

THE  
**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**  
OF

The Rt. Hon. Al-Haj Lord Headley,  
(El-Farooq)

DELIVERED ON

**25TH DECEMBER 1927**

AT

The All-India Tabligh Conference  
DELHI.

Ash-hadu an laillaha il-Allah wa Ash-hadu anna Muhammad-an  
Abd-hu wa Rasuloh.

A'oozu-billahi minash-Shaitan-ir-rajeem.  
Bismillah-ir-Rahman ir-Raheem.

Al-hamd-u-lillah-i Rabbil 'Alameen  
Ar-Rahman ir-Raheem  
Malik-i Yaum-id-deen  
Iyyaka na'budu wa Iyyaka nasta'een  
Ihd-i nassarat al mustaqeem  
Sirat-al lazeen-a ana'mta a'laihim  
Ghair-il maghzoob-i a'laihim wa lazzalleen.      Ameen.

*President of the Reception Committee and Brethren-in-Islam,*

I feel very much honoured by having been selected to preside over this important gathering of my co-religionists and this feeling is accentuated by the knowledge that there are many other Muslims who are far more worthy than myself to occupy the chair, though possibly there may not be many who are more zealous in wishing to see our Faith better understood and appreciated than it is at present.

I must thank you for all the kind words that have been expressed about me, and I wish I could deserve them. How happy I feel when I find myself among my brethren-in-Faith. It was my long desire, since I declared my faith in Islam, to see my brethren and make personal acquaintance with them; and how obliged I feel to the Conveners of this Conference the happy occasion of presiding on deliberations so dear and near to me.

It is not because I believe in Islam, that I wish to see my beliefs shared by my fellow-beings, but because I consciously believe that real human progress and true fellow-feelings for all the human race can only be achieved through the spread of Islamic principles. Everyone in the world looks for peace, and yet peace is nowhere. Nations against nations, and countries against countries are rising everywhere. Race, colour, country and language prejudices are sapping the very life of humanity. Materialism, and in its train, narrow-mindedness, avarice, jealousy, hatred—in short, all that destroys the finer side of human mind, is blackening the atmosphere of the world. Civilisation, with all its modern achievements, though a blessing of God, has become an instrument of oppression and persecution. Religion, though it came everywhere from the Lord to bring the snarling elements of humanity into one harmonious whole, has unfortunately become the very source of discord and dissension. Religion at present is the chief cause of all that is disturbing the peace of the human race. It is not because religion was so in its nature, but because it has become now, in almost every quarter, wrongly reduced into a few dogmas attended with ceremonials and rituals.

Religion, some think, consists in saying prayers in certain forms, in invoking Divine help attended with offerings and various forms of penances, sacrifices—and these only to get more favours from the Lord in mundane affairs. Religion, also, some people believe, consists in extolling certain personalities and demanding universal allegiance to their national heroes, because they regard them as the main intermediary between man and God for human salvation. Others harp on vicarious redemption through their own Lord. Again, people generally believe in certain national manners, fashions and modes of life as part and parcel of their religious beliefs.

If this is the conception of religion, it can not bring even two nations into harmony, as no two men would look eye to eye in these matters. Every nation has got its own heroes. Each is tenaciously attached to her own ways of life, habit and the way of thought, though they may not be of much importance to her faith. Religion, if from God, must soar above all prepossessions. It should not interfere with

the habits of the people, if they are not injurious to its truths or damaging to morality in general. It should inculcate respect and reverence to all religious teachers, prohibiting speaking ill of others' national heroes. It should not thrust upon its converts such manners and customs that are stranger or distasteful to the new comers under its flag, unless it is necessary to work out its basic principles. With all possible efforts we will not see one religion, one way of life, and one mode of thought, accepted by all. Different creeds and cults must exist, till the world sees its last day, as declared by the Quran itself.

A true religion, therefore, should not come to fan the fire of hatred and disaffection based upon such racial prepossessions, on the other hand, it should create such broadness of mind among its followers, as may lead them to tolerate others' differences in the affairs of this life. Religion should also inspire such conduct of life among its adherents, as may create amity, peace and good understanding between the followers of various persuasions. In short, it must inculcate purity of heart and action that may invite others to accept their faith.

Such a religion I found in the Quran and in the teaching of the Prophet Muhammad, (may peace be upon his soul). It is Islam. It has not been named after the name of a country, race or a personality, as such a name would rouse prejudices. Islam means peace, and it came to establish peace in the world. Islam means "obedience to Divine Commandments, love and affection for the human race." So said the Holy Prophet when speaking of Islam. He said:—"He is a Muslim, from whose hand and tongue no one suffers." In fact, Divine Commandments given in the Quran in themselves lead to the same end. To serve God in Islam is to serve humanity in general. Love of God is the chief theme of every religion. But the Founder of Islam gives to it a new and true meaning. "Do you wish to love God?" said the Holy Prophet, "then love his creatures." Muhammad, (may God continue to shower His blessings upon him) did not allow one's love to be confined to his country or race, but enlarged its scope to cover the whole human race. Patriotism, which in its degraded form means strengthening of one's own nation at the expense of others, was absolutely unknown to him. He believed and preached universalism. His

family was the family of God, namely, the whole human race; and his sympathy went equally to black and white. If he preached monotheism in its purest form for the first time to the world and made it a corner stone of his religion, it was not because his God was jealous of other deities—Allah was too above to take notice of it, but because multiplication of divinities and allegiance to tribal gods would create in addition to intellectual, moral, and spiritual degradation, that aloofness in one's mind with racial pride and narrow-mindedness against others, which would destroy the very superstructure of human fraternity, and dismember the family of God. The Quran, in its very beginning, speaks of one God—the Creator and Sustainer of all human race—Who makes no difference between man and man, Whose blessings reach every person without distinction of race and colour, Who has potentially equipped every man with the same capabilities and capacities, and has given equal chances to work them out, though man's inordinacy and his selfishness often come in the way. It should not be forgotten that belief in the Oneness of God was inculcated in Islam, chiefly to establish equality between man and man. That would be the day of real rejoicings for the whole human race when this Muslim principle of equality will be universally accepted. It will uproot all racial, religious and personal prejudices. For the same purpose, the Quran,<sup>1</sup> in most emphatic terms, declared that the whole human race was one family of God, and if they differed in their beliefs and persuasions, the difference arose from man's tampering with the original religion. Otherwise, all religions in the world came from the same Divine source, and brought the same truth. Their teachers were inspired by the same God, and they drank from the same Divine fount. This belief would disarm all ill-feelings towards the teachers of other religions, though the teachings which the world now ascribes to them may differ from each other. The Muslims, therefore, believe that every religion before Islam was, in its pristine purity, Islam—the religion of Divine Commandments and human obedience; and if the purity of their teachings suffered from human interpolations, it should not allow us to speak evil of those religions and their teachers,

because those teachers were the true Messengers of Allah, and were entitled to our respect and reverence.

In this connection I may as well refer to another lesson of peace given in the pages of the Quran, which is badly needed nowadays, especially in India. If every religion originally came from the Divine source, as we Muslims believe, their houses of worship should be equally sacred to all; and the devotees, when in devotion, ought not to be disturbed, though they may differ in their mode of worship. For this reason, the Quran clearly enjoins upon Muslims to police all houses of worship. A Muslim,<sup>1</sup> under the teachings of the Book, belongs to the force of Allah that must protect convents, synagogues, churches, mosques, and every other shrine of God. He must fight even against his own co-religionists, if the latter intend to damage any place of worship. In obedience to these Divine injunctions, the Holy Prophet Muhammad prohibited Muslims from interfering with others' worship, though in some cases they presented polytheistic scenes, as we read in the concessions<sup>1</sup> given by him to the Christians of Nijran.<sup>2</sup> Abu Bakar, the first Caliph, ordered that the soldiers should not disturb non-Muslims in their worship, and should pass by their places of worship without any noise.

