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FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol.
XXXIII

MUHARRAM, 1365 A.H.
DECEMBER, 1945 A.C.

No. 12

BY THE LIGHT OF THE QURAN

“O you who believe ! let not (one) people laugh at (another) people, perchance they may be better than they, nor let women (laugh) at (other) women, perchance they may be better than they ; and do not find fault with your own people nor call one another by nicknames, evil is a bad name after faith, and whoever does not turn, these it is that are the unjust.

“O you who believe ! avoid most of suspicion for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother ? But you abhor it ; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, surely Allah is oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful.

“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.

“The dwellers of the desert say : We believe. Say : You do not believe but say, We submit ; and faith has not yet entered into your hearts ; and if you obey Allah and His

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Apostle, He will not diminish aught of your deeds ; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

“The believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Apostle, then they doubt not and struggle hard with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allah; they are the truthful ones.

“Say : Do you apprise Allah of your religion, and Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth ; and Allah is cognisant of all things.

“They think that they lay you under an obligation by becoming Muslims. Say : Lay me not under obligation by your Islam : rather Allah lays you under an obligation by guiding you to the faith if you are truthful.

“Surely Allah knows the unseen things of the heavens and the earth ; and Allah sees what you do.”

(Ch. XLIX. vv. 11—18).

FACING THE NEW WORLD

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

The war in its principal aspects has ended, though its aftermath, a universal restlessness, continues to exist. This uneasiness is not only the sequel but also the substratum of that violent rage which has just subsided. The uneasiness is due to the disturbed balance in the human mind resulting from a one-sided culture.

Humanity needs peace in its inner mind through the restoration of its lost balance. It needs to be enlightened on the real nature of its malady. Politicians and economists, scientists and educationists, cannot do much in this connection. It needs a Prophet to handle the case. The Prophet alone, inspired by God, knows the deeper maladies of the human mind. Let us enable humanity to find out the Prophet and it will find the cure for its ailments.

FACING THE NEW WORLD

This humble journal enjoys the privilege of being the mouthpiece of the message of the Prophet of this international age.

With our December issue we, by the grace of Allah, will enter the 34th year of our existence. Full thirty-three years ago we had anticipated the present European trouble. We started our work at a time when Europe was not in a mood to consider the desirability of submitting to a Divine code of life—the catastrophe was so far in the future. We, however, helped by the light of God, knew the imminence of the danger. The Qur-ān had warned humanity about the calamity, the Prophet Muhammad had prophesied about it. We raised the alarm when humanity was sleeping in a deep spiritual sleep. We started by telling Europe what Islam was not, because, thanks to the interested propaganda of the Christian clergy, the people of Europe knew only the wrong things about this faith, which was destined to engage its attention later on as a serious life and death question.

It took us about two decades to create a suitable atmosphere for an appreciative hearing for Islam. We almost appeared to cry in the wilderness in the beginning but it was not so in actual fact. The end of the first World War saw Europe taking note of the fact that Islam had resolved to contend with Christianity the right to be the proper religion for the Western people.

As time went, this realisation grew in extensiveness giving birth to a new phase of our work by the end of the second decade of our activities. Whereas during the first phase we were fighting only in self-defence, in the latter we started commending our religion as a superior alternative to Christianity as a social and moral code. The social upheavals and international jealousies, assuming fearful dimensions, facilitated our work and lent effectiveness to our efforts. The second World

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War brought the matters to a head fulfilling to the letter all that we had said about the insufficiency of Christianity as a religion. The social structure of Christendom stands corroded to the core. No man-devised "ism" will help this tottering system even by an iota. The Russian dream will soon bring darker disappointment. As has been rightly remarked by an eminent British statesman, the whole of Europe is in the midst of a spiritual hunger, more pronounced than the physical hunger, which is in evidence in that continent. An appeasement of this spiritual hunger is the condition precedent to the establishment of any new order in the West. The menace of anti-social feeling is symptomatic of the unseen starvation of the inner soul of man. Man has to be taught the necessity of adopting a religious way of living in order to be able to love his neighbour as his own self. The economic valuation of life openly preached by the Marxists, and *de facto* practised by the whole of the Western population, has to be supplanted by a religious valuation to make it possible for the Western man and woman to make the love of his neighbour a practical proposition. But the old discarded religion will not be of much use here. It had been a religion of idealistic sermons having no practical programme for translating those beautiful maxims into action. A practical religion is needed for this purpose, the one that can also satisfy the scientific spirit of the age. Everywhere there is a cry for a new order but no one is sure what this new order is going to be like. Surely sinking humanity cannot save itself. Some outside help is needed, some power and light from beyond and man has to bow before it in reverential submission when it is found. Such an act alone will set his mind at rest, will give him a reassurance of his own destiny, will provide him with justification for his own existence together with its

FACING THE NEW WORLD

struggles. Yes, the light from beyond and faith in it, is condition precedent to any programme of reconstruction. Our first task in this new phase of our activities will, therefore, be to hold aloft this light of God, the Qur-ân, to be seen by the bewildered people of Europe in its fullest brilliance. We have to hold it in a manner that will compel people to recognise it as the word of God, it should strike people as the message of hope and love. That should be our foremost concern.

And our next task will be to argue with people to prove that the order which they are vaguely feeling in their minds can be seen clearly set forth in the pages of this Book. This is as much important as the other task.

We are aware that both the tasks are difficult of performance. The one is as difficult as the other. Both demand qualities which we can hardly claim to possess in any sufficient measure. And yet it is the decree of Providence that the West will see the light of Truth. A whole humanity in agony cannot fail to move the mercy of God. The Merciful Being, Who cannot bear the sight of a countryside parching for want of rain, cannot certainly keep on looking indifferently to a whole humanity starved in mind and soul. It is His mercy that is to be our mainstay in the course of struggles that are to ensue. The new situation demands a new programme and a new way of approach—but the principal factor, *i.e.*, the mercy and help of God, which has been our guiding star throughout all these years, remains constant. It is this factor that will see us through, much more than our manner of acting. And if our patrons are vouchsafed the strength to stand by us in this new phase of our struggle, they will only share this new blessing of the Lord of Universe. Says the Holy Qur-ân :

Man will have nothing but what he strives for.

It is only in the wake of our struggles that the Divine

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blessing comes. It is as true of the spiritual world as of the physical.

Blessed are those that can strive in the cause of Truth !

The last six years have been the years of struggle for us in many ways. As workers in a cause which has no touch of worldly interest, we cannot expect, and we do not in fact receive, much help from those who control the material resources of the world. Paper control, Press censorship, Printing difficulties, Postal irregularities—by themselves great handicaps, were almost killing in our case, because practically no one was in a mood to give any kind thought to a work like ours which is of no “earthly good” to any one. As a result, our paper has been the worst possible, our printing has been awful and our appearance very irregular. We blame no one, we lose no heart. We take it all as the price of our ambition to see the world made comfortable for man.

