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Between Ourselves

THE COVER

The picture on the cover is that of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, England. The building, executed in the Indo-Saracenic style of architecture, was erected in 1889 C.E. by a British Orientalist, Dr. Henry Leitner, who had worked as an educationist for a number of years in India, with the funds supplied by an Indian Muslim princess, the Begum of Bhopal.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

The late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din (d. 1931 C.E.) rescued it from the heirs of Dr. Leitner, into whose possession it had passed, and restored it to the Muslim community of Great Britain.

Dr. Hamid al-Ghawabi, a medical practitioner and Egyptian Muslim.

Mr. William Bashyr Pickard, B.A.(Cantab), a British Muslim, is the author of several books on Islam. He writes fiction and poetry.

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Aminul Islam is a Pakistani Muslim.

Mr. Muhammad Tayyab Bakhsh is an Indian Muslim who is translating the voluminous life of the Prophet (*Sirat-un-Nabi*) by Shibli Nu'mani.

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51st YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Contents

Darkness Being Dispelled	3
Prayer — Medical and Religious Views by Dr. Hamid al-Ghawabi	5
The Divine Divan by William Bashyr Pickard	7
The New Menace and its Answer by Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi	8
O Spirit of Man and Songs for the Children by Amin al-Islam	11
Life of the Prophet by 'Allamah Shibli Nu'mani Translated by Muhammad Tayyab Bakhsh	12
The Concept of God in Islam by the <i>Maulana</i> Muhammad 'Ali	20
The Federation of the Islamic Student Societies in the United Kingdom and Eire by S. Kamruddin	24
Islam, Method and Organic Evolution by Dawood O. Kaje	25
The Concept of Causality in al-Ghazzali by Professor A. F. M. Hafeezullah Bhuyan, B.A.	30
A Dream which might come true — the Universal Temple of Divine Wisdom	32
In Memoriam of Dr. M. W. A. Quraishi by Mr. George Fowler	33
Islam in England	34
Book Reviews	36
Modern Islam — The Search for Cultural Identity , by Dr. G. E. Von Grunebaum; A Refutation of the Miraculous Conception, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus as Taught in the Kuran , by Dawood Sydow; Parcham-i- Zia , by Brahm Nath Dutt; Tauhid , Vol. II, by Muhammad Sultan Nizami; Hussain wa Yazid ; Annual Report of the Aftabud din Ahmed Homeopathic Dispensary .	
What Our Readers Say Enver Pasha, by Kemal Kuseu.	39

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"There will be no Prophet after me" — THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

Vol. 51 Nos. 4-5-6

April—May—June 1963

Dhu'l-Qa'dah-Dhu'l-Hijjah 1382, Muharram 1383 A.H.

DARKNESS BEING DISPELLED

"His Majesty, our exalted Lord, the Prince of the Faithful and the Protector of the Faith, the Sword of Islam Ahmad Ibn Yahya Hamid al-Din, God support him, King of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of the Yemen" (so ran his official style and titles) died in September, 1962.

We have in the past¹ expressed our views on the Imam Ahmad and his régime. We would now like mainly to quote extracts from Western sources on the occasion of his death. *The Times* of London said: "His Majesty the Imam will be remembered for his success in preserving his kingdom virtually intact against all the political and social ideas of the twentieth century. . . . The Imam Ahmad and his father were absolute monarchs. There was hardly a detail of administration with which they did not personally deal. While Imam Yahya's rule was tyrannical and oppressive, that of his son exceeded it in harshness. . . ." Another journal, the American magazine *Time*, said: "Ahmad did his best to carry the Yemen back to the 10th century instead of forward to the 20th. He grabbed choice lands and houses that struck his fancy, and jailed those owners who complained. He handled all the State funds, but never kept accounts or made a budget. The country had no daily newspaper, no long-distance phone, no credit system. . . . He raised money by adding charges to customs duties and levying internal tariffs on trucks and caravans. In the past, fertile Yemen, known as Arabia Felix, was the granary of Arabia, but it now must buy wheat and butter abroad. Exports of the Yemen's top-grade Mocha coffee dropped from 25,000 tons to 12,000, and last year to 5,000 tons. Starved and graft-ridden, the Yemen's 4,500,000 people began exporting themselves; some 500,000 emigrated. . . . In all Yemen there are only three hospitals, two high schools and a primitive military academy, but the six-man Yemenite Foreign Office used to concoct reports to the U.N. of totally imaginary hospitals and schools, including a College of Aviation. . . ."

Not very flattering, these statements about the Yemen and its Imam there. But they are neither false nor exaggerated in any material respects.

By Western standards, therefore, the Yemen is very backward, and the Imam a benighted tyrant of the worst possible calibre. By Islamic standards, too, the Imam could not be a model saint. The Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad abound with clear exhortations of justice, democracy, knowledge and progress. These Islamic concepts have been accepted as guiding concepts by many Muslim countries throughout the ages and have been implemented to the benefit of their peoples. But the Imam Ahmad, who alleged that he ruled according to the principles of Islam and purported to be the Imam (leader) of his Muslim people, bitterly opposed these ideals. He claimed to be a "Protector of the Faith" — but the faith he protected was certainly not the real Islam, but his own utterly selfish and most sinister prejudices and misconceptions which he forced upon an unwilling people literally by the sword. No Muslim could therefore genuinely mourn the Imam Ahmad or be anything but relieved and thankful at his passing.

Evil uprooted

The Imam Ahmad was succeeded by his son, Sayf al-Islam (the Sword of Islam) Muhammad al-Badr. While optimists nursed hopes that the new Imam may, as a result of his wide travels abroad during the days when he was Crown Prince, be less brutal, crude or antique than his infamous father, no one thought he could be a great reformer with any desire to break emphatically with the horrible traditions of the past. People, however, were not left wondering about the Imam for long, for to the great relief and jubilation of the Arab and Muslim peoples (except for a handful of backward and unpopular rulers and their cronies), a successful *coup d'état* took place in the Yemen not many days after the new Imam ascended the throne.

¹ *The Islamic Review*, July 1955, article entitled "Muslim World in Retrospect".

General Abdullah al-Sallal, of the Yemeni army, led the *coup* and proclaimed the Yemen a republic. He received the strong unequivocal support of the people, who hailed the overthrow of the benighted monarchy which had ruled over the Yemen for many centuries. General Sallal had no illusions about the enormous task that lay ahead. He knew that the Yemen, to which at one time the term *Arabia Felix* was apt, will have to wait some time and its people will have to undertake great efforts before it becomes really *Felix*.

The *coup* in the Yemen is not yet, however, complete, and the new régime is not yet fully established throughout the country. The Imam fled to the northern part of the country, and with the active support notably of the Sa'udi Arabian and also of the Jordanian monarchies he is being encouraged to harrass the Republicans by organized military operations. Faced with this threat, General al-Sallal has sought the assistance of the United Arab Republic, which has become a source of progress in the Arab world, and President Jamal Abd al-Nasir immediately rushed substantial assistance to him in men, weapons and supplies. The corrupt monarchy of the Yemen was a disgrace to the Arab nation and to the world of Islam, indeed to all humanity.

On the right road

The decision to merge the South Arabian Federation and the Aden colony was announced early this year. The agreement was made between a minority of servilely pro-British feudal sultans, emirs and sheikhs in the Federation, a handful of unrepresentative Aden citizens, and Britain. The majority of the people of Aden, many of whom are immigrants from the Yemen, are violently opposed to the merger, which they rightly consider as a plot to perpetuate British military and economic rule in the region and to frustrate the nationalist aspirations of the Arab inhabitants. When the feudal and arbitrary Imam Ahmad ruled over the Yemen, the people of Aden were opposed to any closer relationship with that country. Now, however, following the establishment of the republican régime, they enthusiastically seek union with the Yemen and oppose any move to tie their fate to that of the backward and British dominated territories of the Federation. Those who oppose the merger fear that the autocratic rule of the sultans, emirs and sheikhs of the Federation will prevent advance towards self-government within Aden colony. The people of Aden are clamouring for a wider Arab union with the Yemen, now that the brutal and detested rule of the old Imam and his successor has gone. But, as one spokesman for the nationalist movement put it, "Aden was opposed to union with the Yemen because it was feudal. But there was only one Imam there, and he has gone. There would be 26 like Imams in the new Federation. God help us!"

This is what a sober British newspaper, the *London Observer*, says on the question of the merger:

"The Government's decision to force through a merger between Aden Colony and the Federation of South Arabia (the emirates of the former Western Aden Protectorate) without securing the consent of the people of Aden is astonishing, dangerous and unwise. It is astonishing because it runs counter to every lesson taught by British experience in colonial emancipation

and in the handling of Middle East affairs during the past 15 years. It is dangerous because it threatens to produce — unnecessarily — a situation of violence and repression in the name of order and stability. It is unwise because it is certain to damage and perhaps eventually destroy the British interests it is meant to preserve. . . .

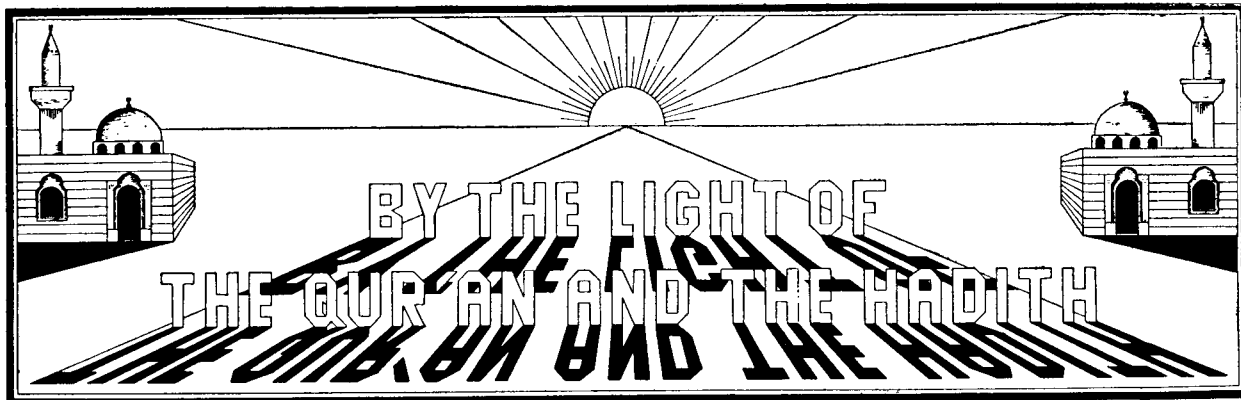
"The Aden situation can be made to look like a caricature of the classical picture of imperialism as painted by the most old-fashioned Communist or anti-colonialist propaganda — a picture one had hoped was now gone for ever. . . .