Muslims were also enjoined not to rob others' houses of worship of their sources of income; they were rather commanded to provide such houses with the means of their maintenance, and the Muslims of the early days obediently observed these injunctions.

Before I speak further of other virtues and verities of Islam, so necessary to human progress, allow me here to put one question to those who are interested in the peace of the world in general, and of India in particular. Do not the very lack of such teachings in some of the religious codes, and the disregard of these Quranic teachings by some of the Muslims, lie at the root of the present evil here? Some Indian Nationalists hold that the elimination of religious element from India is the only

<sup>1</sup>22.40—Those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say that Our Lord is Allah. And had there not been Allah's repelling some people by others certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered

<sup>2</sup>Cf. "House Divided" and "India in the Balance" chapter xi.

remedy of the present trouble. Perhaps they are right, when religion, as I said before, becomes confined to the observance of certain rituals and rites, and to the worship of certain national heroes, with belief in such moral or ethical code, as got its rise under local conditions, but if religion creates in us such broad-mindedness and liberal ideas as I was speaking of, will not religion in itself be a most efficacious and effectual factor in cementing those in unity that are at daggers drawn with each other? You may belong to any faith, you may follow any persuasion, but if you believe in the unity of God in the Islamic sense of the word, if you believe in the equality of man in the way I have explained in the light of the Quran, and if you respect others' religious teachers and their shrines; in short, if you treat others with toleration and humane feeling, as the Quran requires of a Muslim; will there then be any need for any Unity Conference in India or elsewhere? Purity of heart and honesty of purpose, attended with good actions can only lead to that happy end.

With my humble studies of different religions, as they now exist in the world, I may say that Islam, and only Islam, can work wonders in this respect. It is Islam that can create that *via media* of mutual good understanding and fellow-feeling among the adherents of different cults and creeds, that will disarm evil propensities in man to outrage others' feelings. It is the change of hearts that can stop fanaticism; and it would be better if the Quranic injunctions in this respect were more acted upon by all people. The whole world may not or perhaps will not come under Islamic denomination, but it must accept such Islamic principles as I was dwelling upon, to secure universal peace. Spread of religion after all is the spread of its principles and their acceptance by others in action. Hence, as I said before, if I am interested in the "Tabligh" of Islam, it is because in the spread of its principles I see the spread of peaceful life and progress of human society. The whole teachings of the Quran and the Holy Prophet teem with such injunctions and orders and tend to this end, for they destroy all hatred and malice in the human mind and inspire it with feelings of kindness and charity towards others. In short, security of peace in its every phase, is the chief aim of Islam, but I have

here only dealt with that aspect of it which is so urgently needed at present, to stop religious intolerance and racial hatred. To-day we are deliberating on the question of "Tabligh," and I may say that if Islam is preached with the observance of the above-mentioned Islamic ethics by its preachers it will endear Islam to others and will do great good in the world. It will also produce a great harvest.

I also say that Islam has proved to be the greatest factor in the world to bring in progress and civilization. If human progress in the real sense of the word does consist in the working out of what is reposed in our nature to our best advantage and in reducing forces of nature in general to human service, then I can safely say that Islam came with the same message to humanity. Religion before Islam hardly meant more than devotion, offerings, sacrifices and penances, and gave a few lessons of morality and spirituality. Islam no doubt enjoined upon us various forms of devotion to God, but made it a means to uplift man to the height of progress. The Holy Book in its very beginning declares that Divine revelation came to enable man to work out his<sup>1</sup> latent faculties, and to bring out what is best in him. It also declared that man was the vicegerent<sup>2</sup> of God on earth and ruler of all the forces of nature on His behalf. This is the main object of revelation from the Above as given by the Quran. The Book lays down in different ways and in different stresses all such means that may enable us to achieve that grand object. To reduce nature into human service at a time when Islam appeared, was not an easy task. It was unimaginable, nay, abhorrent to human feelings in many quarters, as the greater portion of the human race at that time was the worshippers of the elements. Various manifestations of nature had been deified and were the object of human adoration. It was, therefore, a sort of sacrilege to think of bringing time-honoured gods to serfdom. But the Quran brought a new Gospel. It declared that whatever was in the heavens and the

12.5—These are on a right course from their Lord and these it is that shall be successful. (The Arabic word *falah* used in this verse means literally "to furrow out hidden things.")

22.30—And when your Lord said to the angels I am going to place in the earth one who shall rule in it.



earth<sup>1</sup>—the sun, the moon, the stars and the planets, the clouds the rivers, the trees, etc., were created to serve humanity. In another place the Quran pronounced that nothing in the universe was in vain,<sup>2</sup> but it was for human use. But attaining of this grand object needed diffusion of knowledge and encouragement of Scientific researches which were unknown at that time. The Quran, therefore, made it an act of virtue to ponder<sup>3</sup> over all the things in nature with a view to discover their use to the human race. The Holy Prophet has been reported to have prayed; “God: show me the properties of things.” No doubt there was some sort of knowledge in the world at that time, but it had become the monopoly of the “chosen few.” In the West it was under the ban of the Church, and the treasures of old lore had been condemned to some archives of the priestly class. It was their interest to keep people in utter ignorance, and every land-mark of culture in the West excited stronger opposition from the Clergy. Human mind became totally obscured everywhere, and its intellectual faculties benumbed. But Islam came to its rescue. The first revelation<sup>4</sup> to the Holy Prophet in the cave of Hira pronounced that God now intended to bring human race to honour and greatness, and that he would do it by means of reading and writing. He would teach man things unknown to him. What a wonder! The illiterate Prophet brought the message of literacy and of new knowledge—modern Sciences—to the world which deemed it a religious duty to grope in the darkness of ignorance.

The Prophet, who himself did not know how to read or write, declared to the world that their greatness lay in cultivating the art of reading and writing and in the spread of knowledge. No other Prophet before Muhammad emphasised the importance of knowledge. But Muhammad made it incumb-

<sup>1</sup>31.19—Do you not see that Allah has made what is in the heavens and what is in the earth subservient to you and made complete to you His favours outwardly and inwardly?

<sup>2</sup>3.190—‘Our Lord Thou hast not created this in vain.’

<sup>3</sup>3.190—Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth.

<sup>4</sup>Chap. 96—In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful. Read in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot. Read and your Lord is most Honourable Who taught to write with pen. Taught man what he knew not.

ent on every Muslim to acquire knowledge.<sup>1</sup> In his judgment, he said "Ink of a learned man was more valuable than the blood of a martyr."<sup>1</sup> He also said that "To pass one night in contemplation for the benefit of the human race was more meritorious than prayers and devotions of many a night."<sup>1</sup> But the human race was labouring under various disabilities. False beliefs and wrong notions as to the aptitude of man had strangled all his aspirations. If one part of the world believed that man was born in sin,<sup>2</sup> that there was nothing in him but evil and wrong and that he was the child of wrath and incapable of obeying any law, and, therefore, unable to make any progress; the others<sup>3</sup> thought that there was nothing but trouble and tribulation for the human race in this life and that his salvation lay in his annihilation.<sup>3</sup> Hindu Rishis believed in a similar philosophy. I do not say any word in their depreciation, but I believe that such theologies or philosophies can not help human progress. The lethargy that had overtaken human race for centuries before the advent of Islam, fortifies me in my beliefs. Again, people were not only uncertain of their aptitudes for walks in higher life, but self-reliance and confidence in reaping fruits of one's own labour was also doubtful. Prosperity of life in their view, came to people as if under a lottery played under the wheels of fortune. Good or evil was not an acquisition, but a thing pre-ordained. Man was not regarded as a *maker* of his own life and fortune, but a plaything in the hand of Nemesis and Fate. The doctrine of Transmigration of Soul, though attractive to some minds for its plausible philosophic beauties created a similar sort of psychology in matters of action. And still a greater factor in paralysing human energies was the principle that good beliefs, beliefs alone and not actions, were sufficient to bring salvation to man. Could there be, gentlemen, any progress under such beliefs and notions, under such theology and philosophy? There could be no motive for self-application and no incentive for work. If religion, I say, comes from the Creator of the Universe full of blessings for man it should first falsify all those ideas that had retarded the course of human

<sup>1</sup>Sayings of Muhammad.