As the normal conditions return, however, we hope to be better off in many respects in the physical aspects of our work. But we must not forget that in a case like ours we gain where we seem to lose, we succeed where we appear to fail. It is not so much the appearance of things as the unseen fire within our souls that counts. We invite our comrades-in-arms to keep this inner fire burning in full blaze—the fire of faith and grief for sinking humanity. Let us prove ourselves worthy followers of that Man of whom it is written :

May be you will kill yourself with grief, sorrowing after them, if they do not believe in this announcement. (The Holy Qur-an 18 : 6).

PRELIMINARIES OF THE NEW ORDER

By W. B. BASHYR-PICKARD, B.A. (CANTAB.)

On an evening in the springtime I strolled in a garden ; and the birds were singing with a serene gladness. No sunshine was in that garden, for the brightness had sunk behind lofty distant trees ; but bright was the upper air and the sky a tranquil dome, pale, lucent in blue and pearl.

In that garden was peace ; in that gentle air of the springtime was peace ; in the songs of the birds was an unassailable assurance of joy, welling from peace.

And an influence came to me and said : "Write a new world, yet a world that is existing from of old, a world established upon truth, a world even as the Creator hath created it (Blessed is He!), a world brought forth shining out of the smirching darkness of ignorance, misunderstanding, misapplication, prejudicial twisting of pride, stubborn selfishness, sloven thought, sloven action, avarice and the coward's retinue of fears."

So I beheld the meaning of the admonition and was strengthened to write.

Now it seemed to me that the second World War was a cataclysm, an explosive outburst of suppressed forces, a titanic destruction of what had been : but, on the other hand, with equal clearness I saw that from chaos, from devastation, from the deluge of demoniac fury engulfing humanity in a flood of fire, some respite must arise, some better human state spring forth armed with the brightness of hope renewed, with vision clear

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to behold past evil, with confidence strong to raise up, to rebuild, with spirit victorious to reject past falseness and with determined will to plan nearer to truth and nearer to the heart's desire.

This I saw—that war was evil, that out of evil would come good; but how? Mere cessation of war would not produce prolonged and positive good. The peace humanity sought, clearly or groping blindly, was indeed a positive good, a living good, an active expression of happiness, not simply an absence of war for a time, for a truce filled with fears wherein shapes of evil loomed more largely, but an emancipation of mankind from war.

This final emancipation of mankind to dwell amongst the ways of an abiding peace, I saw was possible. The vision was already in my heart shining with certainty, and I must tell forth that certainty for all to hear.

I now considered the matter more carefully, how I should proceed.

With the cessation of war and the coming of peace, though a wave of relief, of exultation and of a wonderful new-won blessedness would undoubtedly sweep through the greater portion of the earth, this coming of human peace after devilish war would not of itself herald the uprising of the new world I had in mind and in heart. It had been necessary to struggle hard to win the war. To win the peace, to attain entrance into a new world, required also effort, forethought, guidance and determination.

For, behold, surveying the old world that had foundered, in the tempest of war, I found perfection established in the handiwork of the Creator. The

PRELIMINARIES OF THE NEW ORDER

beneficence of the sun, the life-giving rain, the crops, the trees, fruits—who, possessed of intelligence, could find any fault with these? Yet these had been from of old. The mutation of the seasons, the night and the day—who might change these? Who wish them changed? Where then, and how then, could there be a new world?

If not in God-created nature, then perhaps in the handiwork of man. Instead of hovels let us build palaces! In the stonework of glorious cities let us walk in a new world of peace and beauty and grandeur! Instead of poverty and the ignominy of squalor let us have plenty upon all sides! Let us have baths and basins and the refinements of civilized luxury! In our dress let us be elegant, picturesque and comfortable! Let us renew our health with sport and the freedom of outdoor exercise!

Shall it be so? and, if so, shall this and these constitute in themselves at our bidding our desired new world? or indeed any new world that will give us satisfaction?

From out the avenues of the past a myriad echoes answer: "No—not in these—not in these! These are material manifestations, and true peace and true happiness consisteth not in these."

Someone doubts: and a vibrant answer cries out: "Nay, nay! with these assured, with the magnificence of palaces, with the uprising of spacious cities, with poverty abolished, with the foulness of mean dwellings and filth uprooted from our midst, with accustomed cleanliness and the refinements of a cultured civilization ready to hand upon all sides and vigorous health

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prevailing widespread, behold the new world is accomplished unfailingly, inevitably."

Yet I say again: "It is not so. From of old refined civilizations have uprisen; culture has blossomed in her scented beauty of rapture: yet the canker hath overcome; the glory hath faded; the civilization hath decayed and fallen. Night hath closed over the brightness that was day."

So I repeat: "Not in these, though architecture hath grandeur, though cleanly and spacious cities move the mind with their magnificence, though health abound and refinement of living be established in civilization, not from these can a new world be established to endure."¹

How then?

Consider. It is not the outward, it is not the material that makes happiness. Not every millionaire is the happiest man on earth—not every poor man admits to abject wretchedness. In one and the same city many perchance taste heaven, many perchance writhe in hell. The same air, the same environment, the same age and conditions may engender both heaven and hell.

Why is this?

Heaven and hell are matters of the spirit; happiness is a matter of the spirit. Heaven and hell are within you and assail you not from without.

So in the wider sense—a new world cannot be built from without; it must arise from within, from

¹ "So how many a town did We destroy while it was unjust, so it was fallen down upon its roofs, and (how many a) deserted well and palace raised high"—The Holy Qur-an 22: 45.

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the heart of mankind. A new spirit must be born, a new heart throb within the breast of humanity before a new world can arise from out the ashes and chaos of the old. A rejuvenation of heart, a cleansing of the spirit, can alone lighten the eyes of men and lead and guide to the upbuilding of the sure abodes of peace, to the establishing of the house of wisdom, to the securing of a fetterless freedom for the feet of beauty, to the attainment of a carefree singing of the song immortal.

Mark you, I have said, "heart"; I have said, "spirit"; I have not said "intellect"; I have not said "mind." The attainments of mind and the contributions of intellect have changed the face of every day existence. They have not changed the inmost heart of man, upon which alone rests the possibility of obtaining the earthly rapture which is but a chord in divine symphony.

Is this plain? It were better twice to state than not once to make plain.

Earthly peace and blessing widespread over the masses of humanity, of every nation, of every climate, over rich and poor, over every degree of birth and breeding, of upbringing and education rests within the heart of man, can arise only from the living breath of the spirit of man. Things material fade into a comparative insignificance before the bright whiteness of this essential truth, of this essential preliminary.

Should there be any that still might doubt and who still should think that the mind and the intellect have not been given due prominence, it is necessary for me to say that there are higher and more potent and more blessed powers than that of the human intellect, wondrous and but partially developed though that be.

