsatisfactory enough to endanger the very fabric of Christianity. A religious conference was arranged to take place in Paris in 1913 and a world tour was contemplated to examine into various religious tenets and, I presume, find out the best kind of reform for the English Church. But the war broke out and the whole scheme fell through.<sup>1</sup> The period of the war was one of horror at the wholesale slaughter of the flower of youthful manhood in several Christian countries. For years everything was forgotten and men's minds were engrossed by watching the hideous spectacle of civilized Western nations tearing each other to pieces. This terrible war did one service to religion, for it opened the eyes of the West. It exposed the hollowness of its ideas of self-sufficiency. It saw Muslim soldiers on the battlefield, devoted to religion and praying to God in their hours of leisure, while many of their Western companions in arms were

<sup>1</sup> *Sources of Christianity*, Basheer Muslim Library, Woking.

drinking and gambling. All this terrible human slaughter was, after all, only a materialization of certain of the Psalms which are sung in Christian churches and which form part of the Book of Common Prayer. As was to be expected, it aroused a spirit of revolt in many quarters against the inclusion of such Psalms in the Prayer Book; clergy and laity alike made strenuous demands that these Psalms be expunged from the Prayer Book. It was not an extraordinary demand, neither difficult to meet, as the revision of the Prayer Book was a common occurrence in the history of the Church. The committee lately formed for that purpose, in order to bring it up to modern requirements, have proposed the introduction of some new prayers—one for industrial peace, one for election time, one for troubled consciences, one for good weather; in addition to which six of the ten Commandments have been shortened. And what is the process by which these revisions and additions are to become part and parcel of Christianity? They have to pass through the House of the Bishops, the House of Clergy, the House of Laity, and finally to receive Parliamentary sanction, when they will attain full-fledged religious sanctity. This is how religion is coined in the West. Manufactured in the human mint, it is stamped with Divine authority. Such has been the history of Christianity all along. A thing of human origin, it has failed to stand the test of time and experience, and has, of necessity, had to change its form from time to time, to readjust itself to changed

conditions.<sup>1</sup> But those who demanded to have certain Psalms expunged from the Prayer Book forgot, in the heat of the moment, the consequent reflections which their demands were casting upon the genuineness of the Bible. The Psalms, after all, made a part of the Bible ; it showed that the Word of God was not free from human alloy. The question, however, came to the surface in a more clarified form, in the Lower House of Convocation of Canterbury, in the sitting of July 5, 1917, when it was demanded, by some of the clergy, that the wording of certain of the questions<sup>2</sup> put to them at their ordination, should be changed. These questions demanded their subscribing unfeignedly to the belief that everything in the Bible was from God. Their contention was that they could not take the oath in the form prescribed, as they did not believe in the truth of many of the legends and events narrated in the Scriptures. They said they could not believe in the story of Jonah in the whale, though Jesus himself seems to have done so, seeing that he referred to it when he is reported to have foretold his resurrection in these words :—

An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign ; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas : For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Islamic Review*.

<sup>2</sup> Third question : " ' Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament ? ' "

Answer : ' I do so believe them. ' "

<sup>3</sup> Matthew xii. 39, 40.

The suggested form, however, ran as follows :  
“ ‘Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament, as conveying to us in many parts, and in divers manners, the revelation of God which is consummated in Jesus Christ ? ’ Answer : ‘ I do so believe them. ’ ”

The Dean of Canterbury said that the question, in the form suggested by the committee, did not give prominence to the fact that the Scriptures were the result of Divine inspiration and Divine authority, and that they were a vital part of the Christian faith. He moved as an amendment that the words should be : “ Do you acknowledge that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by Divine inspiration ? ” But the Dean of Christchurch pointed out that that proposal would leave them exactly where they were before.

The Dean of Canterbury’s amendment was negatived, 5 voting for it and 63 against. Several other amendments were proposed, the majority of them being rejected by the House, and eventually it was agreed, by 74 votes to 4, that the question should be put to deacons in the following form : “ Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as conveying to us in many parts, and in divers manners, the revelation of God which is fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ ? ”

Though the clerical conscience was pacified by the proposed change, it is interesting to note that the participators in the conference, with all the advantages

of their university education, did not avoid committing the fallacy of *petitio principii*. Their knowledge of Jesus comes exclusively from the Bible, and if they could not subscribe to the validity of its narration of certain events in it, how could they accept its testimony concerning Jesus and his Divinity? The position was anomalous on the very face of it, and betrayed the error of the vicious circle, as was pointed out at the time.<sup>1</sup>

However, it became, though indirectly nevertheless, to all intents and purposes, officially established at Canterbury that the Bible was not free from human adulteration; which was just what the Holy Qur-án had said some thirteen hundred years ago.

The Modernist Church—or perhaps I should say the Modernist Community—consisting of the broad-minded clergy who can no longer subscribe to the Athanasian Creed and such-like absurdities, having declined to accept the Son of Mary as their God, had to explain their conception of the Divinity of Jesus.

One cannot but admire the courage of many of the Church ministers in the West who, as soon as they found that the Word of God contained false stories, did not mince matters, but declared at once to the world that many portions of the Bible were not true. Canon Barnes, Canon of Westminster, the present Bishop of Birmingham, in one of his public utterances, remarked that if we allowed some of the legends of the Book of Genesis to remain in the

<sup>1</sup> *Islamic Review*, vol. v. p. 405.

curriculum of studies, the coming generation would think that our standard of truth was very low.<sup>1</sup>

The remark needs no comment. It shows that the learned Bishop does not believe in the truth of those legends. He regards them as folk-lore, replete with half-savage morality. He may brush them aside as unimportant, and yet he cannot do so without damaging seriously the very structure of his own Church. If the story of the fall of Adam is not correct, and the theory of sin in nature is therefore untenable, as many

<sup>1</sup> The remarks of Canon Barnes in the course of a speech given to the Association of University Women Teachers, held at University College, London, are instructive :—

“In this connection it was most important that the true nature and value of the Old Testament should be explained to children. It was Jewish literature, and was valuable for us mainly because it showed how the Jewish prophets were led to the idea of God, which Jesus accepted and emphasized, and because in it vague expectations of a Messiah foreshadowed the advent of Christ. But in the Old Testament were also to be found folk-lore, defective history, half-savage morality, obsolete forms of worship based upon primitive and erroneous ideas of the nature of God, and crude science. The whole, however, was valuable as showing the growth of a pure monotheism among the Jews—a religious phenomenon as remarkable and inexplicable as the great intellectual development of the golden ages of Greece. It was very difficult to convey truths like this to children, and so it seemed to him better to postpone the Old Testament part of the religious teachings to the later stages ; otherwise children would learn stories like that with which the Book of Genesis opened which they would afterwards discover to be untrue.

“He had come reluctantly to the conclusion that it was highly dangerous to use, for didactic purposes, such allegories as the creation of woman, the Daniel stories, and Jonah ; it encouraged the prevalent belief that religious people had a low standard of truth.” (*Islamic Review*, vol. x. pp. 45, 46.)

of the Church dignitaries now think, the principle of Atonement will, *ipso facto*, fall to the ground.

The belief in the principle of Atonement is the sequel of the belief in the heritage of sin, which in itself is the outcome of the fall of Adam. It is said that our first parents committed sin, which we inherited. Sin innate in human nature therefore demanded punishment, but God saved man through Atonement. No man can atone for the sin of another, as he himself is sinful, and in need of atonement. No one but God is free from sin. Therefore He only can atone for others' sin. Thus it is clear that all Christian beliefs—the Divinity of Jesus, his Atonement, etc.—take the story of the fall of Adam for their basis. It is the bed-rock of the Church, and if it be shattered the whole Church must collapse.

After a great deal of writing and talking, then, the Modernists met at a solemn conclave or representative conference at Oxford in 1921 for the purpose of definitely stating their beliefs regarding the Divinity of Jesus. The meeting was under the presidency of the late Dr. Rashdall, Dean of Carlisle, whose exposition of the question may be said to have acted like a bombshell on the Christian world.

He said that his reading of the Bible did not allow him to accept Jesus as God, who, in the opinion of the learned Dean, was man and not God, in every sense of the word.

There is a growing demand, he said, that liberal theologians should say, in quite definite terms, what



they really mean when they use the traditional language about the Divinity of Christ. The following are some of the things that we do not, and cannot, mean by ascribing Divinity to Christ :—

(1) Jesus did not claim Divinity for himself. He may have allowed himself to be called Messiah, but never, in any critically well-attested sayings is there anything which suggests that his conscious relation to God is other than that of a man towards God. The speeches of the fourth Gospel, where they go beyond the synoptic conception, cannot be regarded as history.

(2) It follows from his admission that Jesus was in the fullest sense a man, and that he had not merely a human body, but a human soul, intellect and will.

(3) It is equally unorthodox to suppose that the human soul of Jesus pre-existed. There is simply no basis for such a doctrine unless we say that all human souls exist before their birth in the world, but that is not the usually accepted catholic position.

(4) The Divinity of Christ does not of necessity imply virgin birth or any other miracle. The virgin birth, if it could be historically proved, would be no demonstration of Christ's Divinity, nor would the disproof of it throw any doubt on that doctrine.

(5) The Divinity of Christ does not imply omniscience. There is no more reason for supposing that Jesus of Nazareth knew more than his contemporaries about the true scientific explanation of the mental diseases which current belief attributed to diabolic possession, than that he knew more about the author-

ship of the Pentateuch or the Psalms. It is difficult to deny that he entertained some anticipations about the future which history has not verified.

The Rev. H. D. A. Major, Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford, who opened the discussion, was as outspoken as the Dean.

"It should be clearly realized (said Mr. Major) that Jesus did not claim in the Gospels to be the son of God in a physical sense, such as the narratives of virgin birth suggest, nor did he claim to be the son of God in a metaphysical sense, such as was required by the Nicene theology. He claimed to be God's son in a normal sense, in the sense in which all human beings are sons of God, as standing in a filial and moral relationship to God and capable of acting on those moral principles on which God acts."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> I can hardly appreciate the conception of the Divinity that the late Dr. Rashdall entertained, after reading his above-quoted utterance. He has, in my opinion, lowered the position of Jesus even from the status of a Prophet, leaving aside the question of Godhood. A messenger from God comes to correct wrong notions of his time concerning religious matters; but Jesus, as portrayed by the late Dean of Carlisle, seems to share in the ignorance of his contemporaries. What else could he do? His own knowledge was no more than theirs. In a subsequent explanation the learned Dean asserted that the Divinity of Jesus lay

<sup>1</sup> *Islamic Review*, vol. ix. No. 8, pp. 276-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Sources of Christianity*, by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

only in the production of Divine morals, as Jesus did in his days. In other words, Jesus became imbued with Divine attributes. It is not only the best and the most rational view of the case, but it is a Muslim verity. "Imbue yourself with Divine attributes" is the watchword of the life of a Muslim, in the words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ; and a Muslim cannot possibly take exception to the position adopted by the late Dr. Rashdall. Besides, what the learned Dean claimed for Jesus is potentially a common heritage of every man in Islam. Jesus himself seems to hold the same view. He wants us to follow him and to be dyed in his colours. How can it be done if we are of a different calibre, and do not possess his capacity and consciousness? We must share with him, in his humanity or Divinity—terms are of no consequence, if they carry the same concept—otherwise his demand from us is beside the mark. If, physically, morally or intellectually we are equal with him, as the late Dr. Rashdall admitted, I fail to understand how spiritually, or in Divinity, he could be different from us. All men are born sinless, so says Islam. They come to this world with a perfect nature equipped with highest capabilities. They can soar to the highest of the high. They may differ in their acquisition and responsibilities. It is a matter of accident. But they are equal with Jesus and all other messengers of God in their aptitude and capabilities.

The effect of these honest and able deliberations on

the mind of Christian people in general, and on the English in particular, can better be imagined than described. The churches became empty, and the clergy had to address vacant pews and unoccupied benches. In this connection the Bishop of London recently remarked that there are forty-nine City churches, and forty-nine men may go there each Sunday and find congregations of four in some and not more than twelve in any.

Speaking of men in the country churches, Dr. Simpson, in the Church Congress held at Plymouth in September 1923, remarked that where there were ten people who came to church before the war, five perhaps came now. "In this country Christianity is fighting for its existence, and losing ground steadily. The Churches no longer influence modern Englishmen ; and, with the spread of education, they are being deserted by the women." Such is the view which I heard recently expressed, and it is widely shared.<sup>1</sup> This inattentiveness to religion in the West has perturbed many minds, which set themselves to search for some satisfactory explanation. It came from many able clerics, Canon Barnes, of Westminster, being one of them ; but the difficult knot was cleanly cut by the Archbishop of York, who, in one of his stirring sermons, asserted that religion is attractive but the Church is repulsive. This laconic but, at the same time, portentous remark cleared the whole ground,

<sup>1</sup> Canon Barnes, under the heading "Is English Christianity Dying ?" in the *Evening News*, 1923.

and showed that the Church as it exists does not teach the religion needed by man. The question itself became the subject of further deliberation when notable persons of the Church of England met at Oxford in 1922. They concluded that the religion taught by Jesus, if shorn of all human accretion, was, after all, a religion of love. They were honest enough to admit that the religion of Buddha was also of the same type, though they could not see their way to bring other religions into the same category ; but one thing was established, that other religions besides Christianity were of equal importance, and that Christianity could not claim exclusive merit.

These deliberations not only represent the views of the few, but they seem to be held by most of the thinking minds of the Church. This I observed with great surprise and interest. Every one of those deliberations—and there have been many since 1917—is followed by a general controversial discussion in the Press, in which many of the bishops and high officials of the Church take part ; and it is worthy of note that the trend of learned opinion goes to support the new theory. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury seems to sympathize with the modern views ; and it is clear that these views, when summed up together, cannot now fail to affect seriously the catholicity of the faith generally held in Christendom. If the genuineness of the Bible has been rightly impeached, and the story of the fall of Adam, with the theory of sin in nature as its consequence, discarded ; if the

Church, passing under the name of Christ, was neither founded by Jesus, nor known to him, and therefore a conception of St. Paul; and last of all, but not least, if Jesus is not God, but man, in every sense of the word, as the Oxford Conference seemed to hold, and his Divinity lies only in his reproductions of Divine morals, an acquisition open to every member of humanity, as believed by Muslims—and if this religion is only the religion of love and not the religion of sin and atonement—a verity claimed by other religions as well, I wonder if these modern beliefs, in their collective form, have anything to do with what has been generally believed in the name of Christianity for the last seventeen centuries. These modern views are, no doubt, consistent with the views of Jesus, and had he lived in our days, he would have been the last person to say anything against them. However that may be, Muhammad came to do the same thing, and I speak the simple truth when I assert that these Modernists only represent Islam.

The pill so prepared by the Modernist could not easily be swallowed by the mass in general. The people generally resented it, and wanted to see the modern movement placed outside the pale of the Established Church in England. They met together and made representations to the Archbishop of Canterbury on the subject in 1921, requesting His Grace to purge the Church of such heresies, but the Archbishop could not see his way to accede to the wishes of the memorialists. Either the position of the Modernists

appeared to him too strong to be refuted, or His Grace did not like to subdivide a religion which has already been subdivided into nearly four hundred sections, especially when he is endeavouring to cast Wesleyanism and other English varieties of faith into one mould. One thing, however, is certain: *the Church of Christ has lost ground in her own land, and the interest of the priests lies more in bringing the strayed flock back to the fold than in sending Foreign Missions to claim the heathen for Christianity.*

A conference was held at Canterbury in June 1923 to consider the delicate situation of the Church. In the opinion of the Archbishop, the general apathy as regards Church-religion arose out of sectarian differences, and he, therefore, saw the remedy in the unity of the various Churches. But this is not the true solution of the problem, as a writer in the *Near East* remarks. The indifference and apathy did not arise from sectional divergences in the Church itself. It is the outcome of modern culture and science.