<sup>2</sup>Church Belief in the West.

<sup>3</sup>Budhists' Belief.

progress in the days I am speaking of. Could God be pleased and glorified by our singing hymns and performance of devotions in different forms, if the whole work of His creation for the benefit of humanity remained unaccomplished. True religion in my humble opinion would consist in arousing man from his lethargic conditions and by energising his faculties so as to make him active in life and thus enable him to appreciate the Creator's blessings and gifts and use them for the benefit of his fellow-beings. Such a religion was brought by the Quran.

It is now a scientific truth that the whole nature with its manifestations is claimed by the law. The secret of their service to us lies in our knowledge of the law and in our abiding by it. Could our knowledge of the various laws governing the forces of nature be of any avail, if we believe in the multiplicity of Godhead? The law of one deity would go against the will of another deity, and he would counteract it, as the Quran alludes to.<sup>1</sup> We read of the same struggle among various deities in the legends of pantheistic religions of ancient Greece and India. Different wishes of the various gods would create a sort of chaos if we believed so and not cosmos, and our researches in scientific realm would be futile. Under these conditions Islam came to reform human race and began to disabuse its mind of these false notions of wrong beliefs. It declared that the whole universe was under the realm of law, and that the source of the law was no other than its own Creator.<sup>2</sup> For the same reason the Unity of God was emphasised. It was declared that the government of the universe was not in many hands, but was in the hands of one God Whose laws and ways of the rule were unchangeable.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>21.22—If there had been in them any gods except Allah they (the heavens and the earth) would both certainly been in a state of disorder.

<sup>2</sup>3.1-4—In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful I am Allah the best Knower.

Allah, there is no god but He, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting by whom all things subsist.

<sup>2</sup>2.258, Ayat-ul-Kursi—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 anything out of His knowledge except what He pleases; His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth and the preservation of them both tires Him not and He is the Most High the Great.

<sup>3</sup>33.62—Such has been the course of Allah with respect to those who have gone before; and you shall not find any change in the course of Allah.

Resignation<sup>1</sup> to His will, and implicit obedience to His law, which Islam literally means, would bring happiness and felicity to human race. His laws are no other than what have been termed as laws of nature in scientific phraseology. Could any atheist take any exception to such a religion? Belief in the realm of law by which the whole of nature abides, and if the existence of the law necessitates the existence of the law-giver, it involves belief in the existence of Allah. Man, it was declared, was not born in sin, but was Muslim<sup>2</sup> by birth, namely, capable of following the law, no matter whether he was born in a Muslim or a non-Muslim house.” It was also stated that man was made of the goodliest fibre,<sup>3</sup> he possessed wonderful capacities. His domain of progress knew no bounds. No doubt he as well possessed a low nature;<sup>4</sup> but if he obeyed the laws of God and did actions on the right lines he would reap the full reward of his labour, as no action remains unrewarded with the Lord.<sup>5</sup> To destroy the false belief as to the “chosen class,” it was declared that all the members of the human race were like unto each other.<sup>6</sup> Everyone was capable of the achievements that fell to the lot of others. One could do what others have done. Thus, barriers of creed, colour, and descent, were removed. Virtue and good actions only were made the criteria of greatness.<sup>7</sup> It was inculcated in the clearest possible terms that actions springing forth from good beliefs carried weight with God. Belief unattended with actions was no good. It was clearly

12.112—Yea whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good to others he has his reward from his Lord and there is no fear for him nor shall he grieve. ..

<sup>2</sup>Sayings of Muhammad.

<sup>3</sup>Chapter the Fig—Consider the fig and the olive, and Mount Sinai and this city made secure, certainly We created man in the best make. Then We render him the lowest of low, except those who believe and do good so they shall have a reward never to be cut off. Then who can give you the lie after this about the judgment? Is not Allah the best of judges?

<sup>4</sup>Chap. “the Fig.”

<sup>5</sup>Chap. “the Fig” (*Ibid*).

618.110—Say I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your god is one God therefore whoever hopes to meet his Lord he should do good deeds and not join any one in the service of his Lord.

749.13—Surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you the most careful of his duty; surely Allah is Knowing, Aware.

taught that nothing but good would come from the Lord—the fountain of all goodness.<sup>1</sup> Evil<sup>2</sup> was man's own make, and followed his own wrong actions. He was not predestined to lead one sort of life or the other. He was a maker of his own destinies, and an engineer of his own life. Good or evil, felicity or adversity, were his own acquisition.<sup>3</sup> He was informed that there was no preordination of good or evil, but their pre-measurement by the Lord. He shall find out himself those Divine measurements in the Book of God and through his own efforts, and mould his conduct and life according to his research. To keep him on the right path he was warned that his actions and motives—hidden or manifest<sup>4</sup>—were within the cognizance of Allah. Him he shall have to account for his words and deeds, and be rewarded accordingly. Even a little good or evil will not pass without their fruit.<sup>5</sup> Freedom of action<sup>6</sup> and independence of judgment was made a great virtue, without which the Quran declared man to be a brute whom others would lead by the nose. He was asked to make use of his own intellect,<sup>7</sup> and accept nothing in any human department unless it was tested on the anvil of reason, experience and observation. We were advised to make constant observations<sup>8</sup> in the working of nature and

14.79—Whatever benefit comes to you O man it is from Allah and whatever misfortune befalls you it is from yourself and We have sent you O Muhammad to mankind as an Apostle and Allah is sufficient as a witness.

<sup>2</sup>42.30—And whatever affliction befalls you it is on account of what your hands have wrought and yet He pardons most of your faults.

<sup>3</sup>2.286—Allah does not impose upon any one soul a duty but to the extent of its ability; for it is the benefit of what it has earned and upon it is the evil of what it has wrought.

<sup>4</sup>2.284—Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is Allah's; and whether you manifest what is in your minds or hide it Allah will call you to account according to it.

<sup>5</sup>99.6-8—So he who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it.

<sup>6</sup>67.22-23—What! Is he who goes prone upon his face better guided or he who walks upright upon a straight path?

Say He it is who brought you into being and made for you the ears and the eyes and the hearts: little is it that you give thanks.

<sup>7</sup>30.24—Most surely there are signs in this for a people who would hear.

<sup>8</sup>Chap. III. Section 20—Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth there are signs.....

30.65—Most surely there is a sign in this for a people who would listen.

30.28—Thus do We make the communications distinct for a people who understand.

10.24—Thus do We make our communications for a people who reflect.

its manifestation,<sup>1</sup> and study history of past nations by visiting various countries<sup>2</sup> and draw lessons to guide us in the conduct of our life.