The intellect may give us 'planes and tanks and

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bombs, may carry us breathless into a new existence, may give us the telephone and radio and medicine and hospitals, may build up an intricate existence in which specialists can alone hope to prosper, to advance beyond humanity in one direction, if they lag behind in others ; the intellect may tighten the tempo of life's fitful dream, may, by a variety of ill-arranged experiences, burn out the candle of life in a fevered flickering ; but it is the abiding soul that alone can bring the enjoyment of peace, of calm progress along the eternal path, of an assured rapture of well being that cannot be taken away.

The world needs more of the expression of the spirit of kindness, of the foregoing of pride, of humility, of patience, of praise, more of self-effacement before the ever-presence of the Eternal, more effort at self-control, less flirting after the forgetfulness of pleasurable excitements, a more quiet realization and a banishment of the fear of being alone. There must be time for the moving of thought, time for contemplation, time for the breathing of the spirit in the presence of its life-source.¹

¹ "Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world; and the ever-abiding, the good works are better with your Lord in reward and better in expectation."—The Holy Qur-ān, 8 : 46.

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

His Life And Death

BY KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from Vol. xxxiii, p. 337)

THE ISLAMIC SOURCES

THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE HOLY QUR-AN

It is one of the favourite charges brought against Islam by Christian writers that it is less interesting than other religions, because its very basis, the Holy Qur-án, is less original than the Scriptures of other religions. They try to account for various passages in the Book as originating from the Bible and other sources : in other words, they say that the Holy Qur-án was not a Divinely revealed Book, but was filled up with fabulous matters current among the Jews and Christians of the Seventh Century and thus the wild legends and garbled stories of the Scriptures of the past were put forth as portions of Divine revelation. The Christian apologists try to explain everything ; but the only elements they leave out or do not account for in their analysis of Islam, are the Will of God and the character of the Holy Prophet. In their rather conjectural works they not only cut out the All-Pervading and All-Knowing Guide, but they also omit the very animating and inspiring soul whose personal character is a guarantee for the truth of his mission.

If all religions of the past originated with God, they must have contained, in the first instance, nothing but the truth. Again, if in course of time their Scriptures lost most of their originality, as the Old and New Testaments, for example, admittedly have, they must nevertheless have retained some particles of truth in them. Is a religion, therefore, less true because it recognises itself in other garbs ? Is the Book of that religion less original because it refers to or mentions all those particles of truth

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in the older Scriptures, which it claims to expand or supplant? Jesus himself asserted that he had come to fulfil, and not destroy, the Law of Moses. Would the Christian apologists admit that, on this ground, the religion he introduced into the world was false? It is strange, to say the least, that the avowed affinity of Christianity to Judaism has not protected Islam from this particular assault of the Christian apologists. Do not the present-day Old and New Testaments contain in them an *iota* of Divine Truth? If the Jews and Christians are willing to answer this in the negative, they are entitled to challenge the Divine origin of the Holy Qur-án, otherwise not.

The Holy Qur-án claims that it verifies what has been revealed in the past;¹ but being the last revealed Book it has distinguished the genuine from the spurious portions of the older Scriptures.² The Holy Qur-án speaks of itself as the "pure pages wherein are all the *right* Books,"³ and as bringing out what was concealed by the Jews and Christians in their books;⁴ and finally as the last Book, it replaced them⁵ because of the innumerable interpolations in them. Likewise, the Holy Prophet never claimed to be the *only* Prophet of God. Indeed, we are told that every nation of the world had prophets sent to them.⁶ Says the Holy Qur-án :

Surely We have revealed to you as We revealed to Noah, and the prophets after him, and We revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and Jesus and Job and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and We gave David a scripture. And (We sent) apostles We have mentioned to you before and apostles We have not mentioned to you; and to Moses Allah addressed His word, speaking (to him). (We sent) apostles as the givers of good news and as warners, so that people should not have a *plea* against Allah after the coming of apostles, and Allah is Mighty, Wise.⁷

¹ The Holy Qur-án, XLVI : 12, 30.

² *Ibid.*, II : 185.

³ *Ibid.*, XCVIII : 2-3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, V : 48.

⁵ *Ibid.*, XVI : 101.

⁶ *Ibid.*, X : 47; XVI : 36; XXXV : 24 ; etc.

⁷ *Ibid.*, IV : 163-165 ; see also XI : 78.

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The charge of want of Divine origin or originality has been levelled against the Holy Qur-án, simply because the Bible does not lay any claims to be of Divine inspiration, and the Christians have to admit human element in every part of it. The immense variety of its readings, the discrepant versions, the dishonest translations, the absurd dogmas and the conflicting doctrines—all these tax the faith of a Christian when he is faced with the claims of the Holy Qur-án, its uniformity, its universality and toleration ; and he is left with no alternative but to attack the character of the Holy Prophet as “an impostor” and the Holy Qur-án as the creation of this “Master mind” and thus “a forgery.”

But the Holy Qur-án and the Holy Prophet present a unique aspect : we can trace both of them historically, step by step and day by day. This peculiarity, which constitutes their strength, furnishes a complete answer to the charge of the Christians. We know the conduct of the Holy Prophet from his childhood to his death from facts in history, and we can proceed to judgment whether such a man could possibly be “an impostor” and whether he, could falsely represent “a creation of his mind” as the Book of God. I will first deal with certain aspects of his life, which conclusively prove the contrary and then support it with a discussion of the internal evidence from the Holy Qur-án.

The life of the Holy Prophet before the Call bears a testimony to his character. He possessed a modesty of deportment and purity of manners rare among the people of his time. Endowed with a refined mind and delicate taste, reserved and meditative, he lived a quiet pious life. The vulgar sports of the young never attracted him and his fair character, honourable bearing and honesty of purpose won for him the approbation of his fellow-citizens, and he received, by common consent at the age of

twenty, the title of *Al-Amin*, the Trustworthy. It is because of his stainless and noble character that it could be said :

Say : Indeed, I have lived a lifetime among you before it :
do you not then understand ? ¹

When the Holy Prophet received the Divine revelation to preach openly,² and in particular to his relations,³ he appealed to the same facts. Climbing one day on Mt. Safa, he summoned every tribe of Quraish by name till all the tribes had assembled there. "Have you", asked the Holy Prophet, "ever heard me tell a lie ?" They replied with one voice in the negative and pointed out that he was *Al-Amin*. "Would you believe me," then enquired the Holy Prophet, "if I tell you that a great enemy lies in the yonder valley, behind the mountains, in wait to attack you ?" The reply was : "Yes, certainly ; for we have never found you telling a lie." "Then," said the Holy Prophet, "know that I am a warner unto you of an appalling doom, unless you amend your ways." At this, as was to be expected, they first mocked at him, then became furious and left him.