Addressing the Oxford Branch of the Churchmen's Union, Dean Inge, of St. Paul's, made some observations on the necessity for free, unfettered investigation of religious truths. The *Christian Life* reports him to have said :—

“Many Churchmen would say that the place of liberal movement was outside the door. Yet just think what would be the result if all expression of free thought had been stifled within the Church of England. The Church would now be committed to

believe that the sun went round the earth, that Heaven was a place which we might reach in an aeroplane when we knew the way, that Hell was a place under our feet, and that, as the mediæval theologian suggested, volcanic eruptions were caused by overpopulation in the infernal regions—things which no educated people could or did believe. If these things were so, there would be no room in the Church of England to-day except for the fools and liars. Modern Churchmen believed that the Church was called upon to face difficulties and solve them by unfettered inquiry. They did not believe that authority or tradition had settled everything, that we had only to accept formulæ drawn up in the early centuries, but that we must take into account recent developments in philosophy, history and criticism, and, above all, natural science. Recent researches of older religions have brought to light things that are penetrating modern minds and leaving them no other course but to reject the time-honoured beliefs and received opinions on matters religious.”

These and many other deliberations of Church dignitaries show that the Church-religion was never founded by Jesus, but by certain monks and prelates of the Athanasian type, who were really the authors of what may be called traditional Christianity. All this fabrication took place in the third or fourth centuries of the Christian era; and it was forced upon the credulous and ignorant people of the Holy Catholic Church, outside which, it was said, no



salvation was possible. Thus was the pure religion, which Jesus brought from God, rendered impure and corrupt.

Is it, then, conceivable that God will permit the corruption due to human adulteration to be permanently attached to the religion He revealed to Jesus? Could He wait for our days when, as we now see, the best men in the Church have to come forward to admit the said corruption, and make strenuous efforts to restore the Faith to the purity it originally possessed when taught by Jesus? No. If God has spoken to man from time to time through long lines of Prophets to reveal His mind to His creatures; if God raised up Jesus to purge the Church of Moses of all the fallacies which had crept into it in his time, the same God would raise up another Prophet to purify the Church of Jesus when it had become "corrupt and decrepit"—to quote Sir William Muir—in the sixth century of the Christian era. At that time appeared Muhammad who brought the following messages in the words of the Holy Qur-án:—

(a) The Qur-án ix. 30: "... and the Christians say: The Messiah is the Son of Allah; these are the words of their mouths; they imitate the saying of those who disbelieved before; Allah destroyed them; how they are turned away."

To-day it is an established fact that Church theology is only an assimilation of paganism—what an irony of fate that those who called others heathens should turn out to be heathens themselves and believers in

mythology ! Jesus himself never claimed Godhood, and there appears to be nothing in the synoptic writings to indicate that he ever looked upon himself as a Deity. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." "Why callest thou me good ; none is good, save one, that is God." "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani." Such utterances as these do not come from God's lips, but from the lips of one who knew that his position was that of a Prophet or Messenger conveying God's wishes to mankind. If Muslims are unable to detect Godhood in Jesus, they have ample reason.

Our conception of God is very sublime. "Allah is He besides Whom there is no God, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, by Whom all subsist ; slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep ; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His ; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission ? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend out of His knowledge except what He pleases ; His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them tires Him not, and He is the Most High."

(b) The Qurán v. 75 : "The Messiah, Son of Mary, is but an apostle ; apostles before him have indeed passed away."

(c) The Qur-án ii. 75 : "Do you then hope that they would believe in you, and a party from among

them indeed used to hear the word of Allah, then altered it after they had understood it, and they know (this)."

(d) The Qur-án xxxv. 18: "And a burdened soul cannot bear the burden of another; and if one weighed down by burden should cry for (another to carry) its burden, not aught of it shall be carried, even though he be near of kin. *You warn* only those who fear their Lord in secret and keep up prayer; and whoever purifies himself only for (the good of) his own soul; and to Allah is the eventual coming."

(e) The Qur-án xxix. 59: "He (Jesus) was naught but a servant on whom We bestowed favour, and We made him an example for the children of Israel."

The Dying God has been the popular theme of many an ancient legend, where a God-man gives his blood for the people. In all times of history is shown the natural inclination of man to shift a burden on to the shoulders of another, and the Suffering God has always appealed to his imagination.

Depend upon it, directly you begin to absorb ideas of non-responsibility or look to the "whipping-boy" or some sort of atonement to get out of difficulties, you are on the road to lowering the moral standard of mankind. It is like taking "the dole." Individualism and self-reliance are weakened every time you lean heavily on another for support. There are numberless very pretty and soothing statements surrounding the pathetic and poetic figures of Jesus and his mother, and no doubt these often bring comfort to

those who have been able to swallow the dogmas tacked on to the religion of our Lord some three hundred years after his time. "Simply to thy cross I cling"; "Come unto me, all ye that are weary, and I will give you rest"; "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." It all sounds so beautiful and consoling but really means so little, for cannot each one of us during every moment of our existence appeal to the God Who made us and to Whom we must all return in a few years? He is surely watching over us, and is perfect in justice and purity, and able to measure our good deeds and our evil deeds. Can He not weigh our merits and our demerits to the fraction of a grain? Can there be any pleasure equal to that of feeling that His sustaining influence and support are never absent, and that we can have direction on the right path as well as sustenance to follow that path? It is through considerations such as these that we are enabled to appreciate the truth and beauty of Islam. Surely it is better to go to headquarters direct than to rely on the assistance of others who, among other things, insist upon the payment of bribes or sacrifices before an audience can be secured? As I have previously said, there are, according to certain religions, quite a number of satellites or attendants to be interviewed and smoothed down before there is any chance of reaching the Almighty. Priests, Saints, the Virgin Mary, and Christ all have power to help you or retard you, and, in any case and whatever you do or say,

innocent blood has to be shed and pagan rites performed before you have the slightest chance of salvation. Besides which the multiplicity of advisers or conductors and introducers is so confusing that when you reach God you may have a great chance of forgetting what you came about !

Why cannot mankind be satisfied with that one grand line of the Fatiah :—

“ Thee, THEE ONLY, do we worship, and of THEE alone do we beg assistance ” ?

Why cannot we all realize that the Almighty Cherisher and Protector is so very near to each one of us ? Why cannot we say those lines I have given before but which can hardly be too often repeated on every occasion of doubt or difficulty ?

Dear Father, Thou art very near—  
We feel Thy Presence everywhere—  
In darkest night, in brightest day,  
To show the path, direct the way ?

I here take the liberty of reprinting a short chapter from my little book, *A Western Awakening to Islam*, because I feel that certain of the prayers and verses are just as applicable now as they were when I wrote them many years ago.

#### PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING.

Praise is the very essence of prayer. The fact of praising God shows the inward appreciation of God's already vouchsafed mercies, and is a clear indica-

tion of the desire for a continuation or repetition of those mercies, and it thus becomes the most exalted form of prayer. It stipulates for nothing, mentions nothing, but leaves all to God, Who knows all our wants. This is the quintessence of the Muslim's Faith.

When prostrate at Thy feet I fall,  
 Fresh wisdom to acquire,  
 All Thy past favours I recall :  
 Nor do I now desire  
 To ask from Thee what Thou must know,  
 In Thy omniscient mind,  
 Is really best for us below  
 And infinitely kind.

There is always a touch of the sordid element in prayer when merely regarded as supplication for worldly treasure or advantage, and it has sometimes struck me that the writer of the Christian prayer in which occurs the line "Who knowest our necessities before we ask and our *ignorance* in asking," was aware of this, otherwise he could not have used a word implying want of knowledge. The inference is that those who are sensible of God's infinite power will not be so ignorant as to ask Him for what He has already arranged to give them. Gratitude for past favours can never be regarded as selfish or sordid or mean.

Again, that "need of reminders" which is so observable in many Christian churches is altogether absent in the mosques where, save for verses from the Qur-án and the simple Crescent—pure and sweet emblem of the birth of Life—there is nothing to catch the eye or distract. There is no need of the praying-

wheel, the rosary, the music and the incense. No idols and no images. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." It is the Spirit of God alone which directs, and the true Muslim sees the evidences of his Father's power and love in every blade of grass, in every breath of air, and he is as happy when saying his prayers on the desert sands, or mountain top, as he would be in the most beautiful building made by man's hands.

With joy unspeakable I feel  
Thy presence ever near,  
I know that when to Thee I kneel  
There is no thought of fear.

For love and fear can never dwell  
Within a human breast,  
Since love is strong and will expel  
All fear and bring sweet rest.

Not rest as understood down here  
By human minds and laws,  
But everlasting labour fair  
Which struggles in Thy cause.

Unselfish love brings glad rewards  
A million times more sweet  
Than any treasure earth affords,  
Or human beings meet.<sup>1</sup>

There are many similar verses in the little book referred to; it was written at times of very dreadful persecution and suffering, but I am thankful to say that my confidence in God's mercy never wavered for

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts for the Future*. By "A. W." (Walter Scott Publishing Co., Felling-on-Tyne, Durham.)

one moment, even in the times of direst distress, and *I never felt fear on one single occasion.* This is the prayer above referred to :—

The following is the text of a prayer which I wrote for use at our services at the Mosque at Woking, and at other places.

In the composition I have earnestly tried to bring out our desire for increased powers of toleration, forgiveness and endurance, and begged God's assistance in driving away all fear of consequences, because I am convinced that FEAR is at the bottom of nearly all the troubles of life.

“ O Almighty and Ever-present God, Thee alone do we look to. Thee alone do we adore and worship ; accept our loving offerings of praise and thanksgiving, and increase our power of understanding Thine infinite wisdom, Thine infinite love and Thine infinite compassion. Thou art our Creator and Thou knowest that since we love Thee we also hate and loathe the devil and his miserable devices to take our thoughts from Thee.

“ Dear Father of Heaven and God of the Universe make us beneficent towards all those of our fellow-creatures who may not think of Thee as we ourselves do : May we show a spirit of toleration and may we beg of Thee to so direct the hearts of all our brethren in this world that they may appreciate our earnest desire to welcome them into that fold where the Shepherd, in Thine Almighty, Glorious, and Merciful Presence, is ever to be found.



“ May we, O God our Preserver and Comforter, endeavour to follow in the footsteps of Thy Holy Prophets, Moses, Christ, and Muhammad, and, from their teachings, may we learn humility and patience. We are now entering upon a new era in which we shall have to combat the demon of Atheism, and the demon of idolatry, and all that tends to obscure our view of Thee, O Blessed God our Father.

“ Give us courage to follow in the footsteps of Thy Prophet, the Divinely inspired Muhammad, whose memory, do Thou, O God, keep fresh and green in our hearts. May we emulate his sincerity and charity, and may we try to be like him in our desire to do justice to all mankind. May we never forget what our Lord Jesus Christ said of the Pharisees and Hypocrites, but, as Thou art All-Merciful, we implore Thee to forgive and change the hearts of those who are hostile to Islam, especially those who have wilfully misrepresented our Faith to the Western World. We pray for Thy Divine guidance ; to Thee alone do we look. Thou art our Leader and Guide, our Ever-present Councillor and Protector. Islam is our only watchword, and we feel safe in Thine Almighty Arms.

“ AMEN.

“ *El Farooq,*

“ *Friday, December 5, 1913.*”

Also the following :—

“ O Almighty God, may it please Thee, in Thine infinite power and love, to remove from our hearts all those feelings of fear which may stand in the way

of our obvious duty to Thee. Give us fortitude to endure without a qualm all adverse criticism, and may we ever look with leniency and toleration on those who have not yet quite understood our creed. Do Thou, Almighty and loving Protector, give courage to the waverers to openly confess the all-conquering powers of Islam, and may their increased self-respect be a portion of their reward. Praise be to Thee, O God our Protector and Comforter.

“ AMEN.

“ *El Farooq,*  
“ *Friday, December 12, 1913.*”

The above appeared in the January 1914 number of the *Islamic Review*, and I also quote the following lines, which I wrote to illustrate the Brotherhood of Islam and Muslim Equality :—

Dear Father, 'twas Thy loving care  
Which did into our minds instil  
The love for all Thy creatures here  
And made us seek to do Thy will.

When we our anthems raise to Thee,  
When foes around us press us sore,  
O may we seek Thy face to see,  
And learn to love Thee more and more.

O Father, may we live in Thee,  
Do Thou our loving hearts enshroud,  
We long Thy loveliness to see,  
*When we have to Thy wishes bowed.*

'Tis not alone in open fight  
In which we prostrate fall to Thee,  
But it is when we do the RIGHT—  
The outcome of Thy Majesty.

At certain times we fall before  
The mercy seat that Thou hast raised,  
And then we do Thy Name adore  
And seek to see Thee loved and praised.

*The King and beggar side by side  
Sing the glad song of gratitude,  
For Thou dost love them both the same  
And giv'st them Thy Beatitude.*

With Moses, Christ and Mahomet,  
Who gave to us Thy message sweet,  
O may our steps towards Thee be set  
And long Thy loving arms to greet.

Many years ago, when I was in very deep sorrow and distress, I wrote the following Hymn of Praise, and that portion in inverted commas, commencing "O Blessed God . . ." came into my head very suddenly—indeed it seemed to be spoken into my ear—and I at once wrote it down in pencil on a scrap of paper:—

The deepest love for Thee and Thine  
Refulgent in my heart will shine;  
Thy slightest wish shall ever be  
My care throughout Eternity.

Thou art my God, my Lord, my King;  
Without Thee could not anything  
I now enjoy be mine to-day,  
And I should not have lived to say—

"O Blessed God, Almighty King,  
Open Thy heart and let me in;  
I know Thy grace, Thy power, Thy love,  
Altho' Thou dwellest in Heaven above.

## 74 ORIGINAL CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

Thy glorious prophets, led by love,  
Directly sent from Heaven above,  
Did strive to show that only one  
Great God above in Heaven shone.

With Moses, Christ, and Mahomet,<sup>1</sup>  
O may our steps towards Thee be set ;  
Of mortal birth, they all proclaim,  
Thy one eternal, glorious Name.

And when of life is known the source,  
Dark evil will have run its course ;  
No mysteries will then appear,  
For we shall be with God most dear.

Death then no more shall touch with fears  
Our hearts, or from our eyes draw tears ;  
Great Allah, God our Lord and King,  
Will banish every thought of sin.

Jehovah, Father, we must now  
Record the noblest human vow :  
To struggle here as Michael strove  
Successfully in Heaven above."

Our love for God is a thing apart, inexplicable to our finite human minds, and known only to the dear Father Who made us and gave us the power to praise Him unceasingly.

<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to be a good Muhammadan without being a good Christian. Why are they at war ?

### CHAPTER III

## THE ORIGIN OF TRADITIONAL CHRISTIANITY

It is not very hard to demonstrate that all that is taught by the Church as an essential part of Christianity did not come from Jesus. All the dogmas laid down as "necessary to salvation" were tacked on to, or brought into the religion by, monks and priests about three hundred years after Christ's time. These dogmas were not *invented* by them, but were the ready-to-hand ready-made essentials of Paganism, the various ramifications of which cult spread from Persia to Great Britain.

There has always been a tendency to shrink from a religion of action; man, feeling his weakness, has ever hankered after some scheme by means of which he could shift his responsibility on to the shoulders of another—something he could do, *without any lasting or continued effort*, to propitiate the deity he feared might have become offended. Such an end could be brought about by one sweep of a flint knife: plenty of blood (of a substitute, a willing or unwilling victim) was wanted for the god, as described on pp. 16 and 17, of this brochure and especially in "The

Sacrificial Vista" there quoted. This way of propitiating the angry god was of barbaric origin, and in the course of time the victim began to be looked upon as the dying deity—God Himself coming on earth to suffer for man's sins ; and it is thus easy to see that the idea of reconciliation by these barbarous methods became the characteristic feature of every creed that was professed and practised in countries round about the birthplace of Jesus at the time of his advent. One of the popular cults was Mithraism, which came from Persia, where it seems to have been flourishing for about six hundred years, the cult reaching Rome about 70 B.C. It spread through the Roman Empire and extended to Great Britain, where remains of Mithraic monuments have been discovered at York, Chester, and other places. Mithra was believed to be a great *Mediator between God and Man*. *His birth took place in a cave on December 25th. He was born of a virgin. He travelled far and wide ; he had twelve disciples ; he died in the service of humanity. He was buried, but rose again from the tomb. His resurrection was celebrated with great rejoicing.*<sup>1</sup> His great festivals were the Winter Solstice and the Vernal Equinox—Christmas and Easter. He was called *Saviour*, and sometimes figured as a *lamb*. People were initiated into his cult through *baptism*. *Sacramental feasts* were held in his remembrance.