"There is the alliance between the imperial Power, local feudal chieftains and a minority of merchants against a predominantly nationalist and left-wing opposition with wide popular support. There is a franchise rigged to exclude most of the potential opposition vote. There are trade union leaders, jailed for political activity and organizing illegal strikes, who are flogged — with a cane — for threatening a hunger strike in support of one of their number. There is in the background the identification of the imperial Power with all the remaining reactionary régimes of the Middle East against the forces of reform and nationalism which have at last broken through in the Yemen and so into the Arab peninsula as a whole. And the reason for all this? To hold a military base, whether the local population wants it or not, the main purpose of which is to preserve oil interests in the Persian Gulf. . . ."

This is certainly a very frank and candid opinion, and we have little to disagree with it.

The announcement of the decision to merge Aden and the Southern Arabian Federation has been followed by strong popular protests and demonstrations in the region. The British authorities have responded to this by promulgating laws enforcing even harsher penalties for nationalist activities. But the people and their leaders remain undaunted. Efforts by the Federation rulers, helped in every respect by the British, to cause trouble for the Yemeni republican régime along the border and to assist the royalists, have so far not yielded any appreciable result. On the other hand, the republicans in the Yemen have not yet offered any material support to their brethren in the South (which they rightly call "Occupied Southern Yemen"). But their presence along the borders of the Federation as an enlightened and forward-looking régime is itself helping to show up the backward Federation rulers in contrast and to embarrass them very much indeed. It is also inspiring the people of the South to continue the struggle.

Political federation and unity among a nation united as the Arabs are by the bonds of religion, language, history, culture and heritage is inevitable. The desperate efforts of imperialism to protect its interests in the Arab world by strengthening the hold of backward and servile potentates on the peoples of the region is never likely to succeed. The will of the people must triumph in the end, and the hopes which the imperialists have founded on the support of the kings, sultans, emirs and sheikhs will evaporate once the people rise in anger and throw off the shackles. History, both ancient and modern, teaches us as much.



PRAYER — Medical and Religious Views

By DR. HAMID AL-GHAWABI

“The Prophet Muhammad, who is the supreme guide to behaviour for the Muslim, has given examples of his faith in the efficacy of prayer. History records that before the Prophet started the battle of Badr he stood up, facing the Ka’bah, and prayed to his God, saying: ‘O God, please grant me the victory you have promised!’ But when he offered this prayer he was not far away from the battlefield, nor was he in a mood of submissiveness to the enemy. Nor, again, was he overwhelmed by an enemy of much greater numbers or strength. He prayed to God only after he had himself done all he could possibly do to bring about a reasonable victory ”

God says : “ And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should hear My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way (The Qur’án, 2 : 186). “ And your Lord says : Pray to Me, I will answer you. Those who disdain My service will surely enter hell, abased ” (The Qur’án, 40 : 60).

Prayer is the means for securing God’s help. If the believer resorted to it, courage would come to him in the hour of fear, resolve, firmness and composure in the hour of insecurity, and hope and happiness in the hour of despondency and hopelessness.

The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, “Prayer is the weapon of the believer, the pillar of faith, and the light of heaven and earth ”.

Man must first do all he can

Prayer does not simply mean the repetition of words according to a fixed formula with the sure expectation of a favourable reply. He who prays in this manner does not really pray, and must not be disappointed if his prayer is not answered. Prayer must be accompanied by effort and active endeavour on the part of him who prays. He must do his very best to try to attain what is the subject of his prayer, and must leave to God only that which he himself has failed to achieve despite reasonable efforts. The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said : “The helpless is the one who allows himself what it likes, and then asks God for the fulfilment of his wishes.”

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Ka’bah, and prayed to his God, saying : “O God, please grant me the victory you have promised !” But when he offered this prayer he was not far away from the battlefield, nor was he in a mood of submissiveness to the enemy. Nor, again, was he overwhelmed by an enemy of much greater numbers or strength. He prayed to God only after he had himself done all he could possibly do to bring about a reasonable victory. He prepared his soldiers and equipped them fully, and he exhorted them to victory and uplifted their morale. And it was only after he had done all this that he addressed his prayer to God. He looked to Heaven only after he had done all that need be done or could be done within his power on earth. In these circumstances God granted him a deserving victory. “ And God made it only as good news for you, and that your hearts might be at ease thereby. And victory comes only from God, the Mighty, the Wise ” (The Qur’án, 3 : 125).

Prayer, as a means for seeking the help of the Almighty, should be accompanied by material efforts on the part of the one who prays. The early Muslims did this when they prayed to God before they engaged in battle or embarked on activities of great importance or difficulty. The Qur’án says : “And when they went out against Goliath and his forces, they said : Our Lord, pour out patience on us and make our steps firm and help us against the disbelieving people. So they put them to fight by God’s permission. And David slew Goliath, and God gave him kingdom and wisdom, and taught him of what He pleased. And were it not for God’s repelling some men by others, the earth would certainly be in a state of disorder : but God is full of grace to the worlds ” (2 : 250, 251).

Predestination and prayer

It may be said : Why pray, since God ordains every-

thing beforehand, and one's fate is predestined? The Qur'an says: "And there is no animal in the earth but on God is the sustenance of it, and He knows its resting-place and its depository. All is in a clear record" (11: 6). "And in the heavens is your sustenance and that which you are promised" (51: 22). "God amplifies and straitens provision for whom He pleases. And they rejoice in this world's life. And this world's life, compared with the Hereafter, is only a temporary enjoyment" (13: 26). These provisions make it clear that God determines matters and ordains the future of all. But it would be most perverse to interpret them as meaning that man must therefore be idle and do nothing whatsoever to get what he wants. Inactivity and laziness of this kind is definitely not ordained by God; indeed it is positively condemned. God says: "But when the prayer is ended, disperse abroad in the land and seek of God's grace, and remember God much, that you may be successful" (62: 10). Clearly, then, God does not say that man should be idle and inactive, and wait for fortune and bounties to be carried to him by angels on a golden platter, nor expect the angels from heaven to repel misfortune or evil!

It is reported that the Prophet Muhammad once saw a man from the Ansar called Abu Amamah sitting idle in the Mosque. He said to him: "Why are you still sitting in the mosque, Abu Amamah, when it is not prayer time?" Abu Amamah answered: "Because of worries and debts weighing upon me, O Messenger of God". The Prophet then said: "I will teach you a prayer which if you will recite, God Almighty will banish your worries and settle your debts. Say, 'O God, I ask you to banish worry and misery, banish anxiety and laziness, banish avarice and cowardice, and grant me refuge from defeat by debt or subjugation by men'." Abu Amamah offered this prayer, and was said to have overcome his worries and difficulties. The story illustrates an important modern principle in the treatment of psychological diseases. One is the sharing of worries and anxieties as a means of lightening the load. In the case of prayer, man would feel that God is sharing his burden. The other point is that laziness is among the qualities which are undesirable in the Muslim, both according to the Qur'an and the views of the Prophet Muhammad; and that the despondent interpretation of the idea of predestination is often nothing but acceptance of laziness as a way of life.

Prayer a source of boundless strength

Prayer is a source of great comfort and solace if properly rendered. It gives man a chance to relieve his feelings by confiding in his God and Creator, and by addressing the One Who alone can do and undo things at will. When one is faced with adversity or with a great task, nothing can give him greater strength than the feeling that God, the Omnipotent, is with him, guiding his steps and smoothing his way. One of the most important means for the treatment of psychological diseases, which often lead to positive organic diseases, is to improve the morale of the patient. Prayer is one of the best means for this, and the one who prays devotedly and establishes thereby real communication with his Creator will thereby tap a source of endless fortitude and guidance.

God helps those who go to Him

The Qur'an says: "Before then the people of Noah rejected — they rejected Our servant and called (him) mad, and he was driven away. So he called upon his Lord: I am overcome, so do Thou help. Then We opened the gates of heaven with water pouring down, and made water to flow

forth in the land in springs, so the water gathered together according to a measure already ordained" (54: 9-12). The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: "Beware of the prayers of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between such prayers and God, and God lifts these prayers up and opens the gates of the heavens for them, and says, 'I shall help you sooner or later'." God says: "And they planned a plan, and We planned a plan, while they perceived not. See, then, what was the end of their plan, that We destroyed them and their people, all (of them). So those who are their houses fallen down because they were iniquitous. Surely there is a sign in this for a people who know" (The Qur'an, 14: 38-39). "O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to take women as heritage against (their) will. Nor should you straiten them by taking part of what you have given them, unless they are guilty of manifest indecency. And treat them kindly. Then if you hate them, it may be that you dislike a thing while God has placed abundant good in it" (The Qur'an, 4: 19). The provisions of the Qur'an and the Hadith show that God helps those who seek His assistance, and listens to the prayers of those who are oppressed or subjected to injustice and directs His wrath against those who do evil to others. They also show that God knows what is best for His creatures, both in this life and in the Hereafter, and that eventually man must be content with his lot. Faith in such principles strengthens the determination and tolerance of those in distress and need, and instils contentment in the hearts of those who are dissatisfied.