The life of the Holy Prophet, from the moment of his Call to the time of his death, bears testimony to his sincerity of purpose. I will only mention a few incidents of his life. Let me begin with his first Call. It was his custom to withdraw into the desert every year during the month of Ramazan, for meditation and prayer. In the mount of Hira he often remained whole nights, plunged in the profoundest thought, deep in communion with the Unseen yet All-Pervading Power. In the still hours of the night, in the depth of his solitude, he heard the Call : *Read*. He simply and truthfully replied: "I cannot

¹ The Holy Qur-ân X : 16.

² *Ibid.*, XV : 99.

³ *Ibid.*, XVI : 214.

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read." Then came the first revelation :

Read in the name of thy Lord, Who created.¹

What were his feelings on this occasion ? Not those of a man who wished to be a prophet; not those of an impostor; certainly ! He had not as yet realized his mission. A severe conflict wrung his heart. Trembling, with the words which had been spoken to him engraved on his heart, he went home to his wife *Hazrat Khadijah* and cried : "Cover me with cloth ! Cover me with cloth !" and he told her what had happened and said : "I am afraid for my life." She covered him as directed and replied :

God is my protection, O Abul Qasim, He will surely not let such a thing befall thee, for thou speakest the truth, keepest faith and leadest a good life. Thou art kind to thy relations and friends, and dost not return evil for evil. What hath happened to thee ? Hast thou seen anything ?

Hazrat Khadijah urged him to be glad instead of sorrowful, for she at once believed with all her heart that he had been chosen to be the Prophet of her people.

During a period of some six months, called *fatrah*, the Holy Prophet did not receive any revelation. This period pressed heavily on his mind for he longed for the heavenly voice to speak again. At last it came and burdened him with a responsibility the extent and consequence of which he did not then know. He was commanded :

O you who are clothed ! Arise and warn.²

The Holy Prophet then became alive to the mission entrusted to him, and answered the Call. He lost all thoughts of himself, and his life henceforth was devoted entirely to the cause of humanity.

During the first three years of his mission he opened his mind only to those who were somewhat attached to

¹ The Holy Qur-ân, XCVI : 1.

² *Ibid.*, LXXIV : 1-2. The reference is to the cloak, with which the Holy Prophet had covered himself after the Call,

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him. Then he gathered his tribe and delivered the message: He met with scant success, but the denunciation of their idols lashed them into fury. At first they boycotted him. Then they insulted and outraged him—they even, to mention only one incident, heaped dirt on his head. His daughter, *Hazrat Fatimah*, wiped it off, and as she did so, wept. The Holy Prophet seeing it comforted her and said: “My daughter, weep not: for verily the Lord will be thy father’s helper.”

The Holy Prophet continued to preach with an unswerving purpose and a small band of followers gathered round him. Amidst frightful persecutions he held to the path of reproof and reform. The Quraish, at last realizing, to some extent, the hopelessness of their task, held a council. They called in a body on the Holy Prophet and Utba, their leader, addressed him thus.

O Son of my brother! thou art distinguished by thy qualities and thy descent. Now thou hast sown division among our people and cast dissension in our families; thou denouncest our gods and goddesses; thou dost tax our ancestors with impiety. We have a proposition to make thee. If thou wishest to acquire riches by this affair, we will collect a fortune larger than is possessed by any of us; if thou desirest honour and dignity, we shall make thee our chief and shall not do a thing without thee. If thou desirest dominion and power, we shall make thee king and thou shalt rule over us. If thou desirest a woman, name her and we will bring her to thee; point to her and she shall be in thine arms:

What a wonderful opportunity for a hypocrite or an impostor! He could have been the overlord of Arabia; and after establishing himself, he could have forced his views on them. But the Holy Prophet was neither a hypocrite nor an impostor. He stuck to the straight path; and in reply he recited the first eight verses of the forty-first chapter of the Holy Qur-ân which run thus:

The Praised, the Blessed God. This is a revelation from

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the Beneficent and Most Merciful God. A Book the verses whereof are distinctly explained, an Arabic Qur-ân, for a people who understand ; a herald of good news and a warner, but most of them turn aside and so they hear not. And they say : Our hearts are veiled from that to what you call us, and there is a deafness in our ears and a veil hangs between us and thee ; so act thou as thou shalt think best ; we shall act according to our own opinions Say : Verily I am only a man like unto you. It is revealed to me that your God is One God ; therefore follow the right way to Him and ask pardon of Him for what is past, and woe to those who worship many gods, (and to those) who give not alms, and believe not in the life to come. (But as for those) who believe and work righteousness, they shall receive an everlasting reward.

When the Holy Prophet had finished this recitation, he said to Utba : "Thou hast heard, now take the course which seemest best to thee."

The Quraish expelled the Holy Prophet from the Ka'ba, and went in a body to his uncle, Abu Talib and addressed him thus :

We respect thy age and thy rank but our respect for thee has bounds; and verily, we can have no further patience with thy nephew's abuse of our gods; therefore, do thou either prevent him from so doing, or thyself take part with him, so that we may settle the matter by fight, until one of the two parties is exterminated.

Abu Talib sent for the Holy Prophet and appealed to him to renounce the task he had undertaken. Imagine the feelings of Muhammad. On the one hand were the Makkans his most cruel persecutors ever ready to kill him if they could. There is his uncle, old and weary, unable to protect him any longer, appealing to him to give up his work ; and there is the Almighty God commanding him to preach His Word fearlessly. A very hard moment of trial, indeed. Finally, the Holy Prophet replied :

O my uncle ! if they place the sun on my right hand, and the moon on my left to force me to renounce my work,

¹ The Holy Qur-ân, XLI : 1-8.

verily I would not desist an *iota* therefrom till Allah made manifest His cause, or I perish in the attempt.

Abu Talib died in 619 C. E., and his death became the signal for the Quraish to redouble their persecution. Reduced to the last extremities for want of provisions and water the Holy Prophet had to leave Makka. He accompanied by Zaid, his freedman, proceeded to Taif and invited the people of that city to follow him. They hooted him through the streets, and pelted him with stones, and at last compelled him to leave the city pursued by a relentless rabble. Blood flowed from both of his legs ; and Zaid, endeavouring to shield him, was wounded in the head. The mob did not desist until they had chased him for some miles. Wounded and bleeding, footsore and weary, he betook himself to prayer. Raising his hands towards heaven, and with tears streaming from his eyes, he uttered the following touching supplication :

O Lord ! Guide my people on the right path. They do not know me ; make them understand, and do not forsake them. Perchance some of them will see the light and pay heed to Thy Word.....O Thou most merciful God ! I seek refuge in the light of Thy countenance, by which all darkness is dispersed and peace cometh here and hereafter. Solve my difficulties as it pleaseth Thee ; for there is no power, no help, but in Thee.

Dealing with this incident of Taif Sir William Muir says :

There is something lofty and heroic in this journey of Mohammad to At-Ta'if ; a solitary man, despised and rejected by his own people, going boldly forth in the name of God... .., and summoning an idolatrous city to repent and support his mission. *It sheds a strong light on the intensity of his belief in the divine origin of his calling.*¹

The Holy Prophet returned to Makka, but, as time rolled on, life there became impossible for him and his followers. He advised his Companions to go to Abyss.