Again, I am not denouncing Christianity, but making an accurate statement of facts, when I say that at the

<sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Pagan Christs*, p. 338.

appearance of Jesus on earth there were temples without end dedicated to gods like Apollo or Dionysus among the Greeks, Hercules among the Romans, Mithra among the Persians, Adonis and Attis in Syria and Phrygia ; Osiris, Isis and Horus in Egypt ; Bēl and Astarte among the Babylonians and Carthaginians, and so on.

All these deities were sun-gods, and it was believed that they were born in a cave or underground chamber, of a virgin mother, on or about Christmas Day. They led a life of toil for the good of mankind and were called by such names as "Light-Bringer," "Healer," "Mediator," "Saviour," and "Deliverer." They were vanquished by the Powers of Darkness and descended into Hell or the Underworld. They rose again from the dead and became the lights to guide mankind to the Heavenly World. They founded Communions of Saints, and Churches into which disciples were received by baptism. They were commemorated by Eucharistic Meals.

I may perhaps be permitted here to give a short account of certain of these various "sons of God."

*Adonis.*—The Syrian god, born of a virgin, was killed and rose again in the spring. Every year *the maidens wept for Adonis* (Ezekiel viii. 14) *and then rejoiced over his resurrection.* Attis, the Phrygian god, was also born of a virgin named Nana. He was bled to death at the foot of a pine-tree. *His blood renewed the fertility of the earth and thus brought a new life to humanity.* He also rose from the dead. . . . In

celebrating his death and resurrection, his image was fastened to a pine-tree on March 24th, and the day was called the "Day of blood," since on that day the deity was bled to death. The image was then laid in a tomb with wailing and mourning, but the coming night changed sorrow to joy. The tomb was *found to be empty on the next day, when the festival of the resurrection was celebrated*. These mysteries seem to have included a sacramental meal and a baptism of blood.<sup>1</sup>

*Bacchus*, sometimes called *Dionysus*, was born of a virgin named *Demeter* on December 25th. Her other name was *Semele*. Evil having spread over the world, the God of Gods was begged to save mankind. *Jupiter* hearkened to the prayer, and declared that *his son would redeem the world from its misery*. He promised a *Liberator* to the earth, and *Bacchus* came as a Saviour. He was called *the only begotten son*. "It is I," so says *Bacchus* to mankind, "who guide you; it is I who protect you, and who save you; I who am Alpha and Omega."<sup>2</sup> He was also a great traveller, and brought the gift of wine to mankind. It will remind the reader of the miracle of *Jesus* when he converted water into wine at the marriage feast.

"Suffering was common to all the sons of *Jove*," as *Justin Martyr* says, and for this reason they were called "The slain ones," "Saviours" and "Redeemers." *Bacchus* was also slain to redeem humanity,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, iv. p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> See Beausobre, also Higgins, *Anaclypsis*, vol. i. p. 322.



and was therefore called "the Slain one," "the Sin-bearer," "the Redeemer." His death, followed by resurrection, was celebrated with all kinds of wild festivities and there was celebrated a representation of the passion of Bacchus, dead, descended into hell and re-arisen.

Quetzalcohuatl, the Mexican Saviour, was born of a virgin, Chimalman, who had received the message informing her that she was to become the mother of a son without any connection with man, but through a heavenly messenger. Soon after the ambassador left she conceived and bore a son Quetzalcohuatl—a word that means "our beloved Son." This offspring of heavenly spirit connection fasted forty days and was tempted by the devil. He was also crucified, at which time the sun was darkened and withheld its light. His second coming was so eagerly looked for that when Cortez appeared the Mexicans greeted him as the returning God.<sup>1</sup>

There are also many similar stories of Horis, Osiris, Apollo, Attis, and Bēl. Thus the passion story of the Lord of Christianity was almost identical with many previous stories of similar nature. The passion play of Bēl, the Babylonian Sun-God, was in existence centuries before the birth of Jesus. It was a mystery play acted every year in the beginning of spring. The main features of the play have recently been deciphered from some tablets discovered from Babylonian ruins, and these tablets disclose very remarkable

<sup>1</sup> Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*, vol. i. p. 60.

facts which must be perturbing to thousands of honest minds in Christendom. The story of Bēl and the story of Jesus are one and the same, and *this not only deprives the evangelical records of the claims to be genuine but it convicts them of complete plagiarism.* The following <sup>1</sup>, taken from the January 1922 issue of the *Quest*, which describes the tablets belonging to the cuneiform documents which were discovered by certain German excavators in the years 1903 and 1904 at Kalah-Shargat, the site of the ancient city of Assour. They belonged to the library of Assour, formed somewhere about the ninth century.

THE BABYLONIAN PASSION  
PLAY.

Bēl is taken prisoner.

Bēl is tried in the House  
on the Mount (the Hall of  
Justice).

Bēl is smitten (wounded).

Bēl is led away to the  
Mount.

Together with Bēl a malefactor is led away and put to death. Another, who is also charged as a malefactor, is let go, thus not taken away with Bēl.

After Bēl had gone to the  
Mount, the city breaks out

THE CHRISTIAN PASSION  
STORY.

Jesus is taken prisoner.

Jesus is tried in the House  
of the High Priest and the  
Hall of Pilate.

Jesus is scourged.

Jesus is led away to cruci-  
fixion on Golgotha.

Together with Jesus, two  
malefactors are led away  
and put to death. Another  
(Barabbas) is released to the  
people, and thus not taken  
away with Jesus.

At the death of Jesus, the  
veil in the temple is rent

<sup>1</sup> *The Sources of Christianity*, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

into tumult, and fighting takes place in it.

Bēl's clothes are carried away.

A woman wipes away the heart's blood of Bēl flowing from a drawn-out weapon (? spear).

Bēl goes down into the Mount away from sun and light, disappears from life, and is held fast in the Mount as in a prison.

Guards watch Bēl imprisoned in the stronghold of the Mount.

A goddess sits with Bēl; she comes to tend him.

They seek for Bēl where he is held fast. In particular a weeping woman seeks for him at the "Gate of Burial." When he is being carried away the same lamented: "O, my brother! O, my brother!"

(Synopt.), the earth quakes, the rocks are rent asunder, the graves are opened, and the dead come forth into the holy city (Matt.).

Jesus' robe is divided among the soldiers (Synopt., John, cp. Ps. xxii. 18).

The lance-thrust in Jesus' side and outflow of water and blood (John). Mary Magdalene and two other women busy themselves with the (washing, and) embalming of the body (Mark, Luke).

Jesus, in the grave, in the rock tomb (Synopt.), goes down into the realm of the dead (1 Pet. iii. 19, Matt. xii. 40, Acts ii. 24, Rom. x. 17, "descent into hell" dogma).

Guards are set over the tomb of Jesus (Matt.).

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sit before the tomb (Matt., Mark).

Women, in particular Mary Magdalene, came to the tomb to seek Jesus where he is behind the door of the tomb. Mary stands weeping before the empty tomb because they have taken her Lord away (John).

Bēl is again brought back to life (as the sun of spring) ; he comes again out of the Mount.

Jesus' restoration to life, his rising from the grave (on a Sunday morning).

His chief feast, the Babylonian New Year's festival in March, at the time of the spring equinox, is celebrated also as his triumph over the powers of darkness (cp. the creation hymn "Once when on high" as the New Year's festival hymn).

His festival, approximately at the spring equinox, is also celebrated as his triumph over the powers of darkness (cp. e.g. Col. ii. 15).

From the above it will be seen that the passion story of the Bible is simply a re-casting of the story of Bēl. All these facts were not brought to light by those who may be dubbed enemies of Christianity, but have been admitted by many who were accepted leaders of Christianity both in the olden days and at the present time.

It is interesting to note the observations made by some of the Early Fathers on this subject. The following is from Tertullian :—

"The devil, whose business is to prevent the truth, mimics the exact circumstances of the Divine Sacraments in the Mysteries of Idols. He himself *baptizes some*, that is to say his believers and followers ; he promises *forgiveness of sins from the sacred fount*, and *thereby initiates them* into the religion of Mithra. Thus he marks the foreheads of his own soldiers, thus he celebrates the *oblation of bread* ; he brings in the symbol of *resurrection*, and wins the crown with the

sword. He limits his chief priest to a single marriage, he even has his virgins and ascetics."

Justin Martyr says :—

"The apostles, in the commentaries written by themselves which we call Gospels, have delivered down to us how that Jesus thus commanded them: 'He having taken bread, after that he had given thanks, said: "Do this in commemoration of me; this is my body"; also having taken the cup and returned thanks, He said, "This is my blood," and delivered it unto them alone'; which things the evil spirit has taught to be done out of memory in the mysteries and ministrations of Mithra. . . . For that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn." <sup>1</sup>

Cortez, the explorer of Mexico, also complained that the devil had positively taught to the Mexicans the same things which God taught to the Christians.

St. Jerome admits that Mithra and Baal, or Bēl, were the same, and called sons of the Lord. He says: "The Sun whom the heathen worship under the names of Lord Sun (Baal Samus) and Son of the Lord (Bor Belus)."

#### BIRTH<sup>2</sup> DATE OF JESUS.

In his *Life of Christ* Dean Farrar has remarked that there is no satisfactory proof by which the 25th of

<sup>1</sup> Justin Martyr, *Apol.* II.

December can be decided upon as the actual date of Christ's birth. The Bible is silent on the subject, though it makes mention of the shepherds being that night with their flocks in the fields of Bethlehem.<sup>1</sup> This makes it difficult to accept December 25th as the real date of the Nativity, since December being the height of the rainy season in Judea, it is unlikely that shepherds or their flocks would have been out by night in the fields of Bethlehem.

I am told that the Feast of the Nativity was originally held on January 6th (the Epiphany), but in A.D. 353-4 Pope Liberius altered it to December 25th, but there seems to be no evidence of a Feast of the Nativity taking place at all before the fourth century A.D. It was not until A.D. 534 that Christmas Day and Epiphany were reckoned by the Law Courts as *Dies Non*.<sup>2</sup>

The Greek Church observes Christmas on January 7th. On or about the year 530 a Scythian monk, Dionysius Exiguus, an abbot and astronomer of Rome, was commissioned to fix the date of the birth of Jesus.<sup>3</sup> He it was who assigned the day and the date and the month now accepted in Christendom. Though the said Exiguus does not give the data which led or authorized him to fix December 25th, it seems highly probable that he may have been influenced by the edict of the Papal chair in 353, when Pope Liberius named the same date: anyhow, the date is the same—

<sup>1</sup> Hastings, *Ency. of Rel. and Ethics*, Art. "Christmas."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Pagan and Christian Creeds*, p. 26.

within a day or two—of the supposed births of many of the Sun-gods.

Had Jesus been one of the Sun-gods, as he has been most unfortunately portrayed by some of his zealous followers—the builders of the Church in the early days—the position is quite tenable. But this great Messenger of Allah came (much as Muhammad did six hundred years later) to demolish paganism, as the Qur-án says. His Church says the same. His story should be quite different and distinct from that of the deities of the ancient days. St. Augustine declared: “We hold this (Christmas) day holy, not like the pagans, because of the birth of the sun, but because of the birth of Him who made it.” And there are many other animadversions of the early Fathers, cursing the devil for introducing into his cult almost all the Church mysteries! <sup>1</sup>

Our fair-minded Christian friends will, I think, do well to ponder deeply over these facts. To some it may even appear that we have been worshipping the Sun-God for all these centuries in the name of Jesus. We have seen his crucifixion and resurrection celebrated on the dates on which the pagans did the same in connection with their own gods; and indeed all the occurrences that are believed to have taken place on those dates in the story of Jesus are almost word for word the same as in the story of the pagan deities. It seems almost like the irony of fate that Christianity,

<sup>1</sup> *The Religion of Jesus and the Traditional Christianity.* (Basheer Muslim Library, Woking, Surrey.)

## 86 ORIGINAL CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

which came to demolish paganism, should have fallen a victim to that same cult ! Why should we be asked to believe in pagan teachings ? It looks as though the pure religion of Jesus has been disfigured by making the great Prophet of Nazareth a substitute for a pagan deity. It is due to the Master that his religion should be purged of fallacies by making a clean sweep of the man-made dogmas which are so many blots on an otherwise perfect Faith.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE SPREAD OF KNOWLEDGE UNDER ISLAM

REFERRING to our mission in South Africa in the spring of 1926, a writer in the Press remarked that science, culture, and civilization have flourished in Christendom, while Muslim nations are backward in these achievements, and thereby the writer tries to establish a superiority of the former over the latter. In support of this contention, some Christian writers also point to the great charitable institutions—hospitals, schools, and homes for suffering humanity—run on Christian lines. Such institutions are mainly due to the growth of modern culture, and owe their origin to quite different external causes—one of the greatest amongst them being Islam in Spain. Islam speaks highly of these charities in its teaching; and brought them into existence in all Muslim countries within two centuries after the Prophet's time.

Islam can claim superiority in one respect—Muslim universities opened their doors in Bagdad, in the days of Nizam-ul-Mulk, and in Granada, in the days of Abdul Rahaman, to students without distinction of caste, colour or creed, where they were looked after, boarded and lodged at the public expense.

Besides hospitals, libraries and other institutions, there were public baths in every town in Moorish Spain, which were demolished in the time of Ferdinand, possibly because cleanliness was strange to Christian piety in those days.

Jesus did not live long enough to evolve a system which could further science, culture, and civilization, but Muhammad, on the other hand, was able to do things that caused a great upheaval of science and culture unknown before his time.

The early Muslim listened to the recitation of the Qur-án and was moved by it to learn to read and write in order to know it himself. The study of the Qur-án led to the foundation of an elaborate and scientific Arabic grammar and rhetoric ; to philology and other branches of the science of language ; to research in ancient history and the record of passing events ; and of the writing of erudite treatises on law. It also resulted in a strong desire being created to learn all that could be known about Nature and its laws.

Muslim messengers were sent to ransack India, Persia, and Greece for hidden treasures of knowledge. Fabulous sums were paid for works which had been concealed for ages from the world. All this wisdom was translated into Arabic and compared with the natural facts observed, then revised, and at last brought system out of chaos.

These unprecedented, world-wide efforts need not surprise us. Muhammad created an insatiable thirst

for knowledge, by remarks such as: "A Muslim should traverse mount and valley, even unto China, to acquire knowledge; the difficulties met with, however arduous, are one great way of worshipping God." . . . "Preserve knowledge to posterity by writing it." . . . "It is the business of every Muslim to discover wisdom, from whatever source." . . . "It is obligatory on every Muslim, male or female, to acquire knowledge." . . . "A Muslim should study from the cradle to the grave." . . . "A Muslim should learn from the wise of any religion." Such sayings were the seed which the Qur-án brought to fruition.

### *History and Geography.*

Several thousand books on history were written, differing in magnitude from one volume to eighty. They dealt with nations and empires, with persons and towns. The Muslims were the first to teach the world the art of making Encyclopædias and Dictionaries, *linguistic and biographical*.

For geography they sailed the oceans and traversed the land. They described phenomena of both sea and land and everything else they saw: races and men, kings and governments, religions and creeds, habits and customs, animals and insects, mountains and valleys, rivers and canals, forests and plains, fertility and aridity, fields and orchards, crops and productions, roads and routes, villages and towns—all portrayed more or less in detail from Japan to England. The

Arabic language can boast of many immortal works on geography. The spherical shape of the globe was held throughout, when its flatness was asserted by the scientists of priest-ridden Europe. The earth's circumference was calculated and proved to be 24,000 miles. Other geographical facts were revealed, while discoveries were made in the East and the West.