How to pray

The Prophet Muhammad says: "Caution does not absolutely protect against fate, and prayer serves both for what has happened and what is going to happen; and adversity on its way down meets prayer, and both struggle against one another until the day of Resurrection." A very poetic and clear way of the relationship between fate and positive effort on the part of man this is.

Prayer is medicine to the sick. Simply the feeling that by prayer man gets into communion with the All-Powerful, the All-Knowing, and the All-Loving, is a theriac against depression and a source of the power needed for positive achievement.

If you pray, your very heart and soul must share in your prayer, for words, however elaborate or ornate, are useless with God, who looks to the innermost feelings. To be truthful in his prayer the Muslim must also abide by the wishes of God and the decrees of his religion in all respects.

Beseech your God in private, and He will grant your wishes in public. Know your God when you are in prosperity and happiness, and He will grant your wishes in public. Know your God when you are in prosperity and happiness, and He will know you when you are in distress. Let God be the main source from which you seek help, and remember what the Prophet Muhammad has said: "God would be displeased with him who does not ask him. Remember also what the Qur'an says: "Our Lord, make not our hearts to deviate after Thou has guided us and grant us mercy from Thee; surely Thou art the most liberal Giver" (3: 7). "My Lord, make me keep up prayer and from my offspring (too), our Lord, and accept my prayer" (14: 40). "And I withdraw from you and that which you call on beside God, and I call upon my Lord. Maybe I shall not remain unblessed in calling upon my Lord" (19: 48).

THE DIVINE DIVAN

Have we not been told?

'Twas said of old :

“ One thing in life is certain — that is ‘ death ’.

Beware, then, how thou livest !

O Mighty God and Merciful, here on this earth Thou givest
Thy servants Guidance, Help and Blessing, while as the
breath

Of life they draw rememb’ring Thee. And what is death?

Death is the Doorway to the Evermore,

The Portal ’twixt two lives, the transient and th’ eternal. Yea,

This may we say :

‘ Death is the Doorway to the Evermore ’.”

* * *

The One Lord keepeth thee. He knoweth best.

Trust firmly to His Guidance, both in work and rest.

The All-Wise keepeth thee. The All-Wise knoweth best.

So doubts shall ne’er assail thee, for the Ever-Present Guide
Shall teach thee how to spend thy moments. At thy side
With merciful direction goes the Ever-Present Guide.

Fear nothing, then! Fear nothing! — loss nor hurt nor harm,
Nor malice of humanity, nor sudden wild alarm.
His Peace upon thy wounds He poureth and the balm
Of peace abiding still shall wrap thee from all harm.

Nothing in life need thee dismay.

Is He not by?

Humble thyself and to Him pray.

Is He not by?

Cannot He hear thy cry?

Mighty and Merciful, Lord of all things,

To Whose praise the whole universe sings

Lord Ever-Present, Lord the Eternal, Lord the All-Wise,

Humbly before Him lay

The bouquet

Of thy heart’s sighs.

He is the Hearer, the Loved One, the Helper.

So, with the Constant-Companion, the Helper,

Ever at thy side,

Thou shouldst not fear, though the world be wide

And full of pitfalls and snares and delusions,

Oft turning thy plans to strange conclusions.

Still and ever, thou shouldst rejoice,

Hearing His voice.

Is He not nigh?

Cannot He hear

Thy sigh?

William Bashyr Pickard

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THE NEW MENACE AND ITS ANSWER

By ABUL HASAN 'ALI NADWI

“The Jihad of today, the greatest need of the present hour, is to repulse the storm of atheism, nay, to go ahead and make a direct assault at the heart of it. The chief task of religious renovation in modern times lies in the revival of faith among the young men and the educated classes of the ‘Ummat in the basic tenets of Islam, in its moral and spiritual scheme of things and in the messengership of the Prophet. There can be no better deed of worship today than to release the educated young men from the intellectual and psychological confusion and frustration they are going through and to satisfy them mentally with regard to Islam. The basic characteristics of paganism that have dug themselves into their minds must be weeded out to make place for the spiritual truths of Islam”

Islam has experienced many an apostatic upsurge during the course of its history. The most powerful of them was the one that manifested itself among the Arab tribes soon after the death of the Prophet. By this we mean the mighty rebellious movement that was nipped in the bud by Caliph Abu Bakr by his matchless courage and strength of will. Then, again, the second great onslaught of apostasy within Islam was the widespread swing towards Christianity at the expulsion of Muslims from Spain which had stolen into some other countries that were then under the domination of the Western Christian Powers, with the active support and encouragement of the Christian missionaries. Apart from these well-known episodes, there are also some stray instances like that of a few faint-hearted Muslims going over to some other faith in India. But such cases have been very rare, and the fact is that with the exception of the large-scale conversion of Muslims to Christianity in Spain, if it can be described as an apostatic movement, the general opinion of the historians of Islam is that the Muslim Millet (community) has never seriously had to encounter a general threat of apostasy.

Whenever an incident of this nature took place in Islam it always produced a twofold reaction within the Muslim society: (1) intense resentment and anger against the erring party, and (2) the termination of social relations. Anyone who had the misfortune to renounce the faith was the subject of unqualified contempt and resentment from among the Muslims and he automatically ceased to be a member of the Islamic society in which he had been born and brought up. All contacts and relationship between an apostate and his kinsmen became non-existent immediately. The walking over from the fold of Islam into that of another faith meant indeed the walking over from one world into another. The entire family of the apostate would turn its face against him. Now neither the kinship remained nor the bond of marriage nor brotherhood nor inheritance. A wave of apostasy would produce international repercussions and arouse at once the self-protective instincts of Islam and the Muslims. The intellectuals, religious leaders and preachers of the Islamic country where such a thing occurred would get arrayed as a united whole against the calamity. They would probe into its causes and draw pointed attention to the virtues and the superior merit of Islam. A current of agony and disgust would run through the entire body of the

Muslim society that was immediately concerned with it and shake it up at all levels. The *élite* as well as the common people would make it their one thought and concern. Such was the way in which the incidents of apostasy would react upon the consciousness of Muslims, although these were neither widespread nor of much consequence in life.

Now, however, the Islamic world has been confronted for some time with a threat of apostasy, which is casting its shadow over it from end to end. In its dimensions and vigour it has superseded by far all the previous threats. No country is safe from its sinister influence. But country is a far cry. There are, in fact, very few families which can claim to have been left unaffected by it. This is an apostasy that has come into the Muslim East in the wake of the political domination by the West, and it has posed the most serious challenge to Islam since the days of the Prophet.

What does “apostasy” mean in Islamic terminology? The exchanging of one faith, of one spiritual creed for another; the refutation of the teachings the Prophet had brought into the world, the rejection of the ideals and precepts that have been continuously attributed to him and are accepted in Islam positively as truths. And what course did an apostate adopt? He denied the Divine Messengership of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his Companions!) and adopted the creeds of Christianity, Judaism or Hinduism, or became an atheist and rejected Prophecy, Revelation and the concept of the Hereafter. This was the sense in which the people of the former times understood the term of “apostasy”. Anyone who abandoned his faith took the way of the Church, if he adopted Christianity, and of the temple, if he accepted Hinduism, and so on. His apostatic deed would be there for everyone to see; there would be no concealment of it. Fingers would be raised at him and the Muslims would cease to associate any hopes with that person. In brief, the apostasy of anyone was not hidden from the public view.

Ideology introduced by the West

Europe introduced into the West concepts and ideologies that were based on the repudiation of the fundamentals of spiritual belief and the rejection of an Omnipotent Power holding sway over the entire universe, that Supreme Consciousness which brought the world into creation and in

whose hands lay the dispensation of it (*Beware! It is He who doth create and it is He alone who rules*): Concepts which had their origin in the denial of the Unknown, the Supernatural, Divine Revelation, Messengership and the transcendental values — this was the common feature of all the branches of thought brought by the West, no matter whether they dealt with biology and evolution, or with ethics, psychology, politics or economics. However varied their field of study, they all had as their meeting ground the materialistic approach to man and his world and the interpretation of the phenomena along materialistic lines.

These ideas and concepts invaded the West and penetrated deep into the inner recesses of its soul. This Western materialistic philosophy was undoubtedly the greatest religion preached in the world after Islam. It was the greatest religion from the point of view of the extensiveness of its scope, the profoundest religion from the point of view of the depth to which its roots went and the strongest religion from the point of view of the capacity it possessed for conquering the hearts and minds of men. The educated and intelligent section in the Muslim countries was simply bewitched by it: it delightfully drank it in and assimilated it eagerly. It became a follower of the new faith almost in the same way as a Muslim follows Islam or a Christian follows Christianity, to the extent that it now adores it with all its heart, reveres its ideals and swears by the greatness of its founders and torchbearers. It propagates its teachings, denounces the creed that may run counter to it and forges links of brotherhood and fraternity with the other followers of the new faith. Thus, the new faith has become a sort of international family.

The religion of irreligiousness

What, then, is this new faith — however shy its protagonists may feel in giving it the name of a faith? It consists of, as we have said earlier, the rejection of that All-Knowing, Well-Informed Being, who is the Creator, the Owner of Destiny and the Architect of Life, of Futurity, the Last Day, Heaven and Hell, Divine Reward and Punishment, Prophecy and Messengership and the Holy Law, of the truth that God has ordained for all mankind obedience to the Prophet Muhammad, and made all salvation and enlightenment dependent on that loyalty, of the principle that Islam is that final and eternal message from the Divine which enfolds all that is good in this world and the next and embodies a programme of life which is higher and superior to every other system, and of the fact that the world has been created for man and man for God.

The ruling classes of Muslim States everywhere today are generally the followers of this new creed, although they may not all belong to the same category so far as ardency and the strength of spiritual allegiance are concerned. There is no doubt that in these classes are found individuals who bear faith in God and are believers in Islam, but the dominant feature of them all is, alas! nothing else but materialism and the Western philosophy of life that are rooted in atheism.