¹ Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 112-113, (The italics are mine.)

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sinia, and they did ; but he himself with a few of the followers remained at his post. Later on, he and his followers were invited by two tribes of Madina, the Khazraj and the Aus, to go to their city. In similar circumstances any other man would have made any sacrifice to get their shelter, have agreed to any terms to procure their protection. But not so with the Holy Prophet. Before accepting their offer he took from them a pledge—called the Pledge of the Akaba—in the following terms:

We will not worship any but the One God. We will not steal, neither will we commit adultery, nor kill our children ; we will not slander in anywise, nor will we disobey the Prophet in anything that is right.

It is noteworthy that the members of these two tribes were not asked, nor did they pledge themselves, to defend or protect the Holy Prophet or his followers.

The study of Muhammad in history is a subject in itself and it is really beyond the scope of this article. I can here only discuss the question of his sincerity. The Christian critics of Islam have debated at great length, regarding this question. They are compelled, however, to admit indisputable facts relating to his life. But to question his sincerity in face of these admissions is really paradoxical. Could any one have done what the Holy Prophet did without the most profound faith in the reality and goodness of his cause ? There is not a single trait in his character which Christian calumny can couple with imposture ; on the other hand there is overwhelming evidence to prove that the Holy Prophet himself believed in what he preached to be the Truth. Even Muir has to admit that :

The first conception by Mohammad of a revelation from heaven.....leave on the mind no doubt of his sincerity and earnest searching after truth at this period of his life.¹

¹ Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 53.

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Gibbon in his *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire* says that no Prophet ever passed through so severe an ordeal as did Muhammad, since he first presented himself as the Prophet of God to those who were conversant with him—those who knew him best : his wife, his freed slaves, his cousins and his earliest friends. Muir, while agreeing with Sprenger that “the faith of Abu Bakr is the greatest guarantee of the sincerity of Mohammad in the beginning of his career, and indeed.....throughout his life,” goes on to say :

It is strongly corroborative of Mohammad’s sincerity that the earliest converts to Islam were not only of upright character, but his own bosom friends and people of his own household ; who, intimately connected with his life, could not fail otherwise to have detected those discrepancies which ever more or less exist between the professors of the hypocritical deceiver abroad and his actions at home.¹

George Elliot has said :

No man whether prophet, statesman or popular preacher, ever yet kept a prolonged hold without being in some measure degraded thereby. His teaching or his life must be accommodated to the average wants of his hearer, and not to his own insight. But, after all, we should regard the life of every great man as a drama, in which there must be important inward modifications accompanying the outward changes.²

I agree to differ, to some extent, with this dictum of Elliot, inasmuch as I consider that it cannot be applicable to the Prophets of God. In their teachings there must be a rigid consistency. I would rather agree with Bosworth Smith when he asserts that we have a right to demand in a great man—a Prophet of God certainly—that the intensity of the central truth he has to deliver should become, not less but more intense ; that the flame of his zeal should burn so clear as to throw into the shade other objects which shine with a less brilliant light, that the essence should

¹ Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 55.

² Elliot, *Romola*, Vol. II, V : 5.

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continue to be pure. To honest Christian students of the life of the Holy Prophet, it has always remained an object of wonder that, under different circumstances, he did not differ at all with himself. I quote here with only such slight alterations as adapt them to my subject, the words of Bosworth Smith : In the shepherd of the desert, in the Syrian trader, in the solitary of Mount Hira, in the reformer in the minority of one, in the acknowledged conqueror of Makka, in the virtual overlord of Arabia, in the superior of the Persian Chosroes and the Greek Heraclius, we can trace the same substantial unity, the same noble personality. History knows of no other man whose external conditions changed so much, and who himself did not change to meet them, in whose life the accidents changed so rapidly but the essence remained unalloyed.

Power, it is said, puts a man to his test. It brings new temptations and also entails new failures. But no man stood this test so successfully as did the Holy Prophet. When he unexpectedly entered Makka in triumph the three hundred and sixty idols vanished before him. He was now a victorious overlord of Arabia. There was now nothing left in Arabia to thwart his pleasures. If ever he had worn a mask at all, he would now at all events have torn it off. If lower aims had gradually sapped his higher ideals, or if his moderation had been directed, as Muir alleges, by his selfish interests, he would now have exposed his real self. Now was the time to gratify his ambition, to satiate his lust, to glut his revenge. Was there anything of the kind? No, the Holy Prophet in his treatment of the unbelieving city remained marvellously true to his programme. He was neither pitiless nor tyrannical, nor cruel through excess of zeal. He forgave the inhabitants of Makka, he forgave his most cruel persecutors, he even forgave Hinda, the wife of Abu Sufian, who

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had devoured the raw flesh of his uncle, *Hazrat Hamza*, on the field of Uhud. He forgave them all except Abdullah ibn Abi Sarh, because he had tried to falsify by tampering with a portion of the Holy Qur-ân.

The Holy Prophet had become the head of the state as well as of the religion he had introduced into the world ; but he never assumed the pretensions nor the legions of a ruler. He did not have a standing army, nor a palace. He never made himself a potentate. He despised the pomp of royalty. He was enjoined never to stretch his eyes towards the classes who had the worldly splendour,¹ and he consequently never desired for any wealth. His wives were ordained not to cherish any desire for worldly things,² and he, along with them, avoided the path of ambition and avarice. He, with them, submitted himself to the menial offices of the family. He swept the floor, kindled the fire, milked the ewes, mended with his own hands his garments and even clouted his shoes. Often no fire could be lighted in his house for scantiness of means. The simplicity of his private life was in keeping with his public life.

He was the overlord of Arabia. Was it not possible for him to gratify his every wish, to surround himself with pomp and luxury, to heap up riches ? The people were prepared to worship him. On the day his little son Ibrahim died there happened to be an eclipse of the sun. What an opportunity, I repeat, for a hypocrite or an impostor ! The people were saying : "It is because of the death of Ibrahim that the sun is in mourning." The Holy Prophet rebuked them for their foolishness and said :

The sun and the moon are two signs of the signs of God. They are not eclipsed on account of life or death of any one.

¹ The Holy Qur-ân, XV : 88 ; XX : 131.

² *Ibid.*, XXXIII : 28.

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He reminded his followers that he was merely a messenger and servant of God, bent only on obedience to his Master's commands. He repeated :

Verily I am only a man like unto you. Praise God Who guided me and raised me in His service.

Hagiology is not history ; but the contemporaries of the Holy Prophet, his enemies who rejected his mission and persecuted him, and the unbiased and honest modern writers on Islam, with one voice extol his piety, his justice, his veracity, his clemency, and his humility. Even a bigotted Christian critic of Islam, whom I have quoted more than once, had to admit that "Mohammad..... practised all these moral virtues."