### *Political Economy and Sociology.*

These sciences were unknown until the Muslims brought them to light. Political economy was known as "Management of Capital" and "Civil Politics." Sociology was called the "Science of Society."

### *Medicine and Pharmaceutics.*

Doctors as well as chemists had to pass an examination in order to obtain a licence to practice their profession. In Bagdad there were 860 doctors of different classes. Each class made one branch of medicine a special study. There were surgeons, opticians, dentists, specialists in the diseases of women, and so on.

The Muslim doctors, through practice and experiment, arrived at advanced ideas which gave ancient medicine its death-blow. They upheld that many diseases, caused by unsatisfactory diet, could be eradicated by the use of cooling vegetables, herbs, and plants. They were the first to use anæsthetics and describe diseases heretofore misunderstood, and to prescribe their cure.

Modern pharmacy is an institution of their invention.

They studied the effect on the body of drugs from many parts of the earth and discovered many new remedies.

### *Chemistry and Botany.*

It has been stated that modern chemistry was founded by the Muslims. Nitric acid, sulphuric acid, silver nitrate, and many other compounds, were first discovered by Muslim chemists. A Muslim historian said that when wood was painted with a certain compound, made by those chemists, it became fire-proof. They were the first to teach the world distillation, filtration, crystallization, solutions, etc. They showed in treatises the worthlessness of ancient chemistry.

Botanical students, accompanied by artists, travelled far and wide to study the different vegetations and described them minutely by pen and brush ; ultimately these researches were recorded in scientific botanical treatises.

### *Hospitals*

Were founded in large towns from the Indus to the North of Spain. These hospitals were well arranged and all classes of people were admitted to them. There were separate wards for each disease. The head doctor, accompanied by assistants, made daily visits to his wards to examine the patients and prescribe their treatment. Here also were departments for the study of medicine and pharmacy.

*Astronomy.*

Wonderful discoveries concerning the movement of the Solar System and other astral bodies were made. The size of the earth, the variation in the lunar latitudes, the precession of the equinoxes, were ascertained. The astronomical tables of Albani were translated into Latin and were the base of astronomical study in Europe for centuries.

As they had done with ancient chemistry, the Muslims were the first to show the falsehood of astrology and set out in treatises, based on observation and experience, the facts and usefulness of astronomy. For this purpose many observatories were established all over the wide empire. Many instruments were invented, such as the telescope and others.

*Mathematics.*

The Arabic figures as well as alphabet are too well known to need any comment. Geometry and other mathematical branches were zealously studied and improved.

*Fine Arts.*

The fine arts were not neglected. Music was made a science and universally practised. Animal sculpture and painting were developed to a high degree of excellence, while Arabic architecture is world-famous.

*Education.*

No town, however small, was without colleges or

schools ; while the principal cities of the Empire had their separate universities. High and low, rich and poor, all were absorbed in one intellectual pursuit or another. One writer left four hundred works, another six hundred, others many hundreds, and so on.

### *Science and Learning.*

Islam annulled fortune-telling, magic, and many other obsessions which were predominant at the time of Muhammad. Reason and natural laws replaced them in ruling life. Islam eradicated the idea of a person being entitled to recognition, respect or superiority merely because he was high-born. The individual was to be estimated by how he conducted himself, by his knowledge and usefulness. The status of women was raised ; the laws of marriage were reformed, and in fact the present civilization owes its growth to the influence of Islam. For full ten centuries Islam made headway in power, civilization and science. Then Muslims became intoxicated with their success and wealth. Luxury caused enervation, foreign economic pressure reduced them to their present condition, and a sort of blight overtook them. If the present-day Islam is lacking in culture and science, it is on account of the failure of Muslims to maintain their religious standard. The case is different in Christendom. The Western nations made their present progress when they liberated themselves from the grip of Church religion and began to think independently for themselves on Islamic lines.

The spread of learning under the ægis of Islam was, as we have seen above, very marked, and the next point which claims our attention is how all this improvement led to a further dissemination of the Muslim Faith and what instructions were given through the Holy Prophet in the matter of religious proselytism. As I have said before, if we compare the method adopted by the Muslims, when advancing their religious opinions, with those of the propagandists of certain Christian sects, we can hardly fail to notice the marked difference shown—the one breathing the spirit of love and toleration and the other savouring more of compulsion and condemnation. The instructions given in the Qur-án are very simple, and lay down in the plainest possible language the duty of the Prophet and his disciples when preaching Islam. They are simply commanded to deliver God's message to mankind, and no blame is to be attached to them if the message is rejected.

“The apostle has only to preach his message. And remind, O Prophet, thou art only to remind, thou art not an authority over them.

“Say, O ye people : There has come to you the truth from your Lord, and he who is guided, his guidance is only for his soul ; and he who errs, errs only against it, and say : I am not a guardian over it. But if they turn aside, We have not sent thee to them as a guardian, thou hast only thy message to preach. But say : This is the truth from your Lord, so let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve.”



‡ There is no ambiguity whatsoever in these lines from the Qur-án ; the missionary is not asked to be a proselytizer, he has only to preach the Word of God ; if conversion is to bless his efforts it must come entirely by spontaneous judgment, and must not be attained by means of compulsion or persuasion. Christ gave much the same instructions to his disciples when he said : “ And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them.”

We also have the following verse, still further guiding honest missionaries of every creed : “ Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and godly warnings, and dispute with them in the kindest way ” (Qur-án xvi. 26).

Here we are set three stages of preaching :—

- (1) Invitation to the religion of God with wisdom and caution.
- (2) Imparting sacred warnings.
- (3) The kindly and beneficent method of conducting the arguments.

If those we are endeavouring to lead towards Islam refuse to listen, we must not get angry or be offended, but merely invoke their witness that we have conveyed to them what we believe to be God's message, and that we are resigned to His Will. All true guidance must come from God, and we have done our duty if we have faithfully preached and endeavoured to

‡ *Western Awakening to Islam* (Lord Headley).

explain His messages. In the Qur-án the Prophet is repeatedly reminded that he is but a "warner," and that no blame will be attached to him on account of the errors or obstinacy of his hearers. "Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve." Verses such as this are of frequent occurrence in the Qur-án, and they certainly show that there is no truth in the constantly repeated charge that the Qur-án incites its readers to propagate Islam by oppressive or violent measures. Indeed, it forbids the Holy Prophet to carry even persuasion too far; for he is told that if the persons preached to pay no heed to his exhortation he should leave them alone, as it was not his duty to compel anyone to accept Islam. Conversion must come spontaneously, and true religion can only be accepted with an open heart. "Whosoever God wishes to guide, He expands his heart to Islam." Conversions of this class can surely not be the result of compulsion.

It will thus be seen that as far as proselytization goes the methods enjoined by the Qur-án are entirely of the peaceful and gentle order. Muslims have had, in days gone by, to protect themselves by force of arms, but they have never attempted to promulgate Islamic teachings by means of the sword—we cannot say as much for the Christians.

When we come to consider the possibilities of establishing Islam as one of the religions of the West, we are confronted by a very difficult problem, i.e. the harmonizing of Eastern customs which prevailed in Arabia over thirteen hundred years ago with modern

Western usages. Concerning this, Sir Harry H. Johnston is reported to have written :—

“ If the Mahomedan Egyptians prefer to regard the Qur-án and the mediæval elaboration of the Qur-án as the last word, the dominant and ultimate authority in law, science, sanitation, morals, and social economy, so long will Mahomedan teaching institutions be utterly futile in coping with the requirements of the twentieth century, and so long will Mahomedan peoples be unfitted to govern themselves, and still less to govern more intelligent fellow-citizens of more enlightened faiths.”<sup>1</sup>

These expressions of opinion, coming from one whose great experience in Africa and the Near East entitles him to most respectful hearing and attention, may not be lightly brushed aside. We cannot agree as to the existence of a “ more enlightened faith,” since it seems impossible to conceive any creed more enlightened than that which does away with all idolatrous rites, relies entirely on the help and direction of the one and only God, and which teaches our duty to our neighbour, and beneficence to *all our fellow-creatures*. The difficulties which seem to exist are chiefly those due to ceremonials. The actual spirit of Islam is far above all these minor points, but it must not be forgotten that the true disciple of the Holy Prophet loves to follow—to the letter, so far as worldly circumstances will permit—all the injunctions laid down so explicitly in the Qur-án. Hard-and-fast rules under one set of

<sup>1</sup> *The Comrade*, Delhi, February 21, 1914.

conditions may be fairly easy to obey—e.g. Eastern conditions many centuries ago—but they may be extremely difficult to follow up in the West at the present day. We may appreciate the piety and zeal of the modern Muslim, but we must also consider the great hindrances there are to, say, a modern European business man, *who is entirely in accord with Islamic teaching in the spirit and truth of our grand religion*, who finds himself unable to conform rigidly to the letter of the law of Islam. This is probably what Sir Harry Johnston means when he refers to the “mediæval elaboration of the Qur-án.” May God grant that all the obstacles may in time be removed, and that the East and West may worship in the same simplicity, and trust to the sole and supreme aid of the Great Creator and Protector of all mankind.

There are many good and sincere Muhammadans who hold that their belief in the Divine Unity of God, and their acceptance of the messages delivered to the world by the inspired Prophet, and their obedience to the commandments from on High, are sufficient to entitle them to be enrolled in the ranks of the Faithful. Their failure to conform to what may be called the minor conventions is not sufficient to exclude them from the great Brotherhood of Islam. The Unity of God, duty to neighbours, and belief in the Angels and Prophets of God, together with an acceptance of the Qur-án, as revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, constitute the essentials of Islam : outward forms and ceremonies cannot be held—as the Christians say their

baptisms are—to be generally *necessary* to salvation. I would say that, in presenting Islam to Westerns, stress should only be laid on the vital points, and that the main injunctions of the Qur-án—which is, of course, the Gospel of Islam—should be adhered to. We have seen from the above that a correct representation of the inspired Book should form the chief feature of Islamic preaching, and that particular care should be taken to do nothing to irritate or offend those we wish to win over. All is to be done in the kindest manner, and without giving cause for resentment or anger.

How great is the difference between the method of propagating religion, as practised by the Muslims, who follow the instructions of the Qur-án as above enumerated, and that aggressive and irritating system adopted by those who endeavour to dispense various brands of the Christian Faith!

I can point to several cases within my own knowledge of rigid and uncompromising Protestants making house-to-house visitations to Roman Catholics in a Roman Catholic country in the hope of making “converts.” These possibly well-meaning but excessively irritating people go about armed with tracts which they press their victims to accept and read. Such visits often upset whole households, causing bickerings and disputes between the otherwise happy and contented members of families. How strangely neglectful are these mistaken proselytizers of their duty towards neighbours, and that beneficence, which

should be the distinguishing mark of Christ's followers ! The Roman Catholics also carry on their work of conversion, but they are far more diplomatic and clever in their methods, and probably meet with greater success.

Christians spend vast sums annually on Missions to "Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics"—the three latter terms being applied to Muslims and generally to all those who do not regard the Almighty exactly from their own standpoint—and it would be instructive to ascertain how much money is annually thrown away in attempts to force or persuade men of other faiths to change their religions.

That the Medical Missions do admirable work, and that they are worthy of support, cannot for a moment be denied, and we should also respect those who endeavour to give a religion to communities of savages who know not God at all, and worship only idols or sticks and stones. It is when we come to find offers of worldly advantages or, in plainer language, bribes being advanced in order to tempt a change of religion, that we feel impressed with the hollowness of the system of proselytizing in lands where excellent forms of worship already exist. I have been told that the accounts of the Societies for the Conversion of Jews show that the cost per Jew convert is many thousands of pounds. Surely this money might be put to better uses ? With respect to Muhammadan conversions, probably the cost is still higher, as there are very few Muslims of any education at all who

would change their pure and simple faith for any other. It is only the very poorest and lowest who can be induced to change, and they only take the step in order to better their wordly position.

The missionary is paid to make converts : he is doing well in his profession if he secures many, and badly if he secures few ; but he should not stoop to unworthy methods and, above all, he should never wilfully misrepresent the religion of those he is endeavouring to lead into another path.

My Brother in Islam, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, has always shown a most perfect obedience to the instructions respecting the important duty of letting people know what Islam really is, and I have for many years endeavoured to emulate his most excellent example, and follow his guidance in this respect. We hope now, with the help of Allah, to start a literary propaganda on a scale hitherto unknown, and we are relying on the support of our Muslim Brethren all over the world. Our recent tour of South Africa was undertaken with the view of securing the support of our Indian and other friends in that part of the world.

## CHAPTER V

### THE BISHOP OF LONDON AND ISLAM

I MAKE no apology for introducing this chapter, together with a long quotation from the June issue of the *Islamic Review*, because most of the points arise in consequence of interviews I had with the Bishop, at his request, at Fulham Palace towards the end of last year. Some time after these interviews the Bishop, speaking at the consecration of an addition to St. John's Church, Harrow, said that "people must realize that no other faith could be regarded as a rival to Christianity. Those who spoke of some of the religions of the East as alternatives did not know what they were talking about. A certain British peer who had embraced Islam had attempted to discuss the matter with him, but he (the Bishop) had closed the conversation by saying: 'Go and do something to induce your fellow-Mohammedans in the Near East to set free the thirty thousand Christian girls whom they have forced into slavery, and then I will argue with you.' " Thus were the Bishop's words reported in *The Times*, November 10, 1925, and I must say they have caused me some astonishment. How does Dr. Ingram know that no other Faith can be regarded



as a rival? The fact that our King rules over more Muslims than Christians, and that there are over 220,000,000 Muslims in the world, should surely give him pause before making such an *ex-cathedra* statement? He seems also oblivious of the fact that Christianity came from the East, just as did the Jewish and Muslim Faiths. I do *quite* "know what I'm talking about," when I say that Christ was an Eastern man. From the way the Bishop puts it one would think that Christianity was a Western product and that it was wrong to go to the wicked East for religious ideas!

Having made several inquiries concerning the forcing of Christian girls into Turkish harems, I have come to the conclusion that the story has been concocted with the unworthy motive of setting the world against Islam, exactly as I have shown over and over again that the Christian missionaries spread it abroad that we "worship" Muhammad and "have to have" four wives, etc. I do not think there is a more contemptible line of conduct than that of fabricating malicious falsehoods about another faith in order to advance your religious views.

The *Islamic Review* thus deals with the question of the Turks and the "slavery" fiction:—

"The fiction of the slavery of 30,000 Christian Armenian girls by the Turks has been artfully made up and has been engineered by men who enjoy a sort of halo of prestige by virtue of the offices they fill. Anything and everything from their pens or with their

endorsement is regarded as 'good enough.' But what is still more amusing is the fact that after having set the ball a-rolling they quietly withdraw and let others grapple with the consequences. Precisely the same drama has been enacted in the case of an allegation made against the Turks, aiming all the while thereby at Islam. The case of Armenian girls who are serving as domestics in Turkish homes has been manipulated and transformed into slavery. The domestic has been called a slave. Once the scheme was ready, to make out the rest was quite easy—a foregone conclusion. By this device, ingenious as it is, the Bishop of London and men of his stamp of thought lost no time in bringing home to the people—especially to women, who have always played a great rôle in religious movements—that Islam was and is a religion which countenances the institution of slavery, and as a proof the Turkish case was ready to hand. The statement was criticized and challenged by some, but no reply ever came from the Bishop of London. One of those who criticized and repudiated the Bishop's statement was Madame Adnan (Halidé Edib Hanoum), who, speaking on the 'Turkish Woman of To-day' at a meeting of the Near and Middle East Association, London, on the 17th December, 1925, made special mention of the allegation at the request of the Muslim peer, Lord Headley (El-Farooq), who desired to hear the views of the speaker with regard thereto; for, as I remarked above, everyone is inclined to believe a statement—however absurd it may be—if it has the

privilege of emanating from a great personage. Even Lord Headley, who would not even for a moment consider such a statement to be true, thought it proper to put a question to the speaker on this absurd allegation. The speaker said: 'There was no truth at all in the story about the 30,000 women. The average Turk was poor. Their wives had to work, or to earn money, and they would not add to their expenses. . . . In Anatolia there had been what may be termed inter-massacres between Turks and Armenians. Both sides suffered severely and probably the Turks much more, but they did not say much about it. There were hordes of homeless children all over Europe. Some Armenian children had been adopted by Turkish families out of kindness. After 1918, these children were returned and many Turkish children were taken away too as Armenians' (*Ceylon Observer*, January 15, 1926).