I say again that it is this apostasy which is nowadays engulfing the Islamic world from one end to another. It has made its onslaught from house to house, family to family. The schools, the colleges, the universities, have all been overrun by it. There will hardly be a family fortunate enough not to include a follower of this creed among its members.

Approach any Muslim family, talk to its members in confidence, question them, scratch them under the surface, and you are sure to find someone who will not be believing in God or the Hereafter or in the messengership of the Prophet or in the Qur'an as a Divine, eternal message and a complete code of life. Or, he will just say that he has given no thought to these questions because he does not attach any great importance to them. And his will be a lucky case.

A forsaken issue

This, indeed, is apostasy, but it has managed to evade the notice of the Muslims. The reason is that its victim does not go to the church or the synagogue, nor does he proclaim his conversion. The society, consequently, remains blissfully blind to it. It does not take exception to the apostate. It neither criticizes him nor punishes him, nor does it enforce the other social sanctions. The apostate retains his place and rights in the society and even gets a chance to dominate it.

It is here that the most vital issue confronting the Muslim world lies. It is an issue that affects the entire Islamic *millet*. A fast-spreading apostatic wave is sweeping over the Muslim society and yet no one cares. Even the *'Ulama* and the religious leaders feel no anxiety about it. In the past, when a critical question faced the theologians, they used to cry out in desperation, "An issue and no Abul Hasan! (That is, an issue of vital importance to the Millet has cropped up and there is no one with the wisdom of Hadrat 'Ali to solve it)." Now I say, "An issue and no Abu Bakr! (Apostasy is consuming the Muslim Millet like wildfire and there is no one with the faith and fortitude of Hadrat Abu Bakr to put it down)."

But remember that war is no solution of the problem, nor will it be wise to inflame public opinion over it. The problem cannot be solved by anger or by the use of force. Islam is not acquainted with the holy inquisition. It also does not follow vindictiveness and violence. The matter calls for patience, perseverance, sagacity and resolution. We will need immense study, thought and wisdom to deal with it successfully.

The secret of the world-wide success of irreligiousness

But how did this new faith infiltrate into the Islamic world? How did it come to acquire the strength to engulf the Muslims within their homes? What can explain the mighty hold it enjoys over the hearts and minds of men? All these questions require careful examination.

In the 19th century, Islam had begun to show signs of fatigue and decay. In matters of faith, religious endeavour, knowledge and learning, it had indeed touched the lowest point. Islam, in fact, knows no old age and no decline. Like the sun, it is ever young, ever new. It was Muslims who had fallen a prey to senility and degeneration. They had become narrow of outlook, their thinking had become stereotyped — it had lost originality — their minds had grown fossilized, they had lost enthusiasm for religion and, exceptions apart, the ability to present it in an effective manner.

In addition to this, no attempt was made to establish contact with the young educated classes and to influence their minds, although the future belonged to them. It occurred to no one to impress upon them the basic truths that Islam was an eternal, evergreen faith, the faith of

humanity, that the Qur'an was a miracle of a Book, permanent, unchanging, deathless, whose wonders knew no limit and treasures were boundless, that the Prophet Muhammad was the prophet for all times and the leader of all men, that the Islamic *Shari'at* was a marvel of legislation, endowed with the ability to march hand in hand with life, and answer all the demands it may make upon jurisprudence. Faith and morality and the spiritual values were the only foundations on which a civilized, enlightened society could be built. The modern civilization had only the means and the channels. The ends and the real springheads were contained in the teachings of the prophets. And a healthy and balanced system of civilization could come into being only when there was a harmony between the ends and the means.

This was the time and the situation when the West made its assault on the Islamic world with its whole armoury of thoughts and ideas that had been designed and hammered into shape in the minds of the foremost thinkers and philosophers of their time and garbed in such philosophical phraseology that they gave the impression of being the very essence of human wisdom and learning, although quite a good deal in them was purely empirical and had no basis in fact. The Western thinkers had taken a lot for granted and drawn conclusions that were in a measure just hypothetical. The systems of thought they had built up were an amalgamation of fact and fiction, of knowledge and ignorance and of firm reality and poetic imagination — yes, poetry, for you must not imagine that poetry is confined only to verse and rhyme; it is practised also in the realms of philosophy and the social sciences.

These ideologies came under the shadow of the political conquest by the West, and the people of the East bowed down before them emotionally and intellectually. The Eastern intellectuals welcomed them with open arms. Some of them, of course, accepted them intelligently and consciously, but their number was few. With the majority it was a case of unthinking acceptance, dazzled as they were by the material superiority of the alien rulers. They saw and they surrendered. Their minds were hypnotised and belief in the Western ideas became synonymous with progress and enlightenment and the most important criterion of learning and wisdom.

Thus it was that this new apostasy spread its wings over the Muslim East without hitch or opposition. Neither the father objected to the downfall of the son nor the teacher to that of the student. The religious leaders also felt no qualms about it. It was a silent revolution. The apostates did not wend their way to any church or temple; they did not prostrate themselves before any idol nor made sacrificial offerings at any polytheistic altar — signs which, in the past, gave an indication of the spiritual metamorphosis.

The apostates of old used to walk openly out of the Muslim society and associate themselves freely with the society of those whose religion they had accepted. They used to declare boldly their change of faith and submit

cheerfully to what they had to bear as a result of it. They did not insist upon clinging to the benefits accruing from membership of the society they had, in fact, forsaken. But the present-day apostates who turn their backs on Islam do not at the same time also walk out of the Islamic society in spite of the fact that, of all societies, it is only Islamic society which is based entirely on spiritual belief, since it cannot come into being without the presence of a particular set of religious doctrines. These modern apostates continue to avail themselves of all the possible advantages of being the members of the Islamic society. This is a unique situation for Islam.

As they have turned and twisted the moral and spiritual values, so also have these ideologies sown the seeds of paganish sentiments and feelings in the Muslim world, upon which Islam has declared an open war. For instance, take paganish factionalism, which is founded in race, country and nation. It is being venerated with fanatical enthusiasm and reverence. The human family is cut into pieces in its name. It has been raised to the status of a religion and given a complete control over people's thoughts and emotions. It is indeed the most powerful rival to religion, judged by the extensiveness and intensity of its influence. It gains ascendancy over one's entire existence. When it sweeps over a society it pushes the work of the prophets into oblivion and reduces religion into a soulless programme of rituals and ceremonies. The organic unity of mankind about which God had declared, "Lo! this your religion is one religion, and I am your Lord, so worship Me," is destroyed and the human race is divided into a number of warring camps.

Why is Islam opposed to factionalism?

Islam had dealt a deadly blow to this spirit and administered a clear warning to its followers against the dangerous possibilities it contained. Factionalism is the very antonym of a universal faith, since the basic oneness of humanity cannot endure even for a brief while in its presence. The negation of factionalism is an undisputed feature of the Islamic *Shari'at*. There are innumerable provisions to this effect in it. Anyone who has an awareness of the inner nature of Islam — in truth, of religion — will have no hesitation in realizing the truth of the assertion that religion can have nothing to do with racial or national prejudices. It is beyond dispute that a majority of the ills that are poisoning the world atmosphere today and dragging humanity to the verge of destruction are the direct results of national factionalism. Naturally, therefore, a man who had come to the world only to weld mankind into one whole, to bring it under the banner of a single faith, to call into existence a new society, based on the consciousness of God Almighty, the Nourisher of the worlds, and to give it peace in place of war, love in place of hatred, unity in place of division, could not but wage a relentless war against it till it became a thing of the past.

(To be continued)

O SPIRIT OF MAN !

By Amin al-Islam

"Honour to thee, O Spirit of Man !"¹
Angels wonder how you can
Suffer, bleed and withstand
The ceaseless pain, agonies and
The wrongs inflicted on you
By the ignorant who were not true
To the Simple Sayings of the Divine
Messengers who did really define
From age to age, with religious care,
"Faith, Freedom and Free Will to share
The total profit of the earth,
Of which there is no dearth ;
But in this short life-span,
'What man has made of man' !"

Sun is yellow, sky is blue,
When mixed, Nature finds clue
And turns green and is always True,
And never forgets to construe :

"Every action has its reaction,
Every deed its consequence,
And a ball
Rebounds with the same force
And at the same angle,
When thrown against a wall."

Racialism, feudalism, capitalism
Nazism, vainglorious nationalism
Countered by material Communism
Were born of deviations and cynicism
And came of a limited human brain,
When mankind lost the strain
Of the Eternal Fundamentals of God,
Given to the First Man to plod
Thru the centuries till the end of this Time,
To live a life, supreme and sublime.

1 John Bojer, *Great Hunger*.

SONGS FOR THE CHILDREN

By Amin al-Islam

... AND BE WHAT YOU WANT TO BE

When you will grow like Man, free,
When you will grow like a tree,
When you will see what you like to see
And be what you want to be.
When you will flow like a river
And bathe in the Light of the Giver,
Who will give you what you wish to get,
And you will be happy and will ne'er fret.

But it flows tick, tick, tick,
And we must be very quick ;
Balance-wheel says, "Don't go far,
And count the beats in the bar !"

* * *

WHAT I LIKE

I like to drink milk with a straw,
And I like to paint and to draw
With pink, yellow, blue, green and grey,
And I say what I mean to say ;
I like to bow only to God and to pray,
And I play when I should play ;

I like a good word and a good deed,
And I don't have any selfish greed
For having more than others and for money
Which I need, but not more than my honey ;
I like my mother and my father —
A love, which none can smother ;
I like to play and to sing
But I never forget God and to bring
Joy and happiness to others,
Who are either my friends or brothers.