The Holy Prophet never claimed to be anything more than a deputy of God on earth. He denied all knowledge of the future, except such as God had revealed to him.¹ He did not pretend to be super-human.² Indeed, he admitted that he could not even save those he loved.³ To his daughter and to his aunt he said :

O Fatima, my daughter, and thou Safiya my aunt !
Work ye out that which shall gain acceptance with the Lord :
for I verily have no power with Him to save you in anywise.

Hazrat Aisha, his wife, once asked him : "O Messenger of God ! do none enter Paradise but through God's mercy ?" "None, none, none," he replied, "neither shall I enter Paradise unless God covers me with His mercy."⁴ He was made to proclaim, time and again, that he was himself bound by and followed the law for the introduction of which he was instrumental :

And this is a book We have revealed, blessed ; therefore follow it and guard (against evil) that mercy may be shown to you.⁵

¹ The Holy Qur-ân, LXXII : 25-27.

² *Ibid.*, VII : 187-188.

³ *Ibid.*, XXVIII : 56.

⁴ *Mishkat-ul-Masabih*, I, Book IV : 280.

⁵ The Holy Qur-ân, VI : 156.

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Again :

Say : Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and death are (all) for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. No associate has He, and this I am commanded, and I am the first of those who submit.¹

And Again :

I follow naught, but what is revealed to me.²

And what a change had the few years of the ministry the Holy Prophet witnessed ? I will let Muir answer this question :

A band of several hundred persons had rejected idolatry, adopted the worship of God, and surrendered themselves implicitly to the guidance of what they believed a revelation from Him; praying to the Almighty with frequency and fervour looking for pardon through His mercy and striving to follow after good works, almsgiving purity and justice. They now lived under a sense of omnipotent power of God, and of His providential care over the minutest of their concern. In all the gifts of nature, in every relation of life, at each turn of their affairs, individual or public, they saw His hand. And, above all, the new existence in which they exulted was regarded as the mark of His special grace ; while the unbelief of their blinded fellow-citizens was the hardening stamp of reprobation. Mohammad was the minister of life to them, the source under God of their new-born hopes and to him they yielded an implicit submission.³

Through his character and self-surrender the Holy Prophet had succeeded in transforming a moral desert into a garden. Harmony and love was breathed into the hearts of those who had before been engrossed in the most inhuman practices of semi-barbarism. The mission of the Holy Prophet was accomplished in his life-time. Well did he, in his farewell pilgrimage, say :

O ye people ! Listen to my words, for I know not whether another year will be vouchsafed to me after this year to find myself amongst you. Your lives and properties are sacred and

¹ The Holy Qur-ān, VI : 163-164.

² *Ibid.*, X : 15.

³ Muir, *The Life of Mohammad*, 162.

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inviolable, amongst one another till ye appear before the Lord, as this day and month is sacred for all, and remember ye shall have to appear before your Lord, Who shall demand from you an account of your actions.....O Lord ! I have delivered my message, and have accomplished my work.

I had set out to narrate only a few events from the life of the Holy Prophet. I have, I think, said more than is sufficient to establish that the Holy Prophet, from the moment of his Call to the time of his death, believed in his mission to be Divine. No other man in the whole history of the world, however mighty his enthusiasm for a cause be, has ever served that cause more single-heartedly than did the Holy Prophet. In his hours of triumph, as in that of adversity, he was doing his duty without a taint of personal motive. To question his sincerity is to deny his work—God's work, I should say—which endures until the present moment.

I will now proceed to examine the very basis of this false accusation. Sir William Muir, while discussing the question whether the Holy Qur-án was a creation of the mind of the Holy Prophet, grounded his charge on certain conjectural statements. Referring to the journeys of the Holy Prophet to Syria, he says:

Though the direct route from Mecca to Basra would run a great way east of the Mediterranean, it *seems possible* that *either* now or in former journeys, Mohammad *may have seen* the Mediterranean Sea. *Perhaps*, the caravan visited Gaza, the favourite *entreport* of the Mecca merchants. His references in the Koran to ships gliding majestically on the waters, like "mountain," points to a larger class of vessels than he was likely to see on the Red Sea. The vivid picture of sea storms are among the finest sketches in the Koran, and *evidently* drawn from nature : the waves and tempest *may have been* witnessed from the Arabian shore; but the "mountain ships" more likely from the Syrian.¹

¹ Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 22 footnote (the italics are mine).

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This passage needs no comments. The italicized words show the flimsy ground on which Muir bases his conjectures. When every detail of the life of the Holy Prophet is known why should he, or anyone else, surmise at all as to facts? His object obviously was to mislead his readers.

There is another aspect. The Holy Qur-ân makes a reference to Moses in the following terms :

And a *witness* from among the brethren of Israel has borne witness of one *like him*.¹

Of course, the reference is to Moses because the Lord had promised to, and thus foretold through, him, that :

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren *like unto thee*.²

But to support his theory Muir says :

Whether this "Witness," and the other Jewish supporters of Mohammad, were among his professed followers, slaves perhaps, at Mecca.....*we can but conjecture*. Whoever his Jewish friends *may have been*, it is evident that he had a knowledge.....of the outlines of Jewish history and tradition. These, distorted by rabbinical fable, and embellished or travestied by the Prophet's fancy, supplied the material for the Scriptural stories which at this period form a chief portion of the Koran.³

To begin with Muir puts a deliberately wrong and false interpretation; on the word *witness* and then he, admittedly relying on conjectures only, comes to an erroneous conclusion, and palms it off as a fact in history. Further on he says :

To acquire so minute a knowledge of considerable portion of Jewish scriptures and legend, to assimilate these to his former materials, and to work them up into elaborate and rhythmical Suras, was a work that no doubt required much time and patience.....For this end many a midnight hour *must have* been stolen from sleep. Such employment is *probably* referred to in passages like the following :⁴

¹ The Holy Qur-ân, XLVI : 10.

² Deut, XVIII : 18.

³ Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 99.

⁴ *Ibid*, 102.

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Muir then quotes the first eight verses of the 74th chapter. He deceitfully omits the words *to pray* from the text and dishonestly construes the text to suit his purpose. The verses are :

O you who have wrapped up yourself ! Rise *to pray* in the night except a little, half of it or lessen it a little, or add to it. And recite the Qur-an well-arranged. Surely We will make to light upon you a weighty word. Surely the rising by night is the firmest way to devotion and the best corrective of speech. Surely, you have in the day time a long occupation. And remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with (exclusive) devotion.¹

The seventy-fourth chapter is called *Al-Muzzammil*, and the Holy Prophet is addressed in the same terms. It means one who is wrapped up or one *who has prepared himself for prayer*.² The revelation of this chapter belongs to the early Makkan period and the commentators generally consider it to be one of the very early revelations. It is beyond comprehension how these verses could ever honestly form the basis for the conjectures of Muir, or could mean that the Holy Prophet spent many midnights for the composition of the Holy-Qur-ān.