Wrong conception of prayer and sacrifices on one side, and belief in vicarious atonement on the other, damped human zeal for work, and weakened the sense of responsibility in him. Prayers, Islam therefore declared, were of no avail if unattended with good striving. Do your utmost to achieve the object you are in need of, and then pray to your Lord for help: a lesson which we have been ordered to repeat in our five daily prayers.<sup>3</sup> God, it was assured, would come to us if we take one step towards Him;<sup>4</sup> He would come running to us, if we walk towards Him: but the movement should always precede from us. And, going towards the Lord does not only mean going to a place of worship, but subordinating<sup>5</sup> ourselves to Divine laws and ways in activities. Prayers are no doubt one of the means to achieve success, but God of the Quran, in the most unequivocal terms, proclaimed—The prayers of one who is ungrateful to His gifts, will invite no response.<sup>6</sup> Allah will not change the condition of any class of people unless they work out the change themselves.<sup>7</sup> He will help only those who help themselves. Penances and all sorts of monasticism were condemned, and to those who saw their spiritual elevation in disassociating themselves from the affairs of this life and in resorting to jungles and wildernesses, it was told that the light of God came to such houses<sup>8</sup> where God was remembered. Every rule of physical, moral and spiritual cleanliness was observed. One could attain the height of spirituality by remaining in the civic life if he was

13.20—Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, Our Lord Thou hast not created this in vain! glory be to Thee! save us then from the chastisement of the fire. <sup>2</sup>(27.59).

<sup>3</sup>Fatihah.

<sup>4</sup>Sayings of Muhammad.

<sup>5</sup>2.238—Attend constantly to prayers and to the most excellent prayer and stand up truly obedient to Allah.

<sup>6</sup>13.14—And the prayer of the ungrateful is only in error.

<sup>7</sup>13.12—Surely Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition.

<sup>8</sup>24.36—In houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted and that His name may be remembered in them; there glorify Him therein in the mornings and the evenings

true to his God and his fellow-men, and did his duty to his Creator and his neighbour.

Sacrifices were no doubt allowed, but a new significance was given to them. It was declared that the blood and flesh of the animal did not reach God,<sup>1</sup> and that it was only their purity that approached the Lord. Animal sacrifice was a lesson for self-sacrifice in the way of the Lord. It served as well another purpose. The flesh of the sacrifice was not to be burnt at the altar of the Deity, but to feed the poor and the needy.

Atonement and belief in vicarious redemption, as I have said already, deaden sense of responsibility in man, and create lack of action. One should not be deceived by the present busy life of those in the West, who see their salvation in atonement.

This condition is due to the modern culture. Besides, they do not allow their beliefs in the dogmas to interfere with their everyday life. They should study the conditions of things obtaining in Europe in the Middle Ages, to see the effects of such beliefs. The Quran has declared that none<sup>2</sup> will carry the burden of others; everyone has to bear his own cross and will reap as he will sow.<sup>3</sup>

In this connection I may speak of another thing that caused great misery and hardship, especially to those who were religiously disposed of. Acquisition of wealth and felicitous life was in those days thought to be below the dignity of a godly man; nay, with some people wealth was a curse, and I need not say that such ideas were hardly conducive to human prosperity. The Quran, however, declared that no one had a right to make unlawful the use of things that he created as ornaments for His own<sup>4</sup> people.

122.37—There does not reach Allah their flesh nor their blood but to Him is acceptable the guarding against evil on your part thus has He made subservient to you that you may magnify Allah because He has guided you aright and give you good news to those who do good to others.

26.165—.....And no soul earns evil but against itself and no bearer of burden of another then to your Lord is your return so He will inform you of that in which you differed.

82.134—This is a people that have passed away; they shall have what they earned and you shall have what you earn.

47.3—Say: Who has prohibited the embellishment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants and the good provisions?

Again, the Book said:—"God placed treasures in the earth and in the bottom of the oceans as ornaments for man."<sup>1</sup> Man was thus prompted to mining and navigation. But the world could not be free from poverty. Some are less favoured in their physical attainments, others are overcome by some sort of misfortune. For the encouragement of such people to exertion and good life, it was declared that poverty was not a sin but the pride of the Prophets.<sup>2</sup>

I was speaking of some of the disabilities under which several classes of human race were labouring and were thus deprived of taking any part in the race for progress. Women and slaves were chiefly among them. Woman, at the appearance of Muhammad, was at the lowest ebb of degradation. Islam came to her rescue and raised her to a proper dignity. She was not a chattel to change hands or a serf in the family; but to her was due,<sup>3</sup> so the Quran said, what was due from her. It was declared that her capacities equalled those of man in moral and spiritual order.<sup>4</sup> She possessed soul like man. No doubt she belonged to the weaker sex and man possessed a degree of superiority over her<sup>5</sup> as he was her maintainer,<sup>6</sup> but she had her own scope of excellence, not falling to man's lot.

And thus each sex had its own province to excel the other in good actions.<sup>7</sup> I may say in one word without fear of contradiction that the present achievements of the fair sex are a mere shadow of that, that was given to her by Islam. As to slavery, the institution was absolutely abolished for the future, but with one exception—captivity in war, a wholesome measure to stop

<sup>1</sup>16.14—And He it is Who has made the sea subservient to you that you may eat fresh flesh from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear.

<sup>2</sup>Sayings of Muhammad.

<sup>3</sup>2.228—And they have rights similar to those against them in a just manner.

<sup>4</sup>33.35—Surely the men who submit and the women who submit and the believing men and the believing women and the obeying men and the obeying women and the truthful men and the truthful women and the patient men and the patient women and the humble men and the humble women and the almsgiving men and the almsgiving women and the fasting men and the fasting women and the men who guard their private parts and the women who guard and the men who remember-Allah and the women, has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward..

<sup>5</sup>2.228—.....and the men are a degree above them (women).

<sup>6</sup>4.34—Men are the maintainers of women.

<sup>7</sup>2.148—And every one has a direction to which he turns himself, therefore hasten to do good works.



war, but such honourable treatment was ordered to be meted to such political prisoners that made the life of the so-called slaves sweeter than before. As for those, who were in slavery under the older order every measure was taken by the Holy Prophet for their liberation. Their emancipation was declared to be an act of great merit and a propitiation of the past sins. Subscriptions were raised to buy their freedom, and public funds were used for their emancipation.<sup>1</sup> In short, Muhammad saw the old system of slavery nearly finished in his very life.

At a time when physical cleanliness was deemed a sin in the West, it was declared as a thing loved by God.<sup>2</sup> All measures were devised to improve physical health including manly sports.

These wonderful messages from the Most High fell like drops of rain in the barren and parched land. It aroused Arabia from mental torpor and stagnation, which was in fact stifling human activities everywhere, though the Arabs were the most miserable victims of it for centuries. The words of the Prophet—"Search for the knowledge even if it is in China"—increased the Arabs' zeal for travelling, as they were already great travellers. They went to the four corners of the world and reached every country where knowledge was available. They unravelled the treasures of the Greek knowledge which had remained hidden in the convents. The conquest of Constantinople caused renaissance of learning. Learned men from every country were invited to Muslim seats of Governments. Schools, Colleges, and Laboratories, were opened where students in thousands received free board, lodging, and education. It produced wonderful results. Not only the foundation of the modern sciences were laid down, but Arabs discovered many of the sciences, which constitute the basis of the modern culture and progress. It needs volumes to speak of this subject, and a lot of it has appeared in the pages of the Islamic Review. But I would say in one word that most of our sciences owe their origin to Arab initiative and their re-

<sup>19.60</sup>—Alms are only for the poor and the needy and the official appointed over them and those whose hearts are made to incline to truth and the ransoming of captives and those in debt and in the way of Allah and the way-farer: an ordinance from Allah and Allah is Knowing and Wise.

<sup>29.108</sup>—And Allah loves those who purify themselves.

search. Industries and arts in various departments saw their accomplishment. In museums we come across with articles of Arab handicraft that excite our surprise and admiration. Thus Islam played a very great part in bringing forth our civilization.