* * *

TIME AND RHYTHM

You all are quicker than I
And Time fast flows by,
Sometimes in twos and sometimes in threes,
And sometimes it rustles thru the trees ;
Sometimes it trips and tiptoes,
And thru the river it rows ;
Sometimes it strides,
Sometimes it glides ;
Sometimes we feel time-sick,
When the ignorant give us a kick.
Man held it in a clock,
And tried to put a block,

LIFE OF THE PROPHET

BY 'ALLAMAH SHIBLI NU'MANI

Translated by Muhammad Tayyab Bakhsh

"If you find any Hadith to be contrary to reason and against accepted principles, then know it for certain that it is fabricated. We need not bother about the reliability or unreliability of its narrators. Similarly, reports that are contrary to our common perceptions and observations and do not admit of any interpretation need not be accepted. Similar is the case with the sayings that threaten people with severe chastisement for trivial errors, or which promise handsome rewards for insignificant acts of virtue, or the Ahádith which border on absurdity. Again, we should not accept a report which has a single reporter, while the nature of the report warrants the knowledge of the fact to many, or if an important incident which, if true, ought to have been narrated by hundreds of persons, is narrated by a single narrator"

MAGHAZI

The Arabs had no arts or sciences, but they loved to preserve the memory of their warlike deeds and tribal battles. It might therefore be expected that, of all the deeds and sayings of the Prophet, traditions concerning the Magházi would be the first to gain popularity, and prepare the ground for this science. But this was not the case. The traditions concerning the military activities of the Prophet were the last to receive attention. The *Khuláfa Ráshideen* (the first four righteous caliphs, viz., Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Ali) and the elder Companions of the Prophet paid more attention to those sayings and doings of the holy Prophet that concerned the *Shari'ah* and on which Islamic *Fiqh* could be based.

Imam Bukhári, while relating the battle of Uhud, has quoted the words of Sá'ib Ibn Yazid, which are : *I enjoyed the company of 'Abdul Rahmán Ibn Auf, Talha Ibn Ubaidullah, Miqdád and Sa'd for a long time. Still I never heard them quoting from the holy Prophet, except that Talha used to relate the incidents of the battle of Uhud.*

The Companions of the Prophet, named above, are very well-known and have reported a large number of Ahádith from the holy Prophet. The quotation given above may only mean that the elder Companions of the Prophet desisted from relating the Ghazawát, except Talha, who often spoke of Uhud. It was on this account that the writers who devoted themselves to Magházi, though very popular with the masses, carried little weight in the eyes of the learned. Ibn Isháq and Wáqidi are regarded as authorities on this subject ; of whom, Wáqidi is declared by the traditionists to have been a perfect liar. Ibn Isháq passes with some of the traditionists for a reliable man ; but others of equal rank do not regard him as worthy of trust. We shall discuss this in some detail later on.

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hambal says : *There are three kinds of writings that have no basis, viz., Maghazi,¹⁵ Maláhim and Tafásir (commentaries on the Qur'án).* Khatib Baghdádi, having quoted these words, says that while making this remark, Imam Ahmad must have had in his mind those

books in particular that are in reality baseless. He further says : *As regards the Tafásir (commentaries), the book by Kalbi and Maqátil Ibn Sulaimán are widely known. But Imam Hambal has said that the commentary by Kalbi is a monument of lies from the beginning to the end.*

He further remarked : *As regards the Magházi literature, the most famous book is the work of Muhammad Ibn Ishaq al-Wáqidi, who borrows freely from the Christians and the Israelites ; and Imam Sháfi'i has declared the books by Wáqidi to be full of lies.* In spite of that, it was impossible to ignore this branch of literature. Hence, the elder Companions of the holy Prophet and the traditionists took great care in narrating those facts that were very well preserved.

Written literature under the Umayyads

In the days of the first four caliphs, Islamic *Fiqh* and *Ahádith* were widely studied and regularly taught by a number of teachers. All this was done, however, orally ; and nothing was reduced to writing. The Umayyads were the first to order Muslim scholars to write. Qázi Ibn 'Abdul Birr, in his book *Jámi' Bayán al-'Ilm*, has quoted Imam Zohri as saying : *We did not like to transfer knowledge on to paper, but at last a time came when the nobles and the men in authority compelled us to do so.*¹⁶

Amir Muá'wiyah was the first man to invite 'Ubaid Ibn Shariyyah to come from the Yemen and to compile a history of the ancients. The book is named *Akhbár al-Mádieen*.¹⁷

Next to Amir Muá'wiyah comes 'Abdul Málik Ibn Marwán, who succeeded to the throne in the year 65 A.H. (684 C.E.). He ordered scholars to write books of every type and on every topic. Sa'eed Ibn Jubair, the greatest scholar of his time, was ordered to write a Tafsir, or commentary on the Holy Qur'án. This the Imam did, and the Tafsir was deposited in the State library. The Tafsir considered to have been written by 'Atá' Ibn Dinár is the same Tafsir that Sa'eed had written. 'Atá' secured it from the royal library.¹⁸

The reign of 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz gave a fresh

¹⁶ *Jámi' Bayán al-'Ilm*, Cairo Edn., p. 136.

¹⁷ *Fihrist Ibn Nadeem*, p. 244.

¹⁸ *Mizán al-I'tidál*, 'Atá Ibn Dinár's version.

¹⁵ *Maudu'át*, by Mulla 'Ali Qári, Muhtabá'i Press, p. 85.

impetus to literary works. Orders were promulgated all over the empire for the Ahádith, or traditions, to be brought into the form of books. Sa'd Ibn Ibráhim, who was a famous traditionist and was the Qázi of Medina, was made to write into books a very large number of Ahádith; and they were all sent to various parts of the Muslim empire. 'Allama Ibn 'Abdul Birr, in his book *Jámi' Bayán al-'Ilm*, says: *Ibn Ibráhim says that 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz ordered us to collect the Ahádith. We did so and wrote a large number of volumes, and 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz sent one each to the various parts of his empire.*¹⁹

Abu Bakr Ibn 'Umar Ibn Hazm Ansári, who was a renowned traditionist of his time, and the teacher of the famous Imam Zohri and the Qázi of Medina, was also ordered to compile books on Ahádith.²⁰

Hadith quoted by 'A'ishah

The Ahádith quoted by 'A'ishah occupy a unique place of their own. A large number of traditions handed down by her are those that deal with the fundamentals of Islamic *Fiqh*. It was on account of this that 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz paid special attention to the Ahádith quoted by her. 'Amrah Ibn 'Abdur Rahmán was a lady who had been brought up by 'A'ishah herself. She was very learned and remembered a large number of Ahádith. All the Muslim scholars agree that none knew the Ahádith quoted by 'A'ishah more than 'Amrah. 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz wrote to Abu Bakr Ibn Muhammad to collect and put into writing all the traditions reported by 'Amrah and send them to him.²¹

Special attention paid to Magházi

So far little attention had been paid to Magházi and *Sirat*.²² 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz ordered that the people should be taught and trained in this branch of knowledge in schools specially run for this purpose. 'A'sim Ibn 'Umar Ibn Qatádah Ansári (d. 121 A.H.—738-739 C.E.) was deeply read in *Sirat* and Magházi. He was ordered by 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz to start a school in the mosque of Damascus for imparting lessons in Magházi and Manáqib.²³

Zohri

It was in these very days that Imam Zohri wrote a book on Magházi, and, as Imam Sohaili, in his book *Raud al-Anaf*, has remarked this was the first book on this subject. Imam Zohri was the most learned scholar of the time, none being his equal in *Fiqh* and Hadith. He was the grand-teacher of Imam Bukhári, the famous traditionist. He took enormous pains to collect the traditions; visited the houses of each Ansári, queried all he could meet, young or old, man or woman, even such as lived in seclusion; and tried to pen down all that they knew about the holy Prophet. He himself belonged to the tribe of the Quraish and was born in the year 50 A.H. (670 C.E.). He had seen many of the Companions of the holy Prophet. In the year 80 A.H. (701 C.E.) he reached the court of 'Abdul Malik Ibn Marwán, where he was received with great honour. Most probably he wrote his famous book *Al-Magházi* at the instance of 'Umar Ibn

'Abdul 'Aziz. It is worth noting that he was closely connected with the court. Hishám Ibn 'Abdul Malik entrusted him with the task of educating his children. He died in the year 124 A.H. (741 C.E.).

Disciples of Imam Zohri

It was as a result of the endeavours of Imam Zohri that the people started taking interest in the science of Magházi, and, from among the large number of his disciples, there rose many who acquired eminent fame in this field of literature, such as Ya'qub Ibn Ibráhim, Muhammad Ibn Swáleh and 'Abdur Rahmán Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz. Accordingly, *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, when speaking of them, appends the words *Sáhib al-Magházi* (authors of the Magházi) as a mark of distinction.

Two of his disciples tower high above the rest, and they are also the ones who have said the last word on the subject — Musa Ibn Aqabah and Muhammad Ibn Isháq.

Musa Ibn 'Aqabah

Musa Ibn 'Aqabah was a slave of the family of Zubair, and had been a contemporary of 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar. In the Hadith, Imam Málik had been his pupil and held him in such high regard that he used to advise others to learn the science of Magházi from none but Musa. The chief characteristics of his writings are:

- (1) The writers of Hadith had cared little for the authenticity of traditions. But Musa usually did that.
- (2) Generally, authors delighted to relate as many facts as they came to know. As a result, almost all sorts of reports, spurious as well as genuine, found their way into their writings. Musa made a careful scrutiny and incorporated only those reports that he found to be correct. Hence it is that his work is much less voluminous than the other books on Magházi.
- (3) There was no age limit and anybody could attend the lessons of a teacher and pass on to others what he had learnt. But it was difficult for an immature mind to understand the actual meaning and implications of the Ahádith at a tender age. Much confusion was therefore created when they quoted traditions to others.

Contrary to others, Musa learnt the subject in his old age.²⁴ He died in 141 A.H. (758 C.E.). The work of Musa is not extant, but it was available for a very long time, and numerous references to it are to be found in all the old books on *Sirah* and Magházi.