"The Bishop of London never took the trouble to refute the statements of the Turkish lady. But somebody else came forward instead, under the *nom de plume* of 'Churchman,' as his lieutenant, and addressed the following to the *Manchester Guardian*, January 4, 1926:—

'SIR,—In your issue of December 19 a report appears of the lecture given by Halidé Edib Hanoum at a meeting of the Near and Middle East Association held in London on Thursday, December 17. This Turkish lady is reported to have said that there was 'no truth at all in the story' regarding the 30,000 Christian girls who, according to the Bishop of London, had been forced into Moslem households. We may, of course,

be very simple folk in Britain, but I venture to think that we are not quite simple enough to believe that the impartially compiled documents issued by the League of Nations which give the facts should be ignored because one Turkish lady happens to say that there is 'no truth at all' in the Bishop of London's statement. In support of the Bishop of London's statement I will quote from just two documents published by the League of Nations. Document A 35, 1921, IV., states:—

'Approximate number of Armenian orphans still in Turkish institutions and homes:—

Unoccupied areas	..	..	60,750
Occupied areas ..	..	..	12,600
			<hr/>
			73,350

'Document A 28, 1922, III., states, referring to Miss Jeppe's Interim Report for January 26, 1922:—

'Miss Jeppe then estimated there were from five to six thousand Armenian women and children in Moslem houses within the French zone of occupation, not including Nisibin, and she now believes that there are still at least thirty thousand Armenian women and children in Moslem hands in the whole region accessible from Aleppo. This does not include the provinces of Diarbekir and Kharpout, into which there has been within the last year a very large influx of Christian deportees from Anatolia, and especially from the Black Sea littoral; nor yet Cilicia, where an unknown number of Armenian survivors from Hadjin, Cis, Zeitun, Marash, and Aintab are still to be found.'

"Yours, etc.,

"CHURCHMAN.

"December 31.

"We must confess our reading of the quotations from the League of Nations Reports *fails to reveal anything about Armenian girls being kept as slaves*. Study these figures honestly. Is there any mention of Armenian girls being kept or forced into the Muslim homes as slaves. Such a conclusion as the writer and

supporter of the Bishop of London makes, one could expect only from those whose mental vision is obsessed by the rage of prejudice. The figures only tell us that there are so many orphan Armenian girls in Turkey. We do not deny that there are Christian girls in Turkey, just as nobody would dare deny that there are any Germans living in France. It is not the presence of the Armenian girls which is being disputed, but the damning fact of their being kept as slaves.

“As a matter of fact these Armenian girls in Turkish homes are living as domestic servants—and one who has been to Muslim countries knows what privileges and comforts the domestics enjoy in Muslim homes—privileges which a servant here in the West dare not dream of. To conclude that they are living as slaves is absurd on the very face of it.

“But we know with what aim these fictions are fabricated—to work up the popular mind of Europe into hatred and contempt against the Turk—which word, thanks to the constant honest efforts of the clergy, means nowadays in the English language ‘a wild person’—subsequently Islam. To achieve this aim articles appeared in the Press—perhaps the most highly organized apparatus of propaganda the world has ever known.

“We wish his Lordship could have realized how deeply he was paining the hearts of many Muslims by this inaccurate statement, and also what share he was contributing in laying the axe to the roots of the British Empire. From him we at least had expected

a foresight, a fuller grasp of the situation ; for he was the Bishop of the Metropolis of the British Empire, the majority of whose subjects, next to the Hindus who number about 245 million, unfortunately, consists of Muslims. If he could not bring about mutual understanding and intelligence, good-will and tolerance between the Muslims and the Christians—the two principal constituents of the Empire—then he ought to have at least refrained from making matters worse. We wish that he could have realized that tactics like these only help to rivet the fetters of prejudice everywhere. Bad seeds sown to-day cannot be expected to bring in a rich harvest to-morrow. Nowadays we certainly do not require ill-will and hatred. May we ask his Lordship what kind of a harvest he expects from such a sowing as his ? Was it not his Lordship's duty to have gone thoroughly into the nature of the matter and then have made his statement ?

“ Would that the Bishop of London had realized how many he would be misleading and how far-reaching the effects of these statements would be ! Here is an example of the echo of his Lordship's voice from the other end of the globe. *The Times*, April 6th, is responsible for the news regarding the attitude of U.S. Bishops towards Turkey. It says :—

“ Petitions protesting against the ratification of the Lausanne Treaty and bearing the signatures of 110 Bishops of the United States Protestant Episcopal Church were sent yesterday to every member of the United States Senate. The Bishops express the belief that American Christian sentiment is opposed to the ratification of the treaty in its present form,

saying : ' We are asked to resume friendly relations with an avowedly and unrepentant anti-Christian Government which . . . is now holding in slavery in Turkish harems tens of thousands of Christian women and children. . . . We cannot forget that more than a million Armenian refugees have no country.' . . .

“ Do not these words provide a very good specimen of the way in which religious sentiment is exploited for the ultimate end of land-grabbing ? If Armenians have suffered, they have suffered as other people do and did. The quarrels between the Armenians and the Turks were always political, never religious. The Armenian has always been a plaything, a tool in the hands of the European diplomats who aimed at the annihilation of Turkey. They have reaped the reward of their machinations.

#### “ PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF !

“ But for our part, even after this gross misstatement, we would have been satisfied and uttered not a word, had we seen even a faint trace of the outpouring of sympathy and love for other people as well. Our astonishment knows no bounds ; for we find just the reverse. We wonder if the Bishop of London, the U.S.A. Bishops and others of their kidney, who are so fond of talking of love, will ever raise even so much as a little finger in protest against the inhuman treatment now being meted out to the people of Kenya ? Or have they ever thought of approaching the League of Nations or the U.S.A. Senators to

exert their moral pressure on the League authorities to cancel the award of the Syrian Mandate to France, which country—civilized as it is!—has ‘pacified’ its mandatory territory with bomb and machine-gun, times and again? Have they ever had a sting of conscience in their heart of hearts over the overbearing and haughty attitude of Christian France and Orthodox Spain riding roughshod over the weaker peoples of Morocco and Syria? Have they ever thought of giving moral support to the petition made by the Syrians against the mandates of France? Have they ever uttered a word of censure at the behaviour of the French and the Spaniards? No. For the truth is that Turkey and other Muslim countries are made the scapegoats of Islam. How much better it would have been for mankind, and for themselves as well, had the opponents of Islam, who always lie in wait, so to say, and are eager to find fault with Islamic countries, could see now and again how things are faring at home. If, instead of running down the Turks, the Christian missionaries thought of correcting their co-religionists, who are treating men as beasts, their words might carry some weight. In Turkey, Christian girls are living as servants, but in Kenya the vivid picture of the old horrible slave institution can be once more lived even in these days of so-called enlightenment. Is it not the truth if we say that the form may have changed but the substance is there? Christianity has been the greatest sinner in respect of slavery. It is the same even to-day. The sinister domination of the



'cotton power' of the slave days in America has transformed itself into the spirit of modern capitalism, which still dominates the 'wage-slaves' of industry. The form has changed; and the underlying ugliness of greed is still the same. The man in Kenya is called a tenant or a labourer, but the change of name does not change the spirit of the system. A tenant is *a slave* if he is treated like a slave—for a slave is a person who is the legal property of another or others and is bound to absolute obedience.

"But is it not strange, mockingly strange, that no notice has ever been taken of the miserable condition of one part of mankind, and that people at large know, or seem to know, that they are being kept in the dark purposely?"

"We ask, If Christianity and Christendom are, as the clergy will have us take them to be, synonymous terms, how is it that such treatment is being meted out to the Syrians, to the Moroccans and to the Kenyans? We for our part, do not expect that the clergy will ever extend their sympathies to a weaker people, except in one special case—when their own end is served, and that is invariably the case against an Islamic country—any Islamic country.

"On the people of Kenya the *Freedom* for March 1926 quotes Mr. Norman Leys, in his *Land Law and Policy in Tropical Africa* :—

"In no country in the world is the unskilled worker so heavily, the large landowner so lightly, taxed. Natives pay most of the 20 per cent. import duties. The European pays

a uniform poll-tax of a pound. An income-tax has fallen through, and there is no land-tax. The average able-bodied native pays in direct taxation for himself and his relations about a quarter of his total earnings. Taxation, in fact, is so high and wages are so low, and alternatives to wage-earning so completely absent, that other means of inducing natives to accept employment have been abandoned as unnecessary.

“ And says, on the camouflaged slavery :—

“ By every means in its power our Government has sought to make him work. It has made desertion a criminal offence. It has compelled every labourer to carry evidence of identity and proof of industry. It has co-operated with employers in fixing wages, which are now at about a halfpenny an hour—the lowest in the world. In one recent year there were over 3,000 prosecutions for desertion and other breaches of the law governing employees. And within the last twenty years the population has fallen by at least one-fifth.

“ And yet they say slavery does not exist !

#### “ CHRISTIANITY AND PROGRESS, AND ITS SHARE IN THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

“ Leaving aside the question as to whether or not the Muslims have done anything towards the advancement of the civilization and culture of the world, we think, in view of the above remarks, that it will not be out of place if we say a few words on the claim of the clergy who, let it be said to their credit, are never tired of dinning into our ears that European civilization is fundamentally Christian and that abolition of slavery is a Christian virtue. The ignorance of the early history of Islam which prevails in Europe is a great help to the clergy in this respect. This lack of

knowledge, again, is responsible for much of the misunderstanding between Islam and Europe. And if fortunately there is any, it has invariably passed through contaminated channels. The men at the helm of the State are as ignorant of the early history of Islam as is the man in the street. To aggravate the effect of this painful experience come the constant efforts of the clergy to take to themselves all the credit for all the improvements and material progress of the world.

“ In this connection we think we cannot do better than reproduce the remarks of our contemporary, the *Freethinker*, which in its issue of the 14th March 1926, while commenting on the couple of articles ‘ Christianity in the World ’ in the *Sunday Times* from the pen of Lord Oxford, has some telling remarks to make concerning the benefits showered upon humanity by Christianity. Lord Oxford, among others, ascribes the improvements instituted in the slavery institution, and finally its abolition, to Christian influence. We reproduce some passages in the hope that they will expose the hollowness of the claims made by the Christians :—

“ CHRISTIANITY AND PROGRESS.

“ Lord Oxford says : ‘ The real contribution which Christianity has made to the betterment of political and social conditions is to be found in the indirect influence, slow and fitful, but clearly discernible in the course of history, of some of its formulative ideas.’ That is a very vague statement, and one cannot be quite sure what is meant by it. If it means that the emergence of ideas of betterment gained ground among

Christians, and were often advocated by Christians, the statement calls for no particular efforts at disproof. In a society where the overwhelming majority make profession of belief in Christianity it would be strange indeed if good men and good ideas did not find place among them. But the same would be equally true if we took a society where any other religion was predominant. What we would like to know is what are the particular ideas of social and political betterment which the world owes to Christianity? We do not know how Lord Oxford would get over the very awkward fact that political and social betterment lie outside the aims of the New Testament and also of the earlier generations of the Christians. Neither the New Testament nor the early Christians saw in human society something to be tolerated, or avoided. The avowed aim in both cases was to keep oneself unspotted from the world, to live apart from it as something intrinsically evil, and to make the best that could be made of it, pending its speedy end with the second coming of Jesus Christ. And it was not until these notions were weakened by the pressure of circumstances that social and political improvement appeared to some Christian as desirable ends in themselves.

#### "SLAVERY AND CHRISTIANITY.

"There are one or two scientific instances mentioned by Lord Oxford which he would have us take as examples, direct or indirect, of the influence of Christianity. There is the case of slavery. It is admitted that progressive legislation in favour of the better treatment of the slave existed in the Roman Empire and also that the number of slaves decreased. And to that we may add the current ethical teaching that slavery was a mere political institution, but was contrary to the 'law of nature.' Lord Oxford also points out that even after slavery had died out, or had nearly died out, in Europe, it was revived in an incredibly brutal form *under Christian* auspices. Now here would seem to be a very good test of the value of the alleged beneficent influence of Christianity. From whatever causes, it is admitted that slavery had practically disappeared in Europe. Its reintroduction was entirely a Christian affair. It was reintroduced by Christian nations without anyone having the slightest notion that it was

religiously wrong. The famous Sir John Hawkins received the direct support of the English Government in the traffic, and, as though to emphasize the point that there was nothing religiously objectionable about it, the Government lent him a ship with the significant name of *Jesus*. In 1698 every British subject was authorized to raid any African village and carry off its inhabitants. The Christian nations of the world entered into fierce competition with each other for the control of the traffic. One of the principal uses of the victories won by Marlborough was to secure to English ships the monopoly of carrying slaves to the Spanish colonies, and it was estimated that in a single century no less than three million slaves were carried into the European colonies and settlements by British vessels. In this respect England was not worse than the other Christian countries; they were all fighting for the control of the slave trade. *The important point is that no one saw anything religiously wrong about it, although here and there moral objections were raised against it.*<sup>1</sup> The modern slave trade, more brutal, more bloodthirsty, with less to excuse it than any other form of slavery the world has ever seen, was introduced by Christians, fathered by Christians, and no Christian objection was raised to it. Of what value was Christian influence?

#### "CHILDREN OF GOD.

"Lord Oxford says the fact that it took so long to extirpate slavery shows 'how slowly the Christian leaven may work.' But it is not a question of the slow working of the Christian leaven, but the damning fact that after slavery had died out—from causes with which Christianity had nothing whatever to do—it was actually reintroduced and flourished under Christian auspices, and its final abolition was strongly opposed by convinced Christians. Slavery, says Lord Oxford, 'involves the negation of one of the cardinal doctrines of St. Paul—that Christ died for the whole human race, every member of which, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, became potentially a son of God.' . . . The belief that all men are children of God no more carries with it a condemnation of slavery than would the statement that all men are members of a division of the animal kingdom. There is no condemna-

<sup>1</sup> Italics are ours.

tion whatever of slavery, as an institution in the New Testament. The very phrase quoted recognizes its existence. Christians did not, then or later, question that all men might be equal before God, but that has never carried with it, of necessity, a social or political quality. The two first rules of Hawkins's slaver, the *Jesus*, was that the men were to 'Serve God daily' and to 'Love one another.' In the worst days of American slavery it was never questioned that every man, black or white, was a son of God. And so little was it thought that the spirit of Christianity was opposed to slavery that the slave party in the United States never ceased to appeal to both the Old and New Testament in support of the traffic. And the example to the rest of Europe in the liberation of slaves was set, not by Christian Spain, Christian Italy, or Christian England, but by revolutionary, anti-Christian France.