May I ask you, gentlemen, to ponder over those facts and figures that have chiefly contributed to modern culture and progress, and I assure you that you will hardly find any of them that have not come within the purview of the Quranic ethics and doctrines, a portion of which I have analysed here so briefly. The Western world did act with obvious results upon some of the Islamic principles. Would it not be in the service of humanity if we were to invite them to Islamic truths and its intellectual, moral and spiritual forces? This is another justification for the Tabligh of Islam in the world, especially in the West. But may I put one question to my brethren-in-Islam? They should search their own houses first. If they wish to show the light of the Quran to others, and they are right in doing so, why are they shutting themselves far off from the same light? A sort of blight has overtaken the Islamic world. It no doubt is greatly owing to others' economic pressure; but we should study our own life and see how we are ignoring the Quranic ethics!

Could a religion that taught such high principles, and had admittedly been *the great landmark* in civilization and progress, be dubbed as an inspirer of brutal force, as some carpers of Islam say? Nay, Islam came to humanize the brute in man and raise him to Divine precincts. It succeeded in doing so. Every religion at its origin, I should admit, came for the same aim; but Islam systematised the way to reach the goal. It did not, for that purpose, only give some stray homilies or sermons or some lessons of morality in a bald form. The Quran gave all this, but in a very beautiful manner. It intermingled its lessons with events in history and illustrated them by references to nature. It explored the human heart and brought home to us the gold and lead in it, while showing at the same time ways to work out true moral and spiritual reforms. But here I would speak only of one way which is so efficacious in attaining the desired object; and for which one need not leave his civic life. He may discharge all his mundane duties and yet he would reach spiritual and moral

height, if he follows the course prescribed by Islam. Man, it has been very rightly said, is a worshipping animal. He would go to his Lord by instinct, if materialistic influences did not get the better of him. Islam worked out this instinct; and placed before him God as model to be imitated. He was asked to assume Divine colour<sup>1</sup> and clothe himself with Divine morals. It was a most difficult task, but Islam put it in a workable form. We were asked to remember God in our actions and deeds, and for this object we were given a prayer in the best form which I recited in the beginning. Prayer, I may say, is not recitation and gesticulation, and the remembrance of God does not consist in counting His Holy name on beads. We assume, no doubt, some forms in our prayers as an indicative of our heart. Indispensable as they are, they are not the essentials of religion.<sup>2</sup> Nor is turning face to east or west, according to the Quran, a real virtue, though we turn our face to Mecca for unification and for some other reasons. Real prayer consists in contemplations and meditations. We have to think of the ways of the Lord in the Universe. Comparing them with our own life and seeing how far the latter agrees with the former, and then invoke Divine help in enabling us to follow His ways. Muslim prayer prescribes the same course. It is an expression of the best of human longings. It, at the very outset, discloses some of the most excellent attributes of God, Rab-ul-Alamin, the Creator, and the Sustainer of all people and races without distinction. Al-Rahman the Beneficent Lord, Whose blessings reach all of us without our meriting them. Al-Raheem; Whose rewards for one good action are manifold. Malik-i-Yaum-id-deen; the Master of the Day of Requit, Who often forgives our faults,

<sup>1</sup>Chap. II.138—(Receive) the baptism of Allah, and who is better than Allah in baptising? and Him do we serve.

<sup>2</sup>Chap. II.177—It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflict—these are they who are true (to themselves), and these are they who guard (against evil).

and if He punishes, it is for our reclamation. You can not please the Lord by singing hymns at the top of your voice, nor by giving lip-praises to Him in your prayers. True devotion and service to the Deity, as the "Fatiah" shows, consist in following His ways and casting our life in the Divine mould "Thee *only* do we serve and of Thee *alone* do we ask for help." Thus we admit that we serve Allah, Who is Rab-ul-Alameen, Rahman, Raheem and Malik-i-Yaum-id-deen and for this purpose, we beseech His help, praying Him to show us the right path—the path of those who have observed these virtues. It would be a mockery of prayer if we did not remember the Lord in this manner. One can not minimise the importance and efficacy of the Muslim prayer, as a means to inspire moral and spiritual life, by his reference to the present Muslim life and conduct in some quarters. You have to see the inspiration which a worshipper receives from the "Fatiah" if he truly follows it. Could there be any racial prejudice in him if a worshipper serves Rab-ul-Alameen—the Sustainer of all nations—in the true spirit? Would not poverty and misery will become an exile from the human race, if we worship Al-Rahman and allow our earnings to go to the benefit of others? Could there be any antagonism between capital and labour—the curse of the present day if in giving wages we acted on the lines of Al-Raheem, Who compensates labour hundredfold? But if we can not afford to soar so high on the moral and spiritual plane in imitating our Lord, we should at least fashion our conduct after the manners of Malik-i-Yaum-id-deen, and be just and equitable in our dealings to others, and pardon other's fault, but if punishment is necessary it should be for reclamation and reform and not out of vengeance and malice. Could a sensible man deprecate such a prayer that goads man to humanism? It would angelize the human race if man followed its dictates, it would disarm all rancour, hatred and enmity based on racial differences. Some people observe that five prayers in a day are irksome and cause waste of time, but if we are in need of examining our heart and our mode of life in the manner Islam wants us to do when in prayer, I would rather say my prayers fifty times a day. I know that the present busy life, especially in the West, would make our institution of

prayer unpalatable, particularly when they have only one day in a week for God; but let Islam once become popular to the westerners for its tenets and simplicity all these hindrances in our way will become removed in this respect. We must follow the orders of our Prophet given to Moaz, son of Jabal, when he was sent to Yamen as the first Muslim Governor. To remind Muslims of these lessons another exhortation comes to the Muslim from every pulpit in every Muslim land on Friday<sup>1</sup> "Verily, Allah orders you to be just—take your dues and let others to have their dues—He orders you to be beneficent—help even those who have no claim upon your help; and lastly, He wants you to treat others as you treat your own family folk." After exhorting us to these three virtues of the highest orders we are enjoined in the remaining portion of the verse read to us in the Friday Sermon, against such evil deeds that may injure ourselves, our neighbour, and the society at large. For the last purpose, the verse clearly says that we should not be seditious and should not go in any way against the law of the country. Could any person, in the name of God and of morality and religion, suggest a better lesson of "Humanitarianism" than that which has been given to us in the opening chapter of the Quran and the verse read in the Friday Sermon? Here may I ask my brethren-in-Islam to examine their own conduct of life and see how far they appreciate the inspiration they ought to receive from these salubrious provisions in Islam? Do they act upon the lessons given to them every Friday? If they do, then why have their prospects become blighted, why are poverty, hardships and misery ruling in our ranks? Would my brethren be at any disadvantage if they live up to these Divine morals? Zakat<sup>2</sup> was introduced for the same end. A person, no sooner joins Islam, than he has to subscribe to the public fund for the benefit of the poor. But do all of us respect this institution? We are facing hardship in every direction; but it is our own doing. We will regain our lost pros-

<sup>1</sup>Chap. XVI.90—Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion; He admonishes you that you may be mindful.

<sup>2</sup>Chap. IX.60—Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and the officials (appointed) over them, and those whose hearts are made to incline (to truth) and the (ransoming of) captives and those in debt and in the way of Allah and the wayfarer; an ordinance from Allah; and Allah is Knowing, Wise.

perity only when we come under the "colour" of Allah, and follow the Quran. But if such be not our life, then we need not invite others to join us. Let our conduct based on true Islamic principles speak for our religion. Our actions ought to be louder than our words, and as we are meeting for the "Tabligh" of Islam allow me to give a piece of advice to those who are interested in it. Charity begins at home. We must preach the religion of Islam first to those who are already under its flag, and goad them to act upon it.