Muhammad Ibn Isháq

He is the most famed writer of Magházi and is regarded as the highest authority. Wáqidi alone can match him as a well-known author; but Wáqidi is notorious for his absurd and baseless reports and his is a negative reputation. Muhammad Ibn Isháq, on the other hand, being a *Tabi'i*,²⁵ had seen one of the Companions of the Prophet, namely

24 *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, Musa Ibn 'Aqabah.

25 *Tabi'i* is the one who has seen or met any one of the Companions of the Prophet. *Taba' Tabi'i* means one who has seen or met a *Tabi'i* in his own lifetime.

19 *Jami' Bayán al-'Ilm*, Cairo Edn., p. 36.

20 *Tabaqát Ibn Sa'd*, Vol. II, p. 134.

21 *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, version of Abu Bakr Ibn Muhammad, and *Tabaqát Ibn Sa'd*, Vol. II, part II, p. 134.

22 It is to be noted that books dealing with Magházi (military campaigns) and *Sirah* (biography in general) naturally cover much common ground. They may, however, be distinguished by the conspicuity they give to the one or the other.

23 Description of the virtues of the Prophet and his Companions.

Anas. He was well-versed in the Hadith literature. Imam Zohri kept a watchman at his door and none could enter his house unannounced. For Muhammad Ibn Isháq, however, there was no such restriction and he had free access to him at any time. As regards the reliability of Muhammad Ibn Isháq, opinions differ. Imam Málik is doubtful about his veracity and does not consider him to be dependable. Other traditionists generally hold him to be dependable, at least in the field of Magházi and Siyar.

Imam Bukhári did not incorporate in his *Sahih* any tradition quoted by Muhammad; yet he drew upon him in the chapter *al-Qir'at*. In books of history, we find copious quotations from his book. He made the subject of Magházi so popular and interesting that even the 'Abbaside caliphs, who were more interested in other branches of art, took a fancy to it. Ibn 'Adi has acknowledged his special services, saying that no other work on *Sirah* and Magházi could equal that by Muhammad Ibn Isháq.²⁶

In his book *Al-Siqát*, Ibn Habban says that the main charge against Muhammad Ibn Isháq was that, while speaking of the battle of Khyber and other Ghazawát, he incorporated facts that he had heard from the Jews converted to Islam. As these facts must have been reported to the converts by the Jews, their reliability was questionable. 'Allama Dhahabi also declares that Muhammad Ibn Isháq reported facts that he took from the Jews and the Christians, whom unfortunately he regarded as reliable. He died in the year 151 A.H. (768 C.E.). Abu Bakr Sa'd Zangi ordered his book to be translated into Persian in the days of Shaikh Sa'di. I had the opportunity of seeing a manuscript copy at Allahabad.

Muhammad Ibn Isháq's work had a wide publicity and many famous traditionists edited it. Ibn Hishám brought out a very elaborate and enlarged edition, known as *Sirat Ibn Hishám*. As the original book of Muhammad is rarely available, its successor, *Sirat Ibn Hishám*, remains there as a relic of the original work.

Ibn Hishám

His name was 'Abdul Malik, and he was a very reliable traditionist and historian. He belonged to the tribe of Hameer, and it was, perhaps, for this reason that he wrote a history of the Himyar dynasty, which even exists to this day. His additional contribution to the science consists of clarifications of the difficult words that occur in books on *Sirah*. He died in the year 213 A.H. (828 C.E.).

The popularity of *Sirat Ibn Hishám* persuaded writers to put it in verse. Abu Nasr Fatah Ibn Musa Khudravi (d. 633 A.H.—1264 C.E.), Abdul Aziz Ibn Ahmad (better known as Sa'd Veeri (d. 607 A.H.—1210 C.E.), Abu Isháq Ansári, Tilismáni and Fath al-Din Muhammad Ibn Ibráhim, known as Ibn al-Shaheed (d. 793 A.H.—1390 C.E.), brought out versified editions. The last-named author's work contains some 10,000 lines and is entitled *Fath al-Gharib fi Sirat al-Habib*.

Ibn Sa'd

Wáqidi himself deserves no notice, but his disciple, Ibn Sa'd, produced so comprehensive and detailed a book on

the lives of the holy Prophet and his Companions that it stands unrivalled even today. He was a famous traditionist, and, though his teacher Wáqidi does not deserve any consideration, Ibn Sa'd may be relied upon. Khatib Baghdádi has remarked of him: *He (Ibn Sa'd) was an eminent scholar and had an unbiased mind. He has compiled a book dealing with the lives of the Companions of the Prophet, and of those that followed them, bringing the narrative to his own day. It is an excellent and beautiful performance.*²⁷

Ibn Sa'd belonged to the tribe of Háshim. Born in the town of Basra, he had taken up his residence in Baghdad. The famous historian Baládhari was his disciple. He died in 230 A.H. (844 C.E.) at the age of 62.

Ibn Sa'd's work is entitled *Tabaqát*. It has eight volumes, two dealing with the life of the Prophet and the rest with the lives of the Companions. As the lives of the Companions contain numerous references to the Prophet, these parts also form a valuable source for the Prophet's biography.

Ibn Sa'd's work had become almost untraceable and no library had any complete copy, when the German Emperor thought of its publication, donating a lakh of rupees (approx. £7,500) from his personal purse. Professor Sachau was entrusted with the task of procuring from various places the missing portions of the book. Sachau went to Constantinople, Egypt, and to other countries, and succeeded in collecting all the available volumes. Twelve professors of Europe took upon themselves the onerous duty of correcting the volume allotted to each; and thus came out this important book from a press in Leyden, carefully edited and printed. Much of this book is based on Wáqidi. But all the Ahádith having been referred to the sources, the ones originating from Wáqidi can be easily separated from the rest.

Several other books on *Sirah* were also written during this period; and books like *Kashf al-Zunun* mention their names. But we know nothing more about them now. They are no longer extant and so we need not worry about them.

In addition to the books on *Sirah*, there are historical writings following the models of the traditionists, that is, recording statements with reference to sources. These works, too, at least the portions dealing with the life of the holy Prophet, form a part of *Sirah* literature. Of these the foremost, and at once the most authentic, are the two books of Imam Bukhári.

Tárikh Kabir and Tárikh Saghir, by Imam Bukhári

¹ Unfortunately, both are very brief. One of these, *Tárikh Sagheer*, has now been published. This book does not devote more than a tenth of its space to *Sirah*, the topic covering only fifteen pages; and this, too, not in consecutive order. *Tárikh Kabir* is fairly voluminous, and I saw a copy of it in a library at the Mosque, Aba Sufia. But the account of the Prophet's life is short, and is found scattered here and there.

Imam Tabari

Among books of historical nature, an authentic and very comprehensive book is that of Imam Tabari, known as *Tarikh Kabir*. Tabari is a writer whose deep knowledge and sound scholarship are unanimously recognized by the traditionists. His commentary is considered the best of all the

26 *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*.

27 *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*: Muhammad Ibn Sa'd.

commentaries. The well-known traditionist, Ibn Khuzaimah, says that he knew none more learned than Tabari. He died in the year 310 A.H. (921 C.E.). Some traditionists (Sulaimáni in particular) have remarked that Tabari coined Ahádith for the Shi'ah). Regarding this charge against Tabari, 'Allama Dhahabi, in his *Mizán al-I'tidál*, says : *This is an allegation based on false misgivings. The fact is that Ibn Jarir is one of the most trustworthy Imams.*

Allama Dhahabi has further remarked that, although Jarir was inclined towards the Shi'ah sect, his Shi'ahism was unharmful. All the authentic and comprehensive books of history, such as *Tárikh Kámil* and the ones written by Ibn al-Athir, Ibn Khuldun, Abul Fidá, etc., are based on his work and abridge from it. Tabari's work, too, was almost unavailable ; and we owe much to the European scholars who put it in print.

Below we give a concise list of the reliable works and authors on the Sirah.²⁸

'Urwah Ibn Zubair (d. 94 A.H.—712 C.E.). He was the son of Zubair (on his mother's side) and the son of Abu Bakr's daughter. He was brought up by 'A'isha. He is the source of a good deal of information on Sirah and Magházi. 'Allama Dhahabi in his *Tadhkirat al-Huffaz*, says that he was learned in the art of Sirah. The author of *Kashf al-Zunoon* says that some people consider his book to be the first on the subject.

Shu'bi (d. 109 A.H.—727 C.E.). He was a great traditionist and had full mastery over the various sciences. He acted as ambassador of the caliph at Constantinople. He knew so much of Magházi that 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar once remarked, "Though I was myself present at many Ghazawát, his knowledge of them all was far greater than mine".

Wahab Ibn Munabbah (d. 114 A.H.—732 C.E.). He belonged to a non-Arab family of the Yemen. He had heard some Ahádith from Abu Hurairah. Prophecies about the advent of the holy Prophet, as found in ancient books, are mostly narrated by him.

'Asim Ibn 'Umar Ibn Qatádah Ansári (d. 121 A.H.—738 C.E.). He was a famous Tabi'i, or a contemporary of the Companions of the Prophet. He narrated Ahádith from Hadrat Anas, from his mother Ramayyiah and from his father. He had an exclusive knowledge of Sirah and Magházi, and taught the subject in the mosque of Damascus under orders from 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz.

Muhammad Ibn Muslim Ibn Shaháb Zohri (d. 124 A.H.—741 C.E.). Already spoken of.

Yaqoob Ibn Utbah Ibn Mughirah Ibn al-Akhnas Ibn Shura'iq al-Saqafi (d. 128 A.H.—745 C.E.). He was a highly reliable traditionist. Governors and State officials sought his advice in administrative affairs. He was believed to be one of the jurists of Medina and a scholar of Sirah. His grandfather had been the greatest enemy of the holy Prophet.

Moosa Ibn Aqabah al-Asadi (d. 141 A.H.—758 C.E.). Already mentioned.