#### "CHRISTIAN AND PAGAN SLAVERY.

"Even at that we have not got a full view of the slavery that was instituted by Christians. Ancient slavery was theoretically an advance. Slaves were for the most part captives of war, and when prisoners were carried into captivity instead of being killed, it was, so far, an improvement. Christian slavery could have no such excuse. And while the slave-owner of antiquity enjoyed immense power over the persons of his slaves, the slave was not the hopeless, degraded being he became under the rule of those who accepted him as the son of God. The Roman slave might be a mechanic, a teacher, a philosopher, a poet. In the middle of the nineteenth century Christian Americans made it a penal offence to teach a coloured man to read or write. Professor Cairnes, in one of the wisest books ever written on the subject of slavery, contrasting ancient with Christian slavery, said :—

'In antiquity precautions were taken to prevent the slave from breaking his chains; at the present day (mid-nineteenth century) measures are adopted to deprive him of even the desire of freedom. The ancients kept the bodies of their slaves in bondage but they placed no restraint upon the mind and no check upon education; and they acted consistently with their principle, since a natural termination of slavery existed, and one day or other the slave might be

set free and become the equal of his master. . . . The education of slaves amongst the ancients prepared the way for emancipation. The prohibition of the education of slaves amongst the moderns has naturally suggested the policy of holding them in perpetual bondage.'

Professor Dill states the bold fact when he says that 'the slave class of antiquity really corresponded to our free labouring class.' And for downright cruelty the Christian slave traffic outdid anything the world has ever seen. When we find that 50 per cent. of the negroes brought from Africa died from their treatment before reaching their destinations, that scores at a time would be dumped into the sea, while still alive, that slaves were packed in ships in spaces no wider than would be allowed them in coffins, that the Church held its slaves to the last, that propagandist bodies such as the Soviet for the Propagation of the Gospel derived part of its revenues from slaves, the cant of assuming that Christianity helped to destroy slavery because it said that we were all children of God, is almost staggering. Renan well summed up the attitude and influence of Christianity in this connection in the following passage: 'Christianity never said that slavery is an abuse. . . . The idea never came to the Christian doctors to protest against the established act of slavery. The rights of men were not in any way a Christian affair. St. Paul completely recognized the legitimacy of a master's position. No word occurs in all the ancient Christian literature to preach revolt to the slave, nor to advise the master to manumission, nor even to agitate the problem of public law which has been produced among us concerning slavery. . . . Never is the master Christian who has Christian slaves counselled to free them; it is not forbidden even to use corporal chastisement towards them. If the movement which dates from the Antonines had continued in the second half of the third century, and in the fourth century, the suppression of slavery would have come about as a legal measure, and by redemption money. The ruin of the liberal policy and the misfortune of the times caused all the ground which had been gained to be lost.'

"The religious cant of our politicians is one of the most amazing things of these days. And of this the trick of attributing the abolition of slavery to a religion which in its sacred

books says never a word against it, which permitted, with its complete and official sanction, the revival of it, in the most frightful form known to history, which in America bred slaves for the market as one breeds cattle, which denied the slaves all civil and political rights, and which finally fought against the abolition of slavery in the name of its traditions and inspired teaching, to say that it led to the removal of slavery because it taught that we were all children of God, is enough to make one despair of human sanity, if not of human honesty."

In dealing with such debatable matters one wishes to be quite unprejudiced, and in quoting at such length from papers so widely differing in many important points as *The Islamic Review* and *The Freethinker*, I am actuated by the desire to present to my readers some of the more prominent modern ideas concerning slavery and the influences to which it has been subjected during various periods of the world's history by those who have had power. I do not claim to be in complete agreement with every expression in the above quotations for, when one is trying to get at the Truth, one should put that great end before any personal considerations. *All* views should be examined. I would give the greatest attention to the most reliable sources quite irrespective of creed or colour. There are numbers of atheists and "pagans" who speak the truth naturally, and would scorn to do anything else and, alas that it should be so, plenty of devout religionists who make a practice of deceiving themselves and their fellow-creatures by telling deliberate falsehoods. The one class does right because it is right, and without any



regard for Heaven or Hell, whilst the other does wrong in order to secure advantages for a particular form of religion, and also secure a place in a particular kind of Heaven.

The Bishop of London possesses a charm of manner which at once draws you to him and seems to invite confidence. When I first met him, he was busy entertaining a large party of poor old people in the beautiful grounds of Fulham Palace, and his guests were evidently attracted by his kindly personality and efforts to make them feel happy and at ease. At our second meeting I went rather fully into the reasons which had compelled me definitely to abandon modern Christianity, and I am sure his Lordship felt rather shocked when I told him that I had for many years given up all belief in the dogmas of Christianity *as being necessary to salvation*. He tried to make out that I was a "Deist" and not a Muhammadan, but this did not succeed at all. We also spoke of the alleged 30,000 girls in the Turkish harems, and I told him I would make inquiries. He admitted that he liked me, and I intimated that I was quite sure that he did not, *as a man*, really believe at the bottom of his heart that I was bound to be damned eternally for my inability to believe in the dogmas of Christianity, though I was aware that, *as a clergyman*, he was bound to pretend to think so. What I felt so strongly was the air of unreality prevailing; and I thought to myself: Here is a man who through the conditions of his profession is bound to subscribe to a certain

shibboleth and yet is convinced by the dictates of his reason and his conscience that the old-fashioned and discredited doctrine means nothing. As a parson he has to say: "This man cannot be saved because he does not think in a prescribed way"; as a man his conscience whispers: "This man is honest in expressing his convictions, and so long as he tries to be good to his neighbours, God will surely not damn him eternally." As with the clergy who are being found fault with for their poor sermons, so with the Bishops. It is not that they are not willing and hardworking, it is that *the materials they have to hand are of such a nature as to promote contempt rather than respect.*

During the interviews I could not help musing on the fact that over fifty years ago the then Bishop of London confirmed me either in Fulham or Putney Church, and here I was telling his successor how much I then resented having been *forced* into vows which meant nothing to me!

It is ignorance as well as wilful misrepresentation we have to contend with. I give two or three examples taken haphazard from questions which have been put to me recently. Only the other day a gentleman said to me in a London drawing-room:—"Of course the Muhammadans have a religion of sensuality and loose morality." He did not know at the time that I was a Muslim, but in a few minutes I furnished him with certain facts, and also suggested that it might be well to inquire into the morality of London and certain other places in this England of ours.

On another occasion a lady said : " Don't you believe in Allah or Muhammad, or something like that ? " Another question was : " You do worship Muhammad, do you not ? " These were all educated people who had no wish to belittle Islam. The silly questions were due to profound ignorance.

It is the Muslim spirit of Brotherly love which will ultimately rule the world, though the time may be far off as yet ; it is the spirit of true democracy which is ever making for the happiness of our fellow-men in all the countries of the world. There are over 220,000,000 of us on this earth, but our religion will never be advanced by warlike hostilities, for it is a religion of the Spirit which recognizes the presence of Allah, our Almighty Protector, in every place and at all times. No earthly intervention, no sacrifice, no propitiation are required. As Muslims we are resigned to His Will, and He will never fail us in times of trial or sorrow.

## CHAPTER VI

### INTOLERANCE AND AGGRESSION

I HAVE before me a book which has unquestionably aroused indignation in consequence of its unreasoning hostility towards Islam. It is from the pen of Miss L. H. Sawbridge and is published under the ægis of the Bishop of London, who says in the Foreword that he has read the first two hundred pages and that he commends it to the Church and Nation.

In order to explain the sort of spirit which is shown by the writer of this remarkable volume, I have made a few excerpts which I propose to criticize as we go along. The text of the first paragraph of the Foreword is encouraging, for we read :—

“ I have only had time to read the first two hundred pages of this beautiful little book, but I must not longer delay to write a Foreword commending it to the Church and Nation ” ; and naturally reading such words from the pen of the Bishop of London, I expected a treat instead of the disappointment which certainly followed my perusal of a very few pages.

“ See now this Vision of awful menace and solemn warning ! The Crescent of the false prophet is lifted over 222 millions of the human race, contending for

the rule of the nations against the Cross of Christ. That scimitar-like Crescent fitly symbolizes the world spirit, which gained adherents to its faith at the point of the sword: the faith that appeals to the worldly and sensual, through its impure mixture of religiousness and immorality. The lust of the world contends with the love of God."

All this is directed against Islam. The "scimitar-like Crescent" is certainly not more revolting than the symbol of the Cross which waved over the Crusaders during some of the most sanguinary and senseless wars of history.

"Then turn and see what this false Spirit of Islam did for Womanhood and the Home, for marriage and morality, when it defiantly bound again in perpetual decree, and in the very name of religion, those same immoral chains of servitude, degradation, and lust from which Woman's Redeemer had come to set her free. Hear the Koran ruthlessly cast aside that pure and lifelong union, and those noble God-given rights of wife and mother, which the incarnate Lord of Life and Love had ordained to be restored to the Life-bearers of humanity. Islam, claiming to be the world-religion, and to supersede the Christian Faith, sanctioned in its 'sacred book' the age-long sensual customs of the non-Christian East. . . .

"Up to the time of Muhammad, the Arabian woman enjoyed a great deal of social freedom, and her relationship with the other sex was healthier and franker than it has ever been since."

Whatever the writer means by the "age-long sensual customs," there appears to be no doubt in her mind that our Holy Prophet interfered with the "social freedom" of woman as well as with her "healthy and frank dealings with the opposite sex." The absolute reverse is, of course, the truth. Before Muhammad's time polygamy was rampant; there was no protection for women, because men were allowed to do exactly what they wished. Muhammad made a good beginning and limited the number of wives a man might have.

Again, we read:—

"See, then, the awful vision of the Churches of North Africa, of Syria, and Asia Minor, going down before the sword of Islam. . . . Gaze at the Crescent, literally supplanting the Cross above numbers of Christian basilicas and temples; as even to-day it glitters over the Church of St. John the Baptist at Damascus."

"Hear the Koran, the book of the false prophet—the only one of all the sacred books of the world's religions that claims to supersede and deny the Everlasting Gospel. . . ."

"The unutterable cruelties which Muhammad allowed his followers to inflict on conquered nations in the taking of slaves have indeed lasted to this day, and are countenanced by the Koran."

This is not true, for Muhammad never countenanced cruelty: he was renowned for his leniency and generosity, and invariably exercised that leniency when

victorious in his battles. There must be a certain amount of cruelty in time of war—it cannot be avoided. But why does not Miss Sawbridge turn her attention to the doings of the “Holy” Inquisition if she wishes to find fault? Here she will find accounts of gangs of cold-blooded miscreants systematically putting to death in calm, calculating, inhuman style hundreds of Jews and Muslims. All was done in the name of the gentle Jesus and for the glory of God! All under the ægis of the Christian banner! I would ask this question: In recent times has it been the Muslim or the Christian who has been most busy with the sword? Where do we find accounts of systematic burnings and torturings carried out by Muslims? We have to turn to Spain and other Christian countries to get a glimpse of such fiendish cruelty, and I for one should like to hear some sympathy expressed for victims other than those who happen to suffer in Eastern countries. During the reign of terror in a country far nearer to our shores than Turkey or Persia or Syria, when cruel murders were of almost daily occurrence, I failed to notice any very marked activity on the part of the Bishops or the Clergy nor any scathing denunciation of the murderers; but, the moment there is a rumour that someone in the East—several thousands of miles away—has been marrying too many wives or taking a few extra servants into his establishment, up rise the British clerics, positively snorting with righteous indignation. It is somewhat curious that these

worthy divines are more affected by far-distant outrages than they are by those which occur next door ; probably they think that charity does not begin at home, but in Armenia, or Persia, or Timbuctoo.

Whenever it is a case of Christians committing outrages on Christians or others, the clerics are silent. Gentlemen may be torn from their beds and assassinated in cold blood in the presence of their wives, and scores of heartless murders may take place throughout an almost adjacent country and no clerical tears are shed, because in their eyes, apparently, a crime does not become really wicked until it is committed by a Muslim.

I may be wrong, but it seems to me that the clerics are jealous because Muslims make better citizens on account of their sober habits, which render them less prone to crime. Christians are usually responsible for the introduction of spirits into a country.

The order is : first the missionary with his Bible ; next the trader with his whisky, rum, and gin ; and then the murder by the " poor heathen " who has killed the missionary, or someone else, in a drunken fit ; and last, but not least, the British punitive expedition !

It is hardly to be wondered at that the simplicity and purity of Islam is more readily understood by primitive savages than the complicated tangle of improbabilities advanced by teachers of modern Christianity—hence, I believe, the jealousy and anxiety felt in many quarters.



Again Miss Sawbridge writes: "Those who worship Allah and those who honour Odin are indeed brothers of the same family. They are alike animated by the same lust of aggression and sensuality, cruelty and lies."

The mention of Odin, the Norse deity, in the same line with Allah, is particularly offensive, and I cannot myself reconcile such conduct as this with a true Christian spirit such as we Muslims try to cultivate. What troubles me most is that this offending passage, as do all the others which I quote here, appears in chapter ix. which is well within the two hundred pages the Bishop claims to have read. The problem for solution is: "How could such an important Dignitary of the Church as the Bishop of London give his name to such a concatenation of unseemly attacks on a sister religion, professed and followed by such a large proportion of the British Empire?"

I could quote a great many more passages full of rancour and abuse, but I think I have perhaps given enough to show how much we have to complain of at the hands of overzealous and unscrupulous traducers.

Not wishing to run any risks by relying on my own unsupported opinion, I have shown this venomous little work to several people of sound judgment—both men and women—and the universal opinion has been that it is the work of a hysterical fanatic who would write or say anything to vilify Islam. The worst of it is that if anyone finds fault with the writer, she can always protect herself by saying—with perfect

truth—that she had the sanction of the Bishop of London, to whom I believe she has been acting as secretary !

Muslims are very long-suffering people ; it is part of their religion to make allowances for the failings of others, and I try to think what my own feelings would be if, in a moment of inconsiderate enthusiasm, I had used language half as offensive as that which has been allowed to find place between the covers of *The Vision and the Mission of Womanhood*<sup>1</sup>—for this is the title of the work I take exception to.

My one desire would be to make amends as far as possible, either by explaining my overheated language, or by a frank and free expression of regret that my religious fervour had caused me to exceed the limits of decency. But although I have called attention to the matter in quarters where Church authority is supposed to be concentrated, I have as yet received no apology or expression of regret. Both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London are well aware that the language used in this book is of such a character as to bring about bad feeling between law-abiding and loyal British subjects. My personal regret is the thought that many Muslims may imagine that Christians as a body are imbued with fanatical ideas ; of course this is not the case, but why does not the Church exercise its authority and forbid the issue of literature calculated to arouse religious bitterness ?

<sup>1</sup> Published by Wells Gardner, Darton & Co., Ltd., 3 Paternoster Buildings, London, E.C.4.

I do not suppose that Church prohibition could be legally enforced, but an interdiction would have the effect of showing that the spirit of toleration is still respected by the high Dignitaries of the Church.

Bearing on this important subject I now quote from "Notes" in the August number of the *Islamic Review*, under the heading of "Plain Speaking" :—

"We have many times before in these pages asked the British public, in the interest of the British Empire, to refrain from rousing the religious susceptibilities of the Muslim world, a world ever sensitive to insults to the personalities of the Prophets of God, whether Moses, Jesus or Muhammad, the absence of which might have brought Jews, Christians and Muslims to a true fellow-feeling.

"But the followers of the 'Prince of Peace,' when unable to give vent to their overflowing energy in destructive wars with deadly weapons, console themselves by pouring forth rancorous literature for the purpose of offending the religious sentiments of their fellow-men, whom, later on, they calmly invite to co-operate through better mutual understanding in the Leagues, Pacts and other Associations which have nowadays become a kind of eyewash. For this, of course, there can be no excuse. To handle the question on moral or spiritual grounds seems waste of time. Ears have they, but hear not; therefore we think the time has come to seek to arouse the better instincts

of our Western friends. For those who have any ambition of gaining commercial openings or seeing their trade flourish in Muslim countries must in their own interests cease from insulting the religious feelings of their customers, in whose eyes their prestige is dwindling and the price of their goods also depreciated.