On the question of spirituality in Islam I have to say a word more. Spirituality reaches its consummation when man becomes a true image of God in his actions and morals. It comes only to those who observe high morals first. It should not be forgotten that selflessness and self-abnegation is the basic principle and superstructure of this all. We should have to exercise self-sacrificial spirit in all our ways in life if we wish to attain that object. All penances and monastic ways were devised for the same purpose. But Islam condemned them as they deprived our fellow-beings from the benefit of such faculties which God reposed in us for other service. Islam, instead of monasticism, strongly recommended that happy institution already in vogue in the world which we name marriage as it creates in every moment of our life such occasions as would automatically bring out the spirit of self-sacrifice in us. No sooner do we marry than we begin to live for the benefit of others in the circle of our family. Callous as one may be, none can remain indifferent to the needs of his own family folk. The passion of mercy<sup>1</sup> and compassion in heart in man comes to surface in its full force within us. This is the main object of marriage in Islam as the Quran says, and not satiation of lust and flesh. Married life would also induce us to extend our charities to those related to us through various matrimonial connections whether on the side of our parents or of our consort. In this way we learn to widen the family circle under the teachings of the Quran by treating others as we treat our family folk. Service of family is the rock-stone on which we have to build our moral and spiritual

<sup>1</sup>Chap. XXX.21—And one of His signs is that He created mates for you from yourself that you may find quiet of mind in them, and He put between you love and compassion, most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect.

edifice, and I may say that the Quran and the Holy Prophet has given us the best of domestic ethics. The Holy Book<sup>1</sup> places our parents next to God in claiming from us devotion, and respect. "Paradise lies at the feet of the mothers,"<sup>2</sup> is the saying of the Holy Prophet. Again he says,—“the best among you is one who is best to his own people, wife is the best treasure in your house, and she is sovereign of the family. Respect your children and teach your daughters the best of manners.” As to our treatment of others, the Holy Prophet says “None among you can be a true Muslim who does not give to his own brother that which he regards as most precious.” “All creatures are God’s, and he is dearest to God who is more energetic in his service.” One could cite verses after verses from the Quran, and sayings after sayings of the Prophet, reading in the forcible terms such lessons of morality and doing good to others, but I simply made here a few quotations, and that for one reason. Materialistic influences have worked such a havoc on the charitable side of humanity, that even those simple precepts so necessary to be observed for domestic happiness are generally ignored. Parents in indigence go side by side with children in affluence. Wives are neglected and children have to live on the charity of others. The world needs the exercise of these morals. If Islam supplies such a treasure of happiness for all, and contains in it such tenets as I briefly analysed above, that will promote our physical, moral and spiritual welfare, and if other religions are to some extent wanting in such doctrines, would it be a matter of wonder if Islam when explained in its true form should spread in the world, and especially in the West? Before I conclude and give some practical suggestions for “Tabligh” of Islam—(spread of Islam)—especially in the West, I would summarise what I have said of our faith as a religion of true human good, and to it I will add a few more observations. Islam presents a religion most simple, comprehensive, and practical. Duty to God and duty to our fellow men is its essence. Its theology, therefore, is neither a dogma, nor a collection of some metaphysical and mysterious conundrums. It brings theology out of the labyrinth of myths and riddles, and places it on a

<sup>1</sup>Chap. XVII.23—And.....goodness to your parents. If.....generous word.

<sup>2</sup>Sayings of the Prophet.

practical basis. It, no doubt, speaks of God<sup>1</sup> of Transcendental Essence, but it mostly makes mention of such of His Attributes that can be pursued by man to bring all that is good in him to surface and crush his evil propensities. It found man worse than animal, and raised him to a height where he could receive homage from Angels.<sup>2</sup> It has become dawned on the Western consciousness to-day, that ethics and morality in their best forms are only a shadow of Divine Attributes. But Islam taught this very lesson in a most practical way when the Holy Prophet said, "Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes," and in this connection I may say, Islam is not in favour of crushing passions. It regulates and sublimates them into higher morality. Its teachings meet every human craving in a desirable form. Islam came to establish universal Brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God, and declared all the human race as one family<sup>3</sup>. It would not suffer creedal or colour differences to affect fraternal relation. For this purpose, it trampled down all the barriers of caste, colour, and descent, and made virtue the only test of greatness.<sup>4</sup> It inspired respect for all religions and their teachers, and enjoins belief in their message.<sup>5</sup> It prohibited ill-speaking of others'

<sup>1</sup>Chap. VI.104—Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends (all) vision; and He is the Knower of subtilities, the Aware.

<sup>2</sup>Chap. II.34—And when We said to the angels, Make obeisance to Adam,

<sup>3</sup>Chap. II.213—(All) people are a single nation; so Allah raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the book with truth, that it might judge between people in that in which they differed; and none but the very people who were given it differed about it after clear arguments had come to them, revolting among themselves; so Allah has guided by His will those who believe to the truth about which they differed; and Allah guides whom He pleases to the right path.

<sup>4</sup>Chap. XLIX.13—O you men! surely We have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is Knowing, Aware.

<sup>5</sup>Chap. XIII.7—And those who disbelieve say: Why has not a sign been sent down upon him from his Lord? You are only a warner and a guide for every people.

Chap. II.136—Say: We believe in Allah and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to Abraham and Ismael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit.



gods,<sup>1</sup> may they be god-incarnate or otherwise. Islam makes love of humanity a most prominent article of our faith. It carries out charity beyond the four walls of one's own family and extends it even to those who have no claim on it.<sup>2</sup> Islam<sup>3</sup> makes man a trustee of all that has been given him by his Creator with the whole world as his beneficiary. A true Muslim is one who would use all his possessions and earnings and his faculties in service of God, which in the words of the Prophet is the service of humanity. Islam loves peace and hates all sorts of disorder. It respects *status quo* if conducive to human welfare. It prohibits sedition<sup>4</sup> and enjoins strict obedience to the law and loyalty to the rule, and would not allow us to do anything that may injure our neighbour or the society in general in any way. It enjoins humility and civility of tongue<sup>5</sup> and recommends sweetness of words.<sup>6</sup> Islam condemns all secret societies or conspiracies to injure others.<sup>7</sup> Islam makes equity<sup>8</sup> and justice the lever of human actions. "Be equitable and just," so the Quran says, "and

<sup>1</sup>Chap. VI.109—And do not abuse those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest exceeding the limits they should abuse Allah out of ignorance. Thus have We made fair-seeming to every people their deeds; then to their Lord shall be their return, so He will inform them of what they did.

<sup>2</sup>Chap. IV.36—And serve Allah and do not associate any thing with Him, and be good to the parents and to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the neighbour of (your) kin and the alien neighbour, and the companion in a journey and the wayfarer and those whom your right hands possess; surely Allah does not love him who is proud, boastful:

<sup>3</sup>Chap. XXXIII.72—Surely, we offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to be unfaithful to it and feared from it, and man has turned unfaithful to it; surely he is unjust, ignorant.

<sup>4</sup>Chap. XVI.90—Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion; He admonishes you that you may be mindful.

<sup>5</sup>Chap. XXXI.19—And pursue the right course in your going about and lower your voice: surely the most hateful of voices is braying of the asses.

<sup>6</sup>Chap. XVII.53—And say to My servants (that) they speak that which is best; surely the devil sows dissensions among them; surely the devil is an open enemy to man.

<sup>7</sup>Chap. IV.114—There is no good in most of their secret counsels except (in his) who enjoins charity or goodness or reconciliation between people; and whoever does this, seeking Allah's pleasure, We will give him a mighty reward.

Chap. LVIII.10—Secret counsels are only (the work) of the devil that he may cause to grieve those who believe, and he cannot hurt them in the least except with Allah's permission; and on Allah let the believers rely.