It is obvious that Muir was alive to the fact that he was dishonestly accusing the Holy Prophet of "the high blasphemy of forging the name of God." Well may he confess :

The confidence in his inspiration is sometimes expressed with imprecations which one cannot read without a shudder.³

In fact, the verses quoted by Muir and which precede these remarks must have sent a cold shiver across his spine, for therein a challenge is thrown out to the unbelievers in the following terms :

Say unto the unbelievers ; Work ye in your place. Wait in expectation. We too in expectancy are waiting.⁴

And

Say : Each of us awaiteth the issue ; wait therefore. Hereafter ye shall surely know, who they are that have chosen the straight path ; and who hath been guided aright.⁵

(To be continued.)

¹ The Holy Qur-ān, LXXIII : 1-8.

² Muhammad Ali, *Translation of the Holy Qur-ān*, p. 1128.

³ Muir, *Life of Muhammad*, 127.

⁴ The Holy Qur-ān, XI : 122, I have given in this and the next verse Muir's translation as given on p. 126.

⁵ *Ibid.*, XX : 135.

ISLAM AND THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD.

Only one man in history has tried to define poverty and it is he who has prayed to God to be spared the ignominy of poverty. It is the Holy Prophet Muhammad.¹ The fact is that when you specify the barest necessity of human life you really define poverty, as it is deficiency in the barest necessity that, strictly speaking, constitutes poverty. Without this specification it is difficult to say what poverty is. Equal distribution of the national wealth, the object of Communism, may still leave the members of a nation poor. Seen from the point of view of a higher standard of life under the socialistic administration, far from poverty being eradicated a whole nation may be regarded as suffering from poverty. The reformers may only have the satisfaction of making all the members of the nation share the poverty, instead of its being shared by a section of people; but poverty may still be regarded as a feature of the nation's life. Take the case of India. An average middle class man here lives in conditions which will be unbearable to an average so-called poor man in England. If to-day India is socialised, we do not expect the standard to be raised higher than the middle class man level. And if the dream of the Western socialists comes true and the whole of the world is socialised, and equal provision be made for inhabitants of fertile productive countries as well as for those of barren and unproductive ones, the standard of living may, for all we know, have still to be lowered. So judging by the current capitalistic standard, the whole world may in that case be regarded as suffering from

¹ O Allah ! I seek refuge in Thee from infidelity and poverty—*Al-Nisai*.

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poverty. It is essential therefore for a correct understanding of the true nature of the economic disease, called poverty, to come to a decision as to what constitutes poverty, i.e. the absence or shortage in the barest necessity of life. In the absence of this eradication of poverty will ever remain an unrealised dream. In the words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad :—

The son of man has no better right than that he should have a house wherein he may live and a piece of cloth whereby he may hide his nakedness, and a piece of bread and some water. (*Tirmizi*)

And in the absence of a better and a more sensible standard, the world will have to accept this as the correct standard to judge the presence or absence of poverty in a nation or an individual. Neither does it need any facts and figures to convince anyone that taking this as the measure of poverty, poverty can indeed be eradicated from the world. But if you leave the matter to the unbounded desire of man, you will never remove poverty either from an individual or from a nation ; far less from humanity. Indeed, the more you think of it, the greater will appear to you the essential need of specifying this barest necessity of human life. Because unless you first settle it, you cannot start on any programme for the eradication of poverty. While once you settle this question the movement for the socialisation of property and national wealth loses its sting of extremism, and the compromise between capital and labour becomes a practical proposition. Because any system that guarantees this barest necessity to the most unlucky man or woman in the realm, can be regarded as having rooted out poverty from its body politic. Systems of society may vary from nation to nation and from country to country, but so long as they agree to guarantee this minimum necessity of human life to its individual members, they may be regarded as having

conceded the principal demand of Socialism. And for all we know no enforcement of a dead level of equality is needed to ensure this minimum. As a matter of fact the idea of absolute communism may be regarded as already dead, seeing that Russia itself has discarded it. So all that really remains of this huge social commotion of the 20th century is this question of the eradication of poverty.

Now, this responsibility for the provision of the minimum need of the individual, may wholly, categorically and unconditionally rest with the Government, which as we have always contended is an unwieldy affair, or the responsibility may rest indirectly and ultimately with it. In the Islamic system the responsibility of the state is of the latter type. Had the European social systems acknowledged this much of responsibility of the state one can say, without any fear of contradiction, that the extremism of Marxism would never have come into existence.

Living in a world which condones poverty making it almost an invariable feature of social life it is difficult for a modern man to believe that poverty may be an exception and an accident even in a society where there is no enforced socialism. And the Islamic Society is exactly the type of society where it is really an accident. Yes, in a society where man's mind works normally, inspired by an enlightened philosophy and code of life and social behaviour follows normal rules of conduct, poverty in the sense enunciated above is an accident just like any other accident, such as a motor-car accident or the accident of drowning. And it needs no wild imagination to comprehend that even in a perfectly organised socialistic state, such accidents of want of food or barest clothing or barest residence may not be altogether non-existent. The only thing to see is whether it is really an accident taking place in spite of all the efforts to avert it or a course of things allowed to happen by sheer callousness

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or by lack of will to control and stop it altogether. Since a wrong social feeling and social behaviour in the West has produced a state of things that condones poverty and in a way enjoys it, it is wrong to suppose that poverty is a rule with all other societies and not an accident with them. As a rule, it may be abolished even by force, but as an accident it will be there so long as accidents of all sorts will continue to take place owing to the inherent imperfections of human control of things. 1300 years of experience has shown that in Islam poverty has never been a rule, unless it be in a society—that has been de-Islamised through its close contact with outside cultures. The standard of living may be low in a particular Islamic society but to call it poverty in the true scientific sense of the term will be a mistake if not an intentional attempt to confuse issues. The social system of Islam does not allow any individual to go without food or minimum dress or residence. The institution of the mosque apart from other institutions which are many, is a guarantee against such a mishap. Any wayfarer or homeless can stay in the mosque and has to be fed by the congregation if he so stays, and clothed as well if indeed he needs that too. But while waging ruthless and ceaseless war against true poverty, Islam has created a mentality in its followers which makes it honourable to give and not to take, either from an individual or from a collective body, call it state or whatever you like. This sense of self-respect, if you will think over it, is the only guarantee of economic stamina in a nation. Devoid of it, it may turn into a nation of shameless indolents. It needs a positive effort to keep alive this sense in a nation just as it needs an effort to banish poverty from a nation. Islam started this double war in the beginning of its history, and succeeded quickly to achieve its object. It is reported in authentic history that at the time of Caliph Umar, one could not

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find a person that would receive any help ; every one was in a position and a mood to give and not to receive. This, indeed, is the ideal society towards which Western Socialism called Sovietism is vaguely groping. The hand that gives, whether individual or collective, is better than the hand that takes whether individually or collectively. That is a dictum of the Prophet Muhammad. It is a strange understanding indeed that whereas private charity is deemed as derogatory to a man's self-respect the Western mind does not revolt at the idea of collective charity *viz.* the helps that come from the state. Perhaps it will be said that the private rich man shows an arrogance while giving the help but that again is lack of culture. Any man who has any experience of the Islamic Society, will readily aver that the giver in Islam assumes the humility of a beggar whereas it is a common experience to see a beggar assuming the pride of a giver. It is not unoften that one sees a beggar reprimanding a rich man who has not given anything to him or whose gift falls short of his expectations. No doubt, this is carrying a thing too far but it is a case of a virtue carried to an excess becoming a vice. In Islam it is honourable not to ask from anyone but from God, the Sustainer of the Universe. But if one does need any help he is never made to feel the small man that he will be if he becomes a member of the Christian Community.