“ Many factors contribute towards the lowering of the prestige of a nation or the lessening of its commercial standing amongst the races of an empire, but, in our opinion, the most potent factor of all is what we may call, to put it very mildly, Religious Indiscretion. Examples are only too abundant. Take one. There appeared on the advertising page of *The Western Mail*, Christmas number, 1924, a cartoon of Muhammad with an insulting and offensive phrase regarding ‘The Mountain and Mohammed.’ Again, later on, to the great annoyance of the Muslim public, there was published another irritating phrase in the news-column of *The Western Mail*, Perth, April 29, 1926, viz. : ‘Islam’s paradise lies in the shadow of the sword,’ which should have run : ‘Islam’s paradise lies at the feet of the mother.’

“ This last saying of the chivalrous Prophet shows the greatest respect towards the mother, who used to be a mere chattel in the Roman or Persian household, and of whom was said in the Judaistic theory : ‘Of the woman came the beginning of sin, and through her we all die.’ Woman, who was regarded by Solomon as unclean, and by Buddhists as a snare for temptation,

was to be respected in Islam and given the highest and noblest position that could be conceived.

“THROUGH COLOURED GLASSES.

“In the *Manchester Guardian* of the 19th June, 1926, appeared an article under the title of ‘The New Turkey and Islam,’ stating, greedily as it were and with a smacking of lips, that ‘The Government of New Turkey appears to be anxious to dissipate the impression in the Moslem world that the Turkish people, once the leaders of Islam, have lost the faith and become infected by Western scepticism.

“Now, leaving at present the question of the truth of the above statement, we find first of all a striking example of the ignorance of the average European about Islam. He has a sort of blurred image of our Religion in his mind, being of opinion, apparently, that the greatest evil has accrued from it. He seems unacquainted with the age before the Renaissance, when Mediæval Europe was a hotbed of religious fanaticism, and when true freedom of thought or speech or action were unknown. The free exercise of conscience, the free choice of will, and the evolution of mental faculties were so cruelly crushed under the intolerable persecutions by autocrat Popes and their myrmidons in the time of the Inquisition, that to the Westerner Religion and Freedom of Conscience seem poles asunder, never to be bridged by any system whatsoever. But a little study of the Religion of Islam must eradicate that erroneous idea cherished by the majority of mankind,

that Religion and Life are two different things ; that Religion and Politics are two separate systems, and that they could never merge one into the other.

“ It is not difficult to make it quite clear to an unprejudiced reader in the West, that Islam is elastic as well as ameliorating. Islam advances with the advanced thought of each age ; it is in perfect harmony with each new invention, with each scientific discovery ; it does not clash with evolutionary reformations in the fields of art and culture, and, moreover, it is a fact that Islam is not lethargic and Al-Qur-án , not a collection of cut-and-dried rules of ritualism or formalism. Its belief is linked to life, its thought is translatable into action ; it is free from fanaticism, it turns its back on intriguing and idle monks, and on celibacy (which is a curse, because unnatural) ; on foolish popular superstitions and on all forms of worship in which the mind does not correspond with the lips, i.e. when devoid of spirit, for Al-Qur-án says : ‘ So woe to the praying ones, who are unmindful of their prayers, who do good to be seen and withhold alms ’ (cvii. 4-7).”

It is lamentable that we should have to utter such reproofs, but unless there is remonstrance I fear there will be no recognition of the fact that we are being constantly insulted. It is no pleasure to make complaints, and I trust that it will not be considered that I have spoken too strongly in the foregoing pages. My animadversions on what nine people out of ten would regard as insulting language and insulting con-

duct generally may be severe, but I think they are deserved. I regret more than I can say that the high dignitaries of the Church do not openly discountenance all unseemly reference to Islam and all that savours of a narrow view of the situation.

## CHAPTER VII

### SPIRITUALISM AND THE OCCULT

SEEING that the Islamic Faith is so nearly akin to the Christian, it follows that whatever affects Christianity must be of great and absorbing interest to Muslims all over the world. It is true that we are still held apart by the dogmas, a belief in which orthodox Christians—led on, as of yore, by the weird doctrines laid down by monks and prelates over three hundred years after Christ's time—still think "necessary to salvation."

But it cannot be denied that we Muslims aim at exactly what all good Christians aim at, viz. duty to God and beneficence to all those fellow-creatures He has placed us amongst. We tread the same path to heaven, but we are unshackled, whilst they are trammelled by a host of mythical improbabilities and superstitions—dogmas in which they have no real belief and for which, in their hearts they have a very lively contempt. What greater handicap is conceivable? The passage through life is strewn with trouble and anxieties, and sorrows are on every side; how terrible it is to think that our Christian brothers and sisters are all the time weighed down by the



thought that "salvation," or the end of the journey, cannot be reached except with a firm belief in: (1) The Divinity of Christ; (2) the Trinity; (3) the two Sacraments; (4) the Atonement; (5) the Immaculate Conception! It must have a very tiring effect, for every step in the truly devout Christian's journey is hampered by constant effort to believe that which no educated person in his or her senses has any right to believe.

There is no doubt that in recent years Spiritualism and various forms of Psychic Research have been the means of investigating phenomena of which we have had but very vague ideas. At the present moment the Occult looms very large, and is without doubt exercising a very great influence over religious opinion. Of course that which is mysterious, recondite, and beyond the range of ordinary knowledge or perception—perceptible only by clairvoyance or clairaudience—has always run the risk of being dubbed "black magic," "necromancy," or "enchantment." Anything which has up to now defied explanation has been looked upon as "involving supernatural agency." But I do not consider the word "supernatural" quite the correct one to use. All these manifestations are perfectly natural; it is, and has always been, the fault of our insufficient knowledge or our very limited capabilities which kept things behind the veil. It seems to my limited intelligence that Science, that greatest ally of true religion, may be ever drawing aside that veil which obscures the affinity between

the so-called "living" and those who have passed away to that other sphere of which we know very little and of which we obtain only occasional glimpses. That there is absolute reality in these Spiritualistic manifestations is, I think, beyond question ; otherwise we should not find men of the highest scientific attainments, like the late Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Lombroso, as well as several perfectly honest and impartial men such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, so completely convinced as to the reality of their observations and experiences, all of which bear the strictest examination. When you come to the highest type of scientist, all thoughts of petty trickery vanish. A Darwin, an Owen, or a Huxley loves the blessed Truth which he collects from his careful scientific observation—there is no dragging red herrings across his line of investigation !

It gives me no little satisfaction to remember that for more than twenty years I have held that Science is the greatest ally to true religion, since Science aims at the Truth alone and without it there can be no religion, and all our efforts are nugatory. It is sad to have to admit that the Christian Church, having wandered far away from the simple laws and teachings of its Founder, set about making it almost impossible to lead an honest or truthful life. Using the dogmas above named as levers, the Church succeeded in terrorizing any of the human race unfortunate enough to come under its baleful influence ; people were fairly good, not *because* of the perverted Church of Christ,

but *in spite* of it. And this state of intolerable sacerdotal tyranny went on from the time Athanasius enunciated his ghastly and ridiculous creed. I do not say that the Church did no good at all; of course there were good people there as elsewhere, but by its intolerance and its holding up for worship a God of superhuman cruelty, i.e.—one who metes out eternal damnation in hell-fire as a punishment for a few faults committed in a few short years—it has earned contempt rather than praise. It certainly earned a reputation as the greatest enemy to scientific progress. In Spain the “Holy Inquisition” burned and put to the rack and every other conceivable form of torture thousands of Jews, Muslims, and Christians who differed from them in matters of belief. About three hundred years ago the Church in all its branches—Roman, Lutheran, Calvinist—denounced the Copernican system as being contrary to Holy Writ. The great astronomer, Galileo, was hauled before this same “Holy Inquisition” and was actually compelled, under the threat of having his eyes torn out with red-hot pincers, to pronounce publicly on his knees the following recantation: “I, Galileo, being in my seventieth year, being a prisoner and on my knees, and before your Eminences, having before my eyes the Holy Gospel which I touch with my hands, abjure, curse and detest the error and heresy of the movement of the earth.” And thus the Church forces the greatest scientist of his day to openly perjure himself in order to escape from a cruel death which the religious mis-

creants were prepared to inflict in the name of the gentle Jesus! It makes one perfectly ill to contemplate the barbarities, the cruel and useless wars, such as the Crusades, which have been perpetrated in the name of the Holy Prophet of Nazareth, who would have properly used the same or similar language of scathing denunciation he addressed to the Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites—the “blind guides”—could he have seen the grotesque edifice which was being raised in his name by monks and prelates over three hundred years after he trod this earth! When did he ever claim to be God? When did he tell us to think of the Trinity in any particular way in order to secure salvation? When did he ever say that an unbaptized person could not reach heaven? On what occasion did he affirm that but for his crucifixion the whole of the human race, both before and after his time, would infallibly be consigned to hell-fire? When did he mention the “Immaculate Conception” as being a miracle in which belief was essential?

It was after he had blessed the little children that one came to him and said: “Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” Jesus said unto him: “Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” When, on other occasions, Jesus said, “I and my Father are one,” he merely meant that he was at one with his Heavenly Father and would carry out His instructions and give the messages to mankind. I cannot reconcile

Christ's sayings with his Divinity. When praying in the garden he said : " O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done." Again, when on the cross, he cried with a loud voice, saying, " Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani ? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me ? " On neither of these occasions could Jesus have been under the slightest misapprehension. He was a man, and as such was crying out to his Maker for help—just as we all do in times of great trouble and anguish.

The question which is now exercising the devout and thoughtful is this : how far can we place reliance on accounts of communion with those who have passed away and to what extent will religion be assisted by accounts of happenings in the future state ? The Rev. Charles L. Tweedale has given the result of his investigations and observations respecting present-day spirit phenomena and the Churches ; in the pages of a most illuminating and interesting little brochure, from which I propose to freely quote, since the reverend gentleman is a very pronounced spiritualist who holds that the greatest possible advantages are to be reaped from constant communication with those in the spirit world.

Only the other day I was visiting Abbey House and inspecting the various spirit photographs and other wonderful exhibits which are to be seen on view there. I asked if it had ever been contemplated that possibly getting into touch with, say, notorious criminals of

Jack the Ripper or Crippen type might be managed with the object of finding out something which might enable us to deal more effectively with the criminally inclined whilst still with us on this side. It would appear that such attempts have not yet been made, but I am anxious to talk this matter over with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle when I next meet him. I find that one of the most cogent effects of spiritualistic belief is that it abolishes all fear of death, for the anticipation amounting to certainty, of meeting friends and relations immediately on arrival in spirit land takes away the sense of loneliness which causes so many people to dread the great change. I have myself experienced the very greatest relief and satisfaction from visitants from the other side, but in all the manifestations there is no question of employing a "medium"—all I have seen is very real, and not due to dreams or excitement.

I will now quote from the Rev. Mr. Tweedale:—

The spiritual body, or spirit body, is a real and effectual body, composed of matter in an extremely rarefied form, yet having substance, and so capable of entering into relations with grosser matter, and carrying human personality, capable of being seen, capable of being photographed. It is automatically freed at "death," and the person usually becomes fully conscious of the new life on or about the third day. People do not sleep or repose or remain apart from a definite body for ages. Let the bereaved take heart: their loved ones are alive and not very far away, and reunion after death is usually speedy. The mortal body of flesh is dead, and moulders away to dust, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. xv. 50), but the spirit body, equally real but of finer material, is more alive than ever.

Our loved ones are in full enjoyment of all their faculties ; memory and character are retained. They do not forget us, do not cease to love us, do not cease to minister to us, for the ministry of spirits is a blessed reality (Rev. xxii. 9 ; Acts xxii. 18).

How fatuous those Christians are who quote the authors of Ecclesiastes and the Psalms in such passages as " The dead know not anything " (Eccles. ix. 5), " In death is no remembrance of thee " (Psalm vi. 5), as Scripture proof that the " dead " are unconscious, or extinct as some say, until they are revived, or re-created, " in the last day," in face of the fact that Samuel, Moses, Elias and Christ all returned after the death of their mortal bodies and talked with mortals concerning coming events, as recorded in 1 Sam. xxviii. 14-15, Luke ix. 30, John xx. 17, will readily be perceived by all who cast aside the spectacles of bigotry and preconception.

Again he writes on page 17 :—

I have psychic photographs of my own relatives obtained many years after their " death." In one case the photograph is a splendid likeness of the deceased, instantly recognized by us all, but differing in detail from any existing photograph taken during mortal life. I have many such pictures. Some of them show clearly *recognized* forms of deceased persons of whom there has never been any photograph, sketch, or painting, made during their mortal life. In my own house we have experienced practically the whole range of psychic manifestation.

How absurd for the Church to say, " Science may some day give us evidence, but has not done so yet," blindly overlooking that already scientists *have* given evidence that not only shatters into bits the Church's teaching concerning the resurrection of the mortal body, but also throws a flood of light on spirit manifestation and existence which she has never even attempted to give.

Efforts are made to discredit this scientific testimony by saying that some scientists deny the phenomena altogether, or affirm that the phenomena and experiences are not spiritual, and do not prove survival. No amount of negative evidence can disprove positively ascertained facts. If the modern

evidence available does not prove the existence of a spirit world and human survival, then human testimony is no good for anything whatsoever, and *the records contained in the New Testament are equally useless as proofs of the spiritual or of human survival.*

It will invariably be found that those scientists who deny the phenomena *in toto* have never made an honest, unbiased, patient and extended investigation; while those who confess the phenomena, but doubt the evidence for spirit or survival, have usually not had a sufficiently extended experience or opportunity.

Mr. Tweedale complains that modern evidence for the reality of the spirit world and for human survival has not come from the Church, as it should have done, nor has it come from the ministers of the Church, with one or two exceptions, but from the psychic and the scientist. It is backed by a long array of names, including the most eminent scientists that the world has known, while there is a voluminous literature connected with and embodying it. Science is bearing witness to "the Communion of Saints," the "Resurrection of the Dead," and "the life of the world to come."

The Church is face to face with facts which simply annihilate the great errors which at present weigh her down. It is idle for her to cry, as she does, that revelation is closed, and that the external witness, having been given nineteen hundred years ago, is no longer needed—as idle as it would be for the scientist to say that succeeding generations need no verification, or demonstration, of previously ascertained scientific truths. It is idle for her to cry that the



modern external evidences of the reality of the spirit world are mere hallucinations of the senses, or tricks of the subconscious, and that modern investigators are hallucinated:—

If these things are hallucinations or tricks of the subconscious to-day, what proof has the Church that the Apostles, the Prophets, and all the holy men of old were not hallucinated or tricked by the subconscious? She has not a scrap. The time has come for plain speaking. If human testimony to-day cannot be trusted when it gives full accounts of the formation, handling and vanishing away of materialized spiritual beings, of the hearing of the voices of the discarnate, of the recognition of the faces, forms and voices of the departed, neither can any trust or confidence be placed in the testimony of the Prophets, of the Apostles, or in that of the members of the early Christian Church, for they were each and all human as we now are. If spectators of these phenomena are hallucinated to-day, what proof have we that the Apostles were not hallucinated in the inn at Emmaus or in the upper room at Jerusalem? Those Christians who rashly make the statement that no real evidence for the identity of a returning spirit can ever be obtained would do well to remember that this *applies equally to the identity of the arisen Christ*. It is about the most disastrous statement that a Christian can make.

How fatuous is the statement made to justify obstinate unbelief in the spiritual phenomena of the present day, to the effect that "revelation is closed, and the ancient witnesses were the subject of special powers which have now ceased." Christ does not say so. He says the very reverse: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater things than these shall he do" (John xiv. 12). Again, he says: "These signs shall follow them that believe" (Mark xv. 17). "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20). (The word translated "works" means "deeds of power or action," and the word rendered "signs" means "wonderful or extraordinary supernatural phenomena.") Nor do the Prophets say so. Joel says: "It shall come to pass in the latter days that I will

pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men dream dreams" (Joel ii. 30). "The latter days" cannot refer entirely to the Apostolic age, for nearly two thousand years have passed *since* that period.

This absurd statement that "revelation is closed" would spell the negation of human progress. As well might it have been declared that because the archangel Gabriel said to Daniel (Dan. xii. 9), "the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end," that there was to be no further revelation after his time (534 B.C.). The truth is, "God sends His teachers into every age with revelations suited to their growth."