<sup>8</sup>Chap. VI.153—And do not approach the property of the orphan except in the best manner until he attains his maturity; and give full measure and weight

let not your inimical relations to others allow you to do injustice to them."<sup>1</sup> Islam denounces ignorance as the root cause of all evils and makes acquirement of the knowledge a prime duty.<sup>2</sup> It invites us to make scientific researches in the universe<sup>3</sup> and find out the use of everything in nature. Islam encouraged reading and writing and brought it for the first time out of convents and monasteries to the benefit of humanity at large, and thus it became a great factor in the diffusion of knowledge in the world. Islam speaks of the highest capabilities in man and of his inherent nobility.<sup>4</sup> It makes sin and evil an after-acquisition and not a heritage or pre-ordained and therefore unavoidable destiny. Islam preaches a gospel of action and arouses man from lethargy and lassitude. It recommends striving<sup>5</sup> and exertion and for that object it declares that God's blessings follow man's actions. It creates in him a keen sense of individual responsibility.<sup>6</sup> Islam sanctifies labour and makes work an honour. Islam encourages acquisition of wealth, not to pamper self-indulgence, but to use it for the benefit of mankind. For this purpose, Islam makes abstemiousness and self-

with justice—We do not impose on any soul a duty except to the extent of its ability; and when you speak, then be just though it be (against) a relative, and fulfil Allah's covenant; this He has enjoined you with that you may be mindful.

<sup>1</sup>Chap. V.8—O you who believe! be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice, and let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably; act equitably; that is nearer to piety, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah; surely Allah is Aware of what you do.

<sup>2</sup>Sayings of the Prophet.

<sup>3</sup>Chap. III.190—Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! glory be to Thee; save us then from the chastisement of the fire.

<sup>4</sup>Chap. XCV.4—Certainly We created man in the best make.

<sup>5</sup>Chap. LIII.39—And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for.

<sup>6</sup>Chap. XVII.13—And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck, and We will bring forth to him on the resurrection day a book which he will find wide open.

14—Read your book; your own self is sufficient as a reckoner against you this day.

15—Whoever goes aright, for his own soul does he go aright; and whoever goes astray, to its detriment only does he go astray; nor can the bearer of a burden bear the burden of another, nor do we chastise until We raise an apostle.

Chap. II.134—This is a people that have passed away; they shall have what you earn, and you shall not be called upon to answer for what they did.

abnegation a matter of great virtue. Islam<sup>1</sup> encourages freedom in action and thought, and respects difference<sup>2</sup> of opinion. It recommends improvement of physical health, and to keep all hygienic laws, and shun uncleanness.<sup>3</sup> In the matter of health, physical or mental, the world owes the greatest possible debt to Islam in its prohibition of alcoholism. That poison in liquid, which benumbs human faculties, was never taken note of by any reformer before Islam. In short, the last<sup>4</sup> Book of God, as it says, codified in it all the true and good things that were given to humanity before Islam. Islam is the reformed form of current Judaism, and the teachings of Jesus in its evolved shape. All that is good and best elsewhere is found in the ethics of Islam, and I may say it bears more kindred shape in its teachings in some respects to many of the Hindoo sects than they bear to each other. These are not mere assertions on my part, as I have substantiated them by reference to the Quran and to the teachings of the Holy Prophet.

Is not a religion of such comprehensiveness and adaptability a thing of universal need? Could any exception be taken to its tenets and teachings? The world and especially the Western world would jump to it, if Islam is preached to them in its "pure form" and if its tenets and doctrines are explained to them in reasonable ways.<sup>5</sup> I come from the West, I know my people. They are mostly tired of the religion current in them. They want a religion of the type of Islam. Their angle of view in many things is already that of Islam. When you come across with a thinking man in the West and talk to him of Islamic verities, he would look eye to eye with you on all that you say

<sup>1</sup>Chap. LXVII.22—What! is he who goes prone upon his face better guided or he who walks upright upon a straight path?

<sup>2</sup>Sayings of the Prophet.

<sup>3</sup>Chap. LXXIV.4—And your garments do purify.

<sup>5</sup>—And uncleanness do shun.

<sup>4</sup>XCVIII.2:3—An apostle from Allah, reciting pure pages. Wherein are all the right books.

<sup>5</sup>Chap. XVI.125—Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and have disputations with them in the best manner; surely your Lord best knows those who go astray from His path, and He knows best those who follow the right way.

to him of Islam and would declare that he thought of religion in the same way. Nay, he would go so far as to say that you were talking of the very religion in his mind. To corroborate my remarks I would refer to one thing already within your knowledge. A short period of fifteen years in the spread of a religion that labours under all kinds of mis-representation and mis-interpretation as Islam does in the West, is not a great thing, nay, it is not enough to bring it in the knowledge of others and yet I find that the Muslim Mission at Woking has achieved marvellous success in the face of adverse circumstances. The workers in the Mission, carefully studied the intellectual, religious, and social trend of thought in the West. They found that it was the right time to hit the nail. They gave to the West the true meaning of religion. Islam was properly explained by the said Mission in the West to possess beauties I have narrated above, and it went to the heart meeting a crying need. Few years before, Islam was looked upon as a religion of anything but desirable. But the minds have been disabused and our faith wherever preached commands respect and appreciative audience, and this in a very short time. This shows how far the Western mind is prepared to accept truth. The workers of the Woking Mission, like true Muslim Missionaries, have always abstained from speaking ill of others.<sup>1</sup> With undaunted courage, though in a temperate language, accompanied with graceful manners, they expose the falsity of the dogmas of the Church. They showed that the religion taught by Jesus, was Islam and not the formal Christianity. Thus within a very short time remarkable success has attended their efforts by spreading Islamic literature either free of charge or at a nominal price. We should therefore concentrate on bringing out more literature on Islam on these lines. Even in this country you will, I think, find more English readers than others. We need the publication of a series of Islamic books, say some twenty-five in number, of shilling edition, dealing with various aspects of Islam: every booklet a self-contained exposition on some of the aspects of Islam, touching culture, progress, love, tolerance and

<sup>1</sup>And do not abuse those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest exceeding the limits they should abuse Allah out of ignorance (VI.109).

so on. Again, we need a handbook of the life of our Holy Prophet in addition to various books dealing with the many aspects of his holy life. The day has come when the world should know more of Muhammad. No one would fail to love that great character in the world, if one is supplied with his true picture. The Holy Prophet is labouring under gross misrepresentation. His character, pure and chaste as it is, has been presented in hideous colours by vilifying agencies. Present only Muhammad in his real colour to the world and that itself is sufficient to win millions for Islam. For this object we have started in our modest way "A Muslim Literary Fund," with myself as its humble Chairman. We have already published and circulated some books almost at the cost price:—

Affinity Between Islam and Original Christianity

Sources of Christianity

What is Islam?

The Ideal Prophet

Sayings of Muhammad

Message of Islam

Open Letter to the Bishops of Salisbury and London  
and I can safely say that these books are doing immense good in drawing hearts to Islam. But our efforts as well as our means are very limited. These are mere drops in the ocean. We need more coadjutors in the holy work, and more means to distribute our literature in every desirable quarter. We should inundate the West with our literature and our harvest will be unimaginable. We also need a Mosque in London that may act as a beacon-light of Islam for the West in religious matters.

What I have said about "Tabligh" in the West is more or less applicable everywhere. You can preach Islam in Europe, in South, East and West Africa on the same lines. Last year I was on a missionary tour with my dearest brother Khwaja Kamal-ud-din who needs no introduction to you, and I may say you have better chances of bringing Europeans there to Islam than elsewhere. Most of them in South Africa know nothing of Islam and they possess a clean slate from all that nonsense which we hear about Islam in the two Western continents under missionary propaganda. As to the natives in South and East

Africa, the spread of Islam is like a *fait accompli* if earnest efforts are made in that direction.