Hishám Ibn 'Urwah Ibn Zubair (d. 146 A.H.—763 C.E.). He quoted Ahádith, generally from his father. He was the disciple of Imam Zohri, and was one of the learned men of Medina. Some traditionists hold that the traditions collected by him at Baghdad were not carefully scrutinized. A vast portion of Ahádith concerning Sirah has been reported by him. These traditions he traced back, through his father, to 'A'ishah. He had many famous disciples.

Muhammad Ibn Isháq Ibn Yassár (d. 150 A.H.—767 C.E.). Has been previously mentioned.

'Umar Ibn Ráshid al-Azadi (d. 152 A.H.—769 C.E.). Among the disciples of Imam Zohri, his name comes second to that of Imam Málik. He was one of the architects of the science of Hadith. He left a work on Magházi, which Ibn Nadeem reports to have been named *al-Magházi*.

'Abdur Rahmán Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Ausi (d. 162 A.H.—778 C.E.). He was also a disciple of Imam Zohri. In the *Sahih* of Muslim, only one tradition has been quoted on his authority. He is not considered reliable by traditionists. He was well-versed in Sirah. Ibn Sa'd calls him a great scholar of Sirah and other sciences.

Muhammad Ibn Swaleh Ibn Dinár al-Tammár (d. 168 A.H.—784 C.E.). He was a disciple of Imam Zohri, and was the teacher of Wáqidi. Ibn Sa'd says he was a scholar of Magházi and Sirah. Many traditionists hold him to be trustworthy. Abu al-Zannád, who was himself a great traditionist, says that if one wanted to learn the science of Magházi one must learn it from Muhammad Ibn Sálh.

Abu Ma'shar Najeeh al-Madani (d. 170 A.H.—786 C.E.). He was a disciple of Hishám Ibn 'Urwah. Thauri and Wáqidi have quoted from him. Though regarded by the traditionists as being less dependable a reporter so far as traditions are concerned, yet, in the sphere of Magházi and Sirah, they regard him as a high-ranking scholar. Imam Hambal says that he had a deep insight into the science of Sirah. Ibn Nadeem has mentioned his book, *al-Magházi*. His name frequently appears in Sirah literature.

'Abdullah Ibn Ja'far Ibn 'Abdur Rahmán al-Makhzoomi (d. 170 A.H.—786 C.E.). He was the great grandson of Mas'ud Ibn Mohzama, a Companion of the Prophet. He held a high position as a traditionist and was regarded as a learned scholar of Sirah. Ibn Sa'd remarks that among the Medinites he was a great scholar of Magházi.

'Abdul Malik Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abu Bakr Ibn 'Umar Ibn Hazm al-Ansári (d. 176 A.H.—792 C.E.). His family had been well-known for their knowledge of Sirah and traditions. It was his grandfather who under orders of the Caliph 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz, first compiled the Ahádith in book form. One of his paternal grandmothers, 'Amrah, had been tortured by 'A'ishah. He was himself deeply read both in Magházi and in Sirah. He received his education from his father and uncle. The Caliph Haroon al-Rasheed appointed him a Qázi. People learned from him the science of Magházi. He was also the author of a work known as *al-Magházi*.

'Ali Ibn Mujáhid al-Rázi al-Kindi (d. after 180 A.H.—796 C.E.). He was a disciple of Abu Ma'shar. Imam Hambal has quoted from him. He is a good writer on Magházi. Critics do not value his work as reliable.

²⁸ Most of the books mentioned herein are not available now in the original. This list has been taken from *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib* and other books. My object in giving some details is that readers may think and judge their authenticity or otherwise themselves.

Ziyád Ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Tufail al-Bakká'i (d. 183 C.E.—799 C.E.). He was a disciple of Ibn Isháq and the teacher of Ibn Hishám; and this forms a link between these two great scholars. His love for the art of Sirah led him to sell off his property and take to a wandering life in the company of his teacher, with whom he remained for a considerable period of time. In the eyes of the traditionists he carries little weight, but the writers on Sirah hold him in high regard as the most reliable reporter.

Salma Ibn al-Fadl al-Abrásh al-Ansári (d. 191 A.H.—806 C.E.). He was a disciple of Ibn Isháq, and quoted from him very often. He was the Qázi of Rai. Critics declare him to be unworthy of being quoted. But Ibn Mu'in, himself an authority on the science of *Rijál* (biographies of the reporters of the Prophet) confirms his claims to reliability and holds the books written by him to be the best writings on Sirah. 'Allama Tabari has quoted from him very often.

Abu Muhammad Yahya Ibn Sa'eed Ibn Abbán al-Amavi (d. 194 A.H.—809 C.E.). He was the disciple of Hisham Ibn 'Urwah and Ibn Jarih. Ibn Sa'd says that, though he did not quote many traditions, yet he is dependable. The author of *Kashf al-Zunoon* has mentioned him as one of the writers on Magházi.

Waleed Ibn Muslim al-Qarshi (d. 195 A.H.—810 C.E.). He was a famous Syrian traditionist, possessed of a fine memory and excelled all his contemporary scholars in Syria. He was regarded as far superior to Wáqidi, as far as Magházi and history are concerned. The number of books written by him is about seventy, one of which is *al-Magházi*. There is mention of this book in *al-Fihrist*.

Yunus Ibn Bukair (d. 199 A.H.—814 C.E.). He was a disciple of Hishám Ibn 'Urwah and Ibn Isháq. As a narrator of traditions, he occupies a place of mediocrity. Still, many a Muhaddith has confirmed his reliability. 'Alláma Dhahabi in his *Tadhkirah* calls him "Sáhib al-Magházi". He wrote marginal annotations on the book of Ibn Isháq (*vide* Zurqání Mawáhib, Vol. III, p. 10).

Muhammad Ibn 'Umar al-Wáqidi al-Aslami (d. 207 A.H.—822 C.E.). On Sirah, he has written two books, *Kitáb al-Sirah* and *Kitáb al-Tárikh wal-Magházi wal-Mab'ath*. Imam Sháfi'i says that the books written by Wáqidi are nothing but heaps of baseless lies. Many baseless Ahádith found in books of Sirah may be traced back to his work. A witty Muhaddith once remarked that if Wáqidi was a man of truth, then there was no one like him in the world, and if he was a liar, even then he had no rival in the world.

Ya'qoob Ibn Ibráhim al-Zohri (d. 208 A.H.—823 C.E.). He was a descendant of 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn 'Auf and was a disciple of Imam Zohri and some of his pupils. In Magházi, he occupied so eminent a place that critics of *Rijál*, e.g. Ibn Mu'in, took their lessons from him.

'Abdur Razzáq Ibn Hammam Ibn Náfi' al-Hameeri (d. 211 A.H.—826 C.E.). He is regarded as a reliable traditionist. He had his leanings towards Shi'ahism. Ibn Mu'in says of him that, even if Abdur Razzáq became an apostate, they could not stop reporting Hadith from him. In his later life he lost his sight, and so the traditions narrated during this period are not so dependable.

'Abdul Malik Ibn Hishám al-Hameeri (d. 213 or 218

A.H.—828 or 833 C.E.). Already mentioned.

'Ali Ibn Muhammad al-Madáyani (d. 225 A.H.—839 C.E.). He was a disciple of Abu Ma'shar Najeeh, Salma Ibn Fadl and others. He had a wide knowledge of the history of the genealogies of the Arab tribes. He is not reckoned as a traditionist, still he is regarded as a most eminent historian. He is the chief source of all the voluminous writings of *Agháni*. He wrote a large number of books on history and Ansáb or genealogy. His book on Sirah is a detailed work, which, as remarked by Ibn Nadeem, has been arranged under all sorts of multifarious headings.

'Umar Ibn Shubbah al-Basari (d. 262 A.H.—875 C.E.). He was a prominent scholar of history, Hadith literature, lexicology, poetry and grammar. He wrote histories of Mecca, Medina and Basra. His place in biography is very high. Ibn Májah, in Hadith, and, in history, Baladhari and Abu Na'eem, were his disciples.

Muhammad Ibn 'Isa Tirmidhi (d. 279 A.H.—892 C.E.). He is considered to be one of the most famous traditionists. His book of traditions occupies the third place among the "Six Authentic Books" of Ahádith. Another work by him is *al-Shamá'il*, in which he has described the life, habits and character of the holy Prophet. He took the utmost care to incorporate only genuine and reliable traditions. Many scholars have written commentaries and annotations on it.

Ibráhim Ibn Ishaq Ibn Ibráhim (d. 285 A.H.—898 C.E.). He, too, is regarded as one of the most outstanding traditionists. His book is entitled *Musnad Sahábah*, to which is appended *Kitáb al-Magházi*.

Abu Bakr Ahmad Ibn Abi Khaisamah al-Baghdádi (d. 299 A.H.—911 C.E.). He learned Hadith from Imam Hambal and Ibn Mu'in. He was a learned scholar of Sirah and history. His most famous work is known as *Tárikh Kabir*, which includes a portion dealing with the life of the Prophet.

Muhammad Ibn 'A'id of Damascus. His book on Magházi is regarded as a reliable work. His authority is very often quoted by men like Hafiz Ibn Hajar.

These were the earliest writers and the books written by them. Now we give a brief schedule of books by later writers which are based on the older Hadith literature and on the books mentioned in the above table. The following schedule mentions also the books written as commentaries on the older works. We include them as they are in themselves regular works with a good deal of matter not to be found even in the original books.

Raud al-Anaf. A commentary on the book of Ibn Isháq, written by 'Abdur Rahmán Sohaili, who died in the year 581 A.H. (1185 C.E.). He was among the leading traditionists. Almost all the later writers on Sirah borrow from him. The author himself, in the preface, has remarked that he had compiled this work with the help of 120 books. Its manuscript is in use with us.

Sirat Dumyáti, written by Hafiz 'Abdul Mu'min Dumyáti (d. 705 A.H.—1305 C.E.). References to this Sirah are frequently found in other works. The full title of the book is *al-Mukhtasar fi Sirat Sayyad Khair al-Bashar*. It contains some 100 pages. In the Patna library a copy of this book is to be found.