In vain does the Church allege that modern spirit manifestations are all the tricks of deceiving devils. This is another disastrous statement for any Christian to make. If modern spirit manifestations are all the tricks of deceiving devils, how do we know, and what security or evidence have we that all the angels who appeared to the Prophets, the Apostles, and the Christ were the agents they professed to be, and were not deceiving devils masquerading as angels of light? How do we know that the appearances of the Lord Jesus after his death and resurrection, as recorded in the Bible, were not the work of a deceiving devil? Truly, those who use this wretched devil argument are hoist with their own petard. It is so illogical and destructive of the Christian position that one can only wonder at the fatal lack of logic and vision shown by those who employ it. If the dead cannot identify themselves to us to-day beyond all doubt, if they cannot be distinguished from deceiving devils, then there is no certainty that Christ was ever identified by the Apostles after his resurrection. Do those who oppose the facts of modern psychic phenomena wish to destroy the very foundations of Christianity? Let them remember that every argument they bring against these phenomena and experiences is an argument against historic Christianity and revealed religion, founded as they are on similar happenings.

This devil argument shows the practical bankruptcy of the religious opponents of modern psychic phenomena and investigation. With the words of the Christ I will answer: "If I, by Beelzebub, cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges" (Luke xi. 19). If modern communications and psychic phenomena are

the work of devils, whose work are all those recorded in the Bible ?

Having quoted thus freely from Mr. Tweeddale's work, I now turn to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's outspoken and straightforward evidence as recorded in his *Psychic Experiences*. He says that if a man can carefully read such first-hand experiences as Crookes' *Research upon Spiritualism*, Crawford's two books upon physical phenomena, and the chapters in Wallace's Autobiography which deal with the subject, and if a comparison of these documents does not convince him of external intelligence, then he claims that that man's mind is not well balanced, and his logical sense is wanting. Sir Arthur emphasizes his point and goes on to say :—

But once you have got so far as to realize that we are in touch with outside intelligences, then to ask their views upon religious truth is clearly the most natural thing in the world. In their answers to these questions lies the purified and inspired religion of the future, which shows how far mankind has in the course of centuries forgotten and misread the earlier message, losing touch with that communion which is the very essence of all things spiritual.

After describing séances in which he beheld his mother and his nephew and others, he writes :

I have clasped materialized hands. I have held long conversations with the direct voice. I have smelt the peculiar ozone-like smell of ectoplasm. I have listened to prophecies which have been quickly fulfilled. I have seen the " Dead " glimmer up upon a photographic plate which no hand but mine had touched. I have received through the hand of my

own wife notebooks full of information which was utterly beyond her ken.

I have seen heavy articles swimming in the air, untouched by human hand, and obeying directions given to unseen operators.

I have seen spirits walk round the room in fair light and join in the talk of the company.

I have known an untrained woman possessed by an artist spirit, and rapidly produce a picture now hanging in my drawing-room which few living painters could have bettered.

I have read books which might have come from great thinkers and scholars, and which were actually written by unlettered men who acted as the medium of the unseen intelligence, so superior to his own. I have recognized the style of a dead writer which no parodist could have copied, and which was written in his own handwriting.

I have heard singing beyond earthly power, and whistling done with no pause for the intake of breath.

I have seen objects from a distance projected into a room with closed doors and windows.

I have seen bright lights shooting round the room, or darting in long flashes from the medium's head.

If a man could see, hear and feel all this, and yet remain unconvinced of unseen intelligent forces around him, he would have good cause to doubt his own sanity.

People who have not gone into the subject may well ask : " But what do you get out of it ? How are you the better ? " We can only answer that all life has changed to us since this definite knowledge has come. No longer are we shut in by death. We are out of the valley and up on the ridge, with vast clear vistas before us.

Why should we fear a death which we know for certain is the doorway to unutterable happiness ? Why should we fear our dear ones' death if we can be so near to them afterwards ?

Am I not far nearer to my son than if he were alive and serving in that Army Medical Service which would have taken him to the ends of the earth ? There is never a month, often never a week, that I do not commune with him. Is it not evident that such facts as these change the whole aspect of life, and turn the grey mist of dissolution into a rosy dawn ?

You may say that we have already all these assurances in

the Christian revelation. It is true, and that is why we are not anti-Christians so long as Christianity is the teaching of the humble Christ and not of his arrogant representatives.

Every form of Christianity is represented in our ranks, often by clergymen of the various denominations. But there is nothing precise in the definitions of the other world as given in the holy writings. The information we have depicts a heaven of congenial work and of congenial play, with every mental and physical activity of life carried on to a higher plane—a heaven of art, of science, of intellect, of organization, of combat with evil, of home circles, of flowers, of wide travel, of sports, of the mating of souls, of complete Harmony. This is what our "dead" friends describe.

I have in my possession many works descriptive of spiritualism and of the wonderful results which have been achieved through its influence. It is futile to jeer at it, for there are now thousands of sensible persons who firmly believe in its benign control or agency. I must say, however, that a drawback seems to appear when we are told that a "medium"—professional or amateur—has to be invoked or employed before we can see or talk to the dear departed. To have a complete stranger called in on such a sacred occasion as an interview with a child or a parent seems rather weird. Of course I may be quite wrong, but it seems to savour a little of the priestly intervention held by some religionists to be necessary when approaching the Deity.

In all the manifestations which have occurred in my own experience there has never been any question of "mediums"; the appearances came at apparently quite unexpected times and were, I think, always attended by good results, and I can truly say that in

one or two instances what I saw brought me peace and happiness. The visions came at times when I was fully awake and in possession of my senses, and my theory is this—and, though the medical fraternity will mutter “illusion,” “delusion,” “hallucination,” I stick to it: I believe that at certain times, certain people are gifted with a sense in addition to the ordinary senses and that, when so provided, they can and do see real things which would be quite invisible but for the lifting of the veil at the exact moment when the transient glimpse into the Eternal is graciously permitted. I have, apparently with my natural eyes, seen wonders so amazing that I have never told about them to any mortal being. These appearances have shown themselves in the open country when I have been walking and quite wide awake so that they cannot be put down to dreams caused by lobster-salad, or to narcotics. I have made a practice of writing down all mysterious occurrences, with the dates and all important particulars. I have done the same with respect to messages I have received in some ancient language resembling the Hittite dialect, but as yet I have not found anyone who can translate any of these undoubted communications which have been transmitted to me in the clearest manner and *always in broad daylight*. Since they have been constantly transmitted to me by instantaneous flashes, and over a long period of years, I can only wait and hope that God may, in His mercy reveal the meaning some day; and I can feel happy in the thought that, whatever

the revelation may be, it will be for the best. In certain cases the figures of animate and inanimate objects indicated some future event which ultimately eventuated, and here, of course, no translation was needed; but in the vast majority of cases the hieroglyphs are quite unintelligible to me: some characters appear with greater frequency than others and seem to indicate a primitive kind of alphabet, and if any reader of these lines knows of anyone versed in early writings of Egyptians, Aztecs or Hittite characters, and will let me know, I shall be deeply grateful.

To conclude, I will say that, so far as I can see, Spiritualism need not interfere radically with any man's religion. Jews, Christians and Muslims need be no worse off by a belief in a nearer connection with the spirit world: I will go further and say that anything which induces reverence for sacred things and belief in a future state, can hardly fail to do good, and may save certain people from giving way to despair.

## APPENDIX I

### WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teaching. For further details please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking.]

**ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PEACE.**—The word "Islam" literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission; as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

**OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.**—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

**THE PROPHETS OF ISLAM.**—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, i.e. the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

**THE QUR-ÁN.**—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, but, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

**ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.**—These are seven in number: belief in (1) Allah; (2) angels; (3) books from God; (4) messengers from God; (5) the hereafter; (6) the measurement of good and evil; (7) resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted



by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in heaven. The state after death is an image of the spiritual state, in this life.

The sixth article of faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Pre-measurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

**PILLARS OF ISLAM.**—These are five in number: (1) declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) prayer; (3) fasting; (4) almsgiving; (5) pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine of Mecca.

**ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**—The Muslims worship one God—the Almighty, the All-knowing, the All-just, the Cherisher of all the Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the heaven and the earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

**FAITH AND ACTION.**—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith is of itself insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden, and none can expiate for another's sin.

**ETHICS IN ISLAM.**—"Imbue yourself with Divine attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

**CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.**—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels and leading him to the border of Divinity.

**THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.**—Men and women come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainment. Islam places man and woman under like obligations, the one to the other.

**EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.**—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

**PERSONAL JUDGMENT.**—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

**KNOWLEDGE.**—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

**SANCTITY OF LABOUR.**—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

**CHARITY.**—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is a man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.

## APPENDIX II

There is one Eastern custom which has often been pushed to the front and used as a sort of bugbear to frighten women. I refer to Polygamy. As a matter of fact, very few Muhammadans have more than one wife, and no one in any Western country need be in the least alarmed lest the introduction of Islam as a recognized religion should alter the laws there obtaining. It is not my intention to go into the question of whether polygamy might or might not be beneficial in certain instances, though it would be easy to show that its establishment might give rise to an enormous amount of extra trouble and annoyance in, say, England.

Polygamy, practised in the East from the earliest times, is pointed to by over-zealous, but unscrupulous traducers as a "Muhammadan institution." As we know, and as the

Christian missionaries also know, it is nothing of the kind. Muhammad broke up the idols, abolished infanticide, and effected innumerable improvements in the midst of heathenish surroundings in a country sunk in all the darkness of pagan idolatry, and *amongst his good works he placed restrictions on existing polygamy by limiting the number of wives a man might have in certain circumstances.* I think we should lose no opportunity of pointing out that, by regulating the marriage customs which then existed, the Holy Prophet was paving the way to higher ideals respecting morality. It was not to be expected that an Eastern custom of the most ancient date could be abolished all at once, but a great improvement was effected.

In this respect the Qur-án takes a decided step in advance of both the Old and New Testament, in neither of which, so far as I can remember, is there any limit placed to the number of wives a man may have except in the case of a bishop, who is expected to be the husband of one wife; though whether he is to be limited to one or compelled to have one does not appear to be clearly defined.

#### THE PROGRESS OF ISLAM.

In the matter of progress Islam stands alone; and Muhammad is the only one amongst all the Prophets who lived to see the complete success of his mission—the establishment of his great religion. Everyone who knows history is aware that no other Prophet—neither Jesus nor Moses, for example—left the world in possession of an established religion which they came to preach. Their religions were kept alive and spread abroad by others who came after them and mixed ancient and erroneous beliefs with their Creeds in order to make them popular with the masses of the people.

It is well known to our adverse critics that the progress of Islam has been both marvellous and unique on account of its beauty, rationality, and simplicity, and yet they do not hesitate to say that our Faith has been spread by the sword! As Muhammad was compelled in self-defence to fight many battles, they twist the truth in justification of their charges. Before I come to those charges I should like to bring home to my non-Muslim brethren a great Islamic truth that has characterized all our activities in the spread of Islam. No

*compulsion in religion.* Muhammad acted upon this principle and history cannot lay its fingers on a single instance where conversion to the Muslim Faith was secured by the sword during his lifetime. In his hour of greatest trial, when the whole of Arabia was at his feet, the Christians of Najaran, in Yemen, under the leadership of the Patriarch, came to Muhammad and received certain concessions, and no attempt was made to force them into Islam. The following appear amongst the concessions: "There shall be no interference with their Faith or observances; nor any change in their rights or privileges; no Bishop shall be removed from his bishopric; nor any monk from his monastery, nor any priest from his priesthood, and they shall continue to enjoy everything great and small as heretofore; no image or cross shall be destroyed; no tithes shall be levied from them nor shall they be required to furnish provisions for the troops." Similar concessions were made by the Prophet to the followers of Zoroaster in Persia. This noble example was followed by his successors Abu Bekr, Omar, Usman and Ali, and wherever Muslim rule went the Muslim Kings did the same. To-day Dr. Mingana has brought to light a charter given by an Abassid Caliph in the twelfth century of the Christian era—or five hundred years after the Prophet—giving similar concessions to the Christians.

"But," says Dr. Mingana, "could an English King, a Dutch Queen, or a French President write in the twentieth century a more tolerant charter of their numerous Muslim subjects?"

It will be interesting to quote from the letter of the Nestorian Patriarch to the Bishop of Merve:—

"The Arabs, to whom God has given at this time the government of the world, do not persecute the Christian religion, but favour it, honour our priests and the Saints of the Lord, and confer benefits on churches and monasteries."

This has been the attitude of Islam to non-Muslims. It reminds me of the well-known charge against Islam, coming from the zealous Christian missionaries, that wherever Muslims went they proposed three alternatives to the conquered people:—

- (1) Acceptation of Islam.
- (2) Payment of Poll-tax.
- (3) Penalty.

Every government brings its subjects under taxation, and anyone not paying the tax must suffer for disobedience. Under Muslim rule a Muslim has to pay certain taxes and render certain services; he has to pay the tithe and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of his net annual profit. He comes under the conscription and has to provide military costs when there is war.

Islam has always been beneficent to its non-Muslim subjects; it exempts them from the said taxes and the military contribution, and in lieu of this asks them to pay a very small "Poll-tax." Failure to comply brought its penalty, and possibly the extreme penalty in time of war.

Could there be more humane treatment of conquered countries? But our over-zealous critics distort facts as regards this and many other matters.

I would like to say a word as to the battles of the Prophet. For full thirteen years the Muslims were subjected to relentless persecutions in Mecca. The Prophet and his followers fled for life to Medina, which is over 150 miles from Mecca, but the enemy would not leave them alone in their refuge. They came to attack them within a year, and the first three great battles were fought in the very locality which will show whether the Prophet was an assailant or defendant. The first battle took place at Badr, a place about 120 miles from Mecca and 30 miles from Medina; the second battle took place at Ohad, 12 miles from Medina; and the third was the siege of Medina by the enemy from Mecca. Does not this seem to indicate that the Holy Prophet was on the defensive throughout?

This brought forth a state of war in the whole country, and the offensive and defensive was taken on both sides till ultimately Muhammad was victorious and entered Mecca a conqueror who obtained a bloodless victory and earned the admiration of the whole world by his magnanimous and magnificent example when he freely forgave the 10,000 foes who were entirely at his mercy.

In the last few years of his life the Prophet sent his envoys to Persia and Syria, the latter country being then under Christian rule. The object of this visit was to invite these countries to adopt Islam in these words: "Ye people of the Book, come to terms which are equitable between yourselves and ourselves, and these terms are that we should not worship other than Allah and should not associate other gods

## 156 ORIGINAL CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

with Him. If you accept, we are one ; if not, we have given you the message and God is our witness." This peaceful message only aroused opposition, and the envoy was insulted and ill-treated, some of the party being killed. This event was followed by preparation for a Christian invasion of Arabia. The Holy Prophet prepared for defence, and when his army reached the border he passed away, but the defence was carried on after his death.

The breaking out of hostilities to which I allude resulted in the subjugation of Syria and Egypt. In the days of Omar, the second Caliph, the Persian armies invaded Muslim lands and this led to a series of engagements, and on each occasion Omar used to say : " God created a wall of fire between us and the Persian hosts so that the enemy may not trouble us." This seems to show how averse he was to wage war. Persia was conquered in Omar's days and Islam reached to the borders of India within the next few centuries. It was in the time of Subaktin, the King of the Jhazni, the then capital of Afghanistan, that Jaipal, the Indian King, invaded Afghanistan and defeated the Muslim armies, taking possession of a portion of Afghan territory. In retaliation Mahmud, the son of Subaktin, invaded India, and a portion of India then passed under Muslim rule. Ultimately the whole country came under the same domination but, be it said to the credit of Islam, there was never any attempt to force the religion on the conquered people.

This shows clearly that the maxim " Let there be no compulsion in religion " has been carried into effect.