As to the question of "Tabligh" in India, you are in a better position to judge the situation than myself. The present conditions prevailing here may seem difficult to surmount, but let me remind you that the holy founder of Islam had to face a harder time still. Let the holy life of our Prophet inspire us with his spirit, and chalk out for us line of action for preaching Islam. We should not, however, give up perseverance and sincerity, tolerance and modesty, sympathy and true fellow-feelings, and these attended with patience and constant prayer<sup>1</sup> as the Quran advises, will disarm all opposition. Do not harp on the glory and righteousness of the past. Think of to-morrow,<sup>2</sup> and believe in the future.<sup>3</sup> Set your own conduct, mirror your religion. A tree is known by its fruits, and your actions therefore should be louder, more forcible, in preaching your faith than your words. Let your purity, chastity, modesty, and in one word your righteousness, inspire non-Muslims with admiration and respect for your religion. And this all I expect, especially from that class who have to bear the torch of Islam to others.

Anyone understanding what we have to show will see the beauty and simplicity without any persuasion on our part. I am myself an Englishman of the English, and I hope a true Muslim at heart, but no one even asked me to become a Muslim. My dear friend and brother the Khwaja Kamal-ud-deen never did more than explain certain points to me when I asked for enlightenment and I never try to influence anyone else or bring any pressure to be. I feel sure however that when the time for selection comes to each man, the choice will, because of the beauty and purity of the tenets and absence of improbabilities, be Islam every time.

<sup>1</sup>II.153—"O you who believe; seek assistance through patience and prayer; surely Allah is with the patient.

<sup>2</sup>Chap. LXIX.18—"O you who believe be careful of your duty to Allah and let every soul consider what it has sent on for the morrow."

<sup>3</sup>Chap. II.4—"And they are believer in the hereafter.

Some of the Muslim countries seem to be indifferent to Missionary duties, but you have become alive to them. Pursue the course on the Quranic lines: "Invite others to the ways of the Lord with wisdom and knowledge." Preach in a beautiful way, and if the matter come to controversy, adopt the sweeter and most beautiful manners in giving your message, and I am sure, you will accomplish a great task.

One word more from the Quran in this respect, and then I conclude. I read a few verses from the Quran:—"And hold fast by the covenant of Allah altogether, and be not disunited, and remember the favour of Allah on you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts. So by His favour you became brethren, and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way. And from among you there should be a party who invite to good, and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful."

They hardly need any comment, but I should like to draw your attention to two points so forcibly put in these verses. The last verse says that you must preach Islam to achieve success, and the first verse speaks of that great blessing of the Lord, *i.e.* brotherhood, that Allah conferred on you. The moral of the section in my humble opinion is this:—If success follows "Tabligh" in the terms of the Quran, it can only be carried on successfully, if the cord of Allah is unitedly in our hands,<sup>2</sup> and we are not affected by internecine differences. I have been hearing of many sects in Islam: Sunis, Shias, etc. The first two are at extreme variance against each other. I read the Quran and studied what was essential for a Muslim to believe. I tried to understand, things that differentiated a Suni from a Shia. I also tried to understand the differences between various other sub-sections under the Suni School of Thought. But I must admit my inability to appreciate things that could create the present sectarian troubles. May be, that I am a new comer in Islam. But I should like to say here of those things that compel me to

<sup>1</sup>III; 101, 102, 103.

<sup>2</sup>III.102.

believe that Islam is not amenable to any sectional split. Do we not Sunnis, Shias or others believe in one God and in the Messengership of Muhammad, whose advent sealed the door of Prophethood for ever? Do we not receive all our inspiration on the intellectual, moral and physical plane from one Book, the last word from God, and from Sunna, the Tradition of the Prophet? Do we not all believe in "Allah, in His Angels, in His Prophets and Books, in the Hereafter, in the Pre-measurement of good and evil by Allah, and in the Resurrection after death? Do we not all turn our face to one direction when we pray, and in prayer do we not do only those things which have come to us admittedly from the Prophet? Do we not all accept the Five Pillars of Islam? And now I ask you—does this not all complete our belief in Islam, and if these are the essentials of our faith, then we all, no matter under whichever denomination we come, hold one and the same belief? I am absolutely at a loss to understand the causes of the trouble brewing in our atmosphere on sectional grounds. And let me be frank to tell you one thing. Don't entertain any hope of success in the spread of Islam, especially in the West, if you carry your religion to them with all such sectional spirit, so rife in this country. Those who think otherwise are totally mistaken. Sectarianism is the chief trouble in Christendom; they are divided more or less in five hundred sects. People there regard these divisions and sub-divisions as a curse of the official faith, in the West. Should we carry to them that which also smacks of the same curse? And here I must pay my quota of tribute to the workers in the Woking Mission. It was a piece of good luck for Islam that the pioneers of faith in England were level-headed enough to stand above these paltry differences. They did not think it their worth to bring these trivial things on their programme. They preach to the West a "Religion without Sect," as Islam really is. It proved to be a true Gospel to the sect-ridden people there. Your preachers in England did not deny the present existence of the so-called sectarianism in Islam when asked, but they proved to the hilt that the said division consisted in things of a secondary nature.

I have been to Mecca for the pilgrimage, and what a grand scene of unity and brotherhood I saw there. But I find also a miniature of it on Eid days in the gardens of Woking Mosque,



Muslims of every nationality living in England resort to the Mosque, and present a unity of hearts in religion unknown to Christendom. Sunnis, Shias and others, stand shoulder to shoulder before their Lord under the leadership of one Imam. I never perceived any religious difference among them, and in my humble opinion, there is none whatsoever, of any import, in the so-called Islamic Sects.

Brethren, others are following the teachings of your religion and are giving up their differences to unify their ranks, although their differences are of basic principles. It is high time that you too give up these sectarian differences, which in principle are none, and join forces for the spread of Islam as taught by the Holy Prophet Muhammad. To-day everything demands organisation and I have every confidence that the Central Jamiat-i-Tabligh-i-Islam can give a lead in this direction. They should receive active co-operation from all the Muslims. Nothing can be achieved unless all of us co-operate, and I for one volunteer myself.

May the Almighty Allah help and protect us and crown our labours with success. Ameen!

## ADDENDA.

Before I conclude, I wish to say a word as to the kind invitations you have received from our brethren requesting me to pay visits to their respective towns. I thank them for their very kindly giving me an opportunity to make personal acquaintance with them. You ask me also to do something to further the cause of "Tabligh," in these visits. I think, gentlemen, it comes within the purview of my duty as a president of your Conference. I had a mind to spend some time in India and if I could spend it in the sacred cause of Islam, I would deem it as an act of merit in the eye of Allah. In fact, any time spent in His service, is not a loss but a real gain. I will see that if my home affairs could permit my absence from there for a longer time, I would willingly extend my stay here. I am devoted to your cause, I mean the propagation of our Faith in the world. Though my activities in this respect have till now been confined to Western countries, I see no reason why I should not bring the East within their province. You have also referred to the London Mosque scheme and ask me to do something in that direction. The mosque is a real necessity. It would strengthen there our sacred cause and would be a great help in its propagation. I am willing to act according to your wishes and programme in this connection. I would go to any place you propose to knock Muslim doors and awaken my brethren to a duty which in my humble opinion, is of first importance in Islam. But the success lies mainly in mutual co-operation and in our brethren's appreciative response to your call; and let them not forget what an English author says—in fact, he simply reminds you of the Quranic truths which the Holy Book so emphatically says—that "God helps those who help themselves."