In Islam it is the foremost duty of the state to see that no poverty in its true sense exists anywhere in the nation, but not always through direct interference. And here comes in another question that has been unnecessarily puzzling the minds of our Christian friends of the West.

State is neither a curse nor a punishment nor indeed the sole vehicle of collective social expression. 'It is a self-felt need of the individual. State is a provision made

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by the individual himself for guiding and controlling himself in moments of forgetfulness or excitement. It is an essential need and yet not the supreme need of social life. In normal condition of things, the native social feeling of man guided by his practical common-sense is enough guidance for social behaviour. State interference in such a condition will do more harm than good. It will stunt the growth of the nation mentally, morally, economically and politically. The state, however, must look after the cases of accident. Islam favours that view of the question which stands for as little state interference as possible, but it insists that its range of interference must cover all cases of accidents.

Like all other accidents, the accident of poverty must be its duty to avert and to redress. The State is accordingly held responsible for the provision of food, clothes and residence to the individual if he cannot provide for these himself. But it must not be burdened with the entire duty of feeding, clothing and housing the whole population. That will be a task too unwieldy and cramping at the same time. It will, moreover, be an unsuitable approach to the question to paralyse the instincts springing from biological and ethnological elements of animal life, because on these lines, as Islam rightly holds, lies the moral and spiritual evolution of man. It is noteworthy that whereas other religions as they exist to-day discard animal instincts as wholly Satanic, Islam considers these as the very basis of spiritual faculties. According to this religion original animal instincts properly guided and controlled are transformed into moral qualities which in their turn give birth to spiritual life in man. As we see it, Marxism has its moral source in the other, *i.e.* non-Islamic theology and believes animal instincts as of the Devil and productive of nothing but evil. That is why it is so anxious to crush the animal instincts of family

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We hope to supply later.

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powers. All executive powers in Islam must be under the strictest supervision of constitutional law. As for violence, there is no room for it anywhere in its system.

It disallows all kinds of revengefulness. Its attitude towards the enemies is enunciated in the following words :

“Repel evil by what is best, when lo, between whom and you there was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend.” (The Holy Qur-an, 41 : 34).

In what a sharp contrast does this stand to the policy of terrorisation advocated by Marxism and implied in the term class-war. Islam has no faith in violence. It believes only in fighting in self-defence and in replying in the same term and on an equal footing, never regarding anyone or any party as incorrigibly inimical. It knows that violence reacts in a greater violence, and cruelty in a greater cruelty. It knows that man goes wrong only through misguidance or through temporary insanity, if the term may be permitted in this connection. One may act with the object of stopping the evil so produced from spreading trouble but in no case should one regard the man as inherently vicious. That being the attitude of Islam, it does not favour either wholesale responsibility of the state in the eradication of poverty nor yet any violent measures adopted for the purpose. It believes in the native goodness of man to work for the imperceptible eradication of poverty provided no immoral influences are at work. Like all other sins economic sins, fall within the purview of state censorship. Indeed if economic sins *i.e.*, earning by anti-social ways, are not allowed to consolidate themselves in any society, poverty, in its real sense, cannot find any room to grow. It is because the Christian social system has no principles to guide them in this matter that they now feel obliged to cause violence to certain instinctive play of human faculties. Islam luckily is placed in a more fortunate position. It has regula-

ISLAM AND THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

tions to guide man in his small economic affairs, so that even when matters assume wider dimensions nothing is found to threaten social peace. The dictum "A stitch in time saves nine" is very appropriate to this case.

Given proper guidance to the individual man, telling him clearly which line of economic effort is right and which wrong, he will never be a callous hoarder. It is the sins of earning that mostly hardens the heart of a man. Nay, he must also be told the wholesome ways of spending the money. Given these instructions, there remains very little for the state to do in the eradication of poverty, excepting to bring the stray sinning person to book and making reparations for any accident that may have been caused either by intentional sin or the unavoidable imperfections of human efforts. In short, the state's function should be one of supervision, and correction like that of the police and nothing beyond.

"Capitalism," a typically Western phenomenon, may be regarded by some as a natural evolution of human social organism but to us Muslims it is a calamity befalling humanity in consequence of a wrong religion putting a premium on human sins, individual and social. From the era of Islam to that of Capitalism is a lapse, a fall. As a true offspring of the current system, Marxism may condone it, but we Muslims deplore its very existence and consider it a nightmare. It plays no part whatsoever in human social evolution unless it be to stay its progress. The poverty which forms the basis of Marxist slogan is a peculiar creation of Capitalism with all its Western implications. And if any system can really eradicate poverty in its truest sense it has to be the one which believes Capitalism to be a false system in its very origin. And while believing it to be false it must not adopt any violent measures to rectify its mistakes, otherwise the evil will go on swinging from extreme to extreme in the manner of a pendulum. And this is exactly the attitude of Islam towards the question.

Indeed, the enthusiasm for any reform of this nature must be enlightened by a correct knowledge of the deeper laws of human nature. The absence of this enlightenment always makes matters worse in course of time.

PRECIOUS GEMS

Convey to others no words of mine save those you know for a certainty.

* * * * *

Islam consisteth in cherishing the profoundest respect for the Commandments of Allah and extending sympathy to His creatures.

* * * * *

Imbue thyself with Divine attributes.

* * * * *

God saith : O man ! only follow My laws, and thou shalt become like unto Myself.

* * * * *

Whosoever loveth to meet Allah, Allah loveth to meet him.

* * * * *

There is a polish for everything, and the polish for the heart is the remembrance of Allah.

* * * * *

Actions shall be judged according to motives.

* * * * *

No man is true in the truest sense of the word save he who is true in word, in deed, and in thought.

* * * * *

Dost thou love thy Creator ? Love thy fellow-creatures first.

* * * * *

The best of men is he from whom good accrueth to humanity.

* * * * *

He that doeth good to the needy, God will do good to him in this world and the next.

* * * * *

Who is the most favoured of God ? He from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures.

* * * * *

The tax of charity shall be collected from the rich and given away to the poor.

MUHAMMAD

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