Sirat Khaláti, written by 'Ala al-Din 'Ali Ibn Muhammad Khaláti Hanafi (d. 708 A.H.—1309 C.E.).

Sirat Gázrooni, written by Shaikh Zaheer al-Din Ibn Muhammad Gázrooni (d. 694 A.H.—1294 C.E.).

Sirat Ibn Abi Tai, written by Yahya Ibn Hamidah (d. 603 A.H.—1206 C.E.). The book consists of three volumes.

Sirat Mughlatá'i. This is a famous book and has been published in Egypt. 'Allama 'Aini has written a commentary on this book, known by the name of *Kashf al-Lithám*.

Sharf al-Mustafa, by Háfiz Abu Sa'eed 'Abdul Malik of Nishápur. The book consists of eight volumes. Hafiz Ibn Hajar has largely quoted from this book in his *Isabah*, but some of the quotations cited by him are absurd and ridiculous. This shows that the author was not particular in making his selection of reports.

Sharf al-Mustafa Iktifá'fi Magházi al-Mustafa wal-Khuláfa' al-Thaláthah, by Háfiz Ibn al-Jauzi. This book was compiled by Hafiz Abu Rabi' Sulaiman Ibn Moosa al-Khalá'i (d. 634 A.H.—1236 C.E.). Many later writers have often quoted from this book.

Sirat Ibn 'Abdul Birr. Ibn 'Abdul Birr was a famous traditionist of his day. Quotations from this book are found in many other books.

'Uyun al-Athar, by Ibn Sayyid al-Nás (d. 734 A.H.—1333 C.E.). The author was a famous literary man of Spain. This book is a sober and comprehensive work. Quotations have been made from the most authentic books and sources indicated. A manuscript copy of this book is to be found in the Calcutta library and is in use.

Noor al-Nabrá's fi Sirat Sayyid al-Nás. This is a commentary on the book of Ibn Sayyad al-Nás, mentioned above. The name of the author is Ibráhim Ibn Muhammad. The book itself has been written after much research work. It contains valuable information and consists of two big volumes. There is a very fine copy of it in the library of Nadwah, India.

Sirat Manzoom, written by Zain al-Din 'Iráqi, who was the teacher of Hafiz Ibn Hajar. This book is in verse, and the author has stated in the introduction that his book contains everything, whether good or bad.

Mawáhib Ladunniyah. This book is written by Qastaláni, who is also famous as a commentator of Bukhári. He was equal in rank with Hafiz Ibn Hajar. The later writers have mostly relied on his authority. This book is, no doubt, exhaustive, but contains, at the same time, thousands of fabricated and false reports.

Zurqáni 'Ali al-Mawáhib. This is a commentary on *Mawáhib Ladunniyah*, mentioned above. In fact, no book except that of Sohaili was ever written with as much care and caution as this. It runs into eight volumes and has recently been published in Egypt.

Sirat Halabi. This is one of the most famous and exhaustive books on Sirah.

Authenticity and correctness of the sources

The events of the life of the holy Prophet were compiled almost one hundred years after his death. Hence, the writers had no written sources of the distant past and had to fall back upon memorized traditions.

Other people in a similar situation, when facts had to be recorded long after their occurrence, have generally picked up all sorts of street-gossip; even the names and addresses of the reporters are not known. At the most, out of this common talk a selection is made in the light of circumstances or on grounds of probability. Shortly after, this heap of rubbish passes for an interesting historical record. European literature on history is a collection of this type of material.

The Islamic methods of judging narrators

Muslims, among the nations of the world, may claim the credit of having established a far superior standard of compiling books of history. The first principle the Muslim historians laid down was that the incidents to be incorporated should be such as had been reported by a person who had personally witnessed the affair. If this was not the case, the names of all the intermediaries had to be serially mentioned up to the man who had been an actual participator or eyewitness. The important thing was to see what type of person they were, what calling they followed, what character they bore, what kind of understanding and memory they had. Further, it was to be discovered whether they were reliable persons, i.e., naturally credulous or critical, well-informed or ignorant. It was hard, almost impossible, to know all these details. Still, hundreds and thousands devoted their lives to this arduous job. They went from door to door, travelled on foot from one place to another, met persons who had anything to narrate, and gathered all possible information regarding their lives and characters. If the person had been dead, enquiries about him were made from those who had known him when living.

Asmá' al-Rijál

Thus biography gave birth to a new science of *Asmá' al-Rijál*, or biographies of the narrators, etc. To this branch of knowledge we are indebted for exhaustive information of at least a hundred thousand narratives; and, if the opinion of Sprenger is to be accepted, the number is not less than five hundred thousand.³⁰

These traditionists, without being influenced by the position or status of the men, gathered all relevant information without any fear. They brought to light many of the innermost secrets and laid bare the shortcomings of these persons, including kings and religious heads. Thus, hundreds of books were written; and hereunder we are going to give a brief description of some of them.

The first book on this subject (a critical study of the lives of the narrators) was written by Yahya Ibn Sa'eed al-Qattán. He was a scholar of such a high calibre that men like Imam Ahmad Hambal said of him, "Never have I seen the like of him". After Yahya this science gained wide popularity and many books were written. A few of the most

30 A famous German orientalist, who served at the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, for a long time. Sprenger brought out the edition of the book *Isabah*. In its preface, he says that he had found no other nation having developed so splendid a branch of knowledge as the *Asmá' al-Rijál*. He has further remarked that it was owing to this development that we get exhaustive details of about 500,000 narrators.

prominent among them were :

Rijál 'Aqili. It deals specially with the people whose reliability was questionable.

Rijál Ahmad (d. 216 A.H.—874 C.E.). The full name of the book is *al-Jirah-wa al-Ta'deel* (Scrutiny and Criticism).

Rijál Imam 'Abdur Rahmán Ibn Hátim al-Rázi (d. 327 A.H.—938 C.E.). It is a voluminous book.

Rijál Imam Dár Qutni. Imam Dár Qutni was a well-known traditionist. The book deals particularly with the weak narrators.

Kámil Ibn 'Ali. It is the most famous book on the subject, and all the later traditionists have drawn from it as their main source.

These books have now become almost extinct. Later writings based on them are, however, available.

The most comprehensive and authentic work in this category is *Tahdhib al-Kamál*, by 'Allama Mazzi Yusuf Ibn al-Zakí (d. 742 A.H.—1342 C.E.). 'Allama 'Alá al-Din Maghlatá'i (d. 762 A.H.—1360 C.E.) completed it in thirteen volumes. 'Allama Dhahabi (d. 748 A.H.—1347 C.E.) brought out a compressed and abridged version of this book. Many other traditionists also produced its abridged copies and companion books. Based on all this material, Hafiz Ibn Hajar at last compiled a voluminous work, *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, running into twelve volumes. It has recently been published from Hyderabad, Deccan (India). The author remarks that it took him eight years to write it. Another popular and authentic work in this line is *Mizan al-I'tidál* by 'Allama Dhahabi, to which Hafiz Ibn Hajar has made further additions in his *Lisán al-Mizán*.

Books on the science of Rijál consulted by me

Of all these sources I have made use of the following books : *Tahdhib al-Kamál*, *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib*, *Lisán al-Mizán*, *Taqrib*, *Tárikh Kabir*, *Tárikh Sagheer* (both by Imam Bukhári), *Thiqát* by Ibn Habbán, *Tadhkirah al-Huffaz*, by Dhahabi, *Mushtabah al-Nisbatah*, by Dhahabi, *Ansáb*, by Sam'áni, and *Tahdhib al-Asmá'*.

The first principle

The principle of investigation had been laid down by the Qur'an itself : *O you who believe, if an unrighteous man comes to you with a report, look carefully into it* (49 : 6). A saying of the Prophet, too, confirms this principle : *If one relates whatever one hears from others, it is enough for him to be regarded as a liar*.

Second principle

The second principle for ascertaining the truth of a report is to see whether the statement stands to reason.

This principle, too, has been enunciated by the Holy Qur'an. When the hypocrites started a calumny against 'A'ishah (wife of the Prophet), they advertised it in a way that even some of the Companions of the Prophet were misled. The *Sahih* of Bukhari and Muslim affirm that even Hassaan (son of Fatimah, daughter of the holy Prophet) was led to believe it, and consequently was ordered to be punished for libel. The Holy Qur'an says : *Surely they who*

concocted the lie are a party from among you.³¹ The author of *Tafsir Jalálain*, a famous commentary on the Holy Qur'an, while explaining the word *minkum* (from among you) says that by this is meant a group of Muslims. One of the many verses of the Qur'an that exonerate 'A'ishah and declare her chastity runs as follows : *And why did you not, when you heard it, say : It beseems us not to talk of it. Glory be to Thee ! this is a great calumny*.³² In accordance with the usual practice, the procedure for an enquiry would be to ascertain the names of the reporters and then to see if they were trustworthy. This done, their statements were to be taken. God, however, says that it ought to have been discarded as a baseless calumny. This establishes the principle that an incident that sounds so highly incredible ought to be rejected outright as false. This method of enquiry or *daráyah* (judging the truth of a fact in the light of one's previous knowledge and experience) had made a beginning, even in the days of the Companions of the Prophet.

Some jurists (*fuqahá'*) are of the opinion that ablution, or *Wadu*, becomes null and void if one takes a thing cooked on fire. When Abu Hurairah attributed this saying to the holy Prophet in the presence of 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbás, the latter said that if it was so, ablution becomes void, even if one drinks water heated on fire.³³ When Abu Hurairah narrated this, then 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbás did not consider him to be unreliable, and yet he was not inclined to accept this report (*riwáyah*) as it was against *daráyah*. In his opinion Abu Hurairah might have erred in understanding and grasping the actual meaning.

Side by side with the compilation of books on Sirah, the Muhaddithin were engaged in framing the principles of *daráyah*. A few of these principles are given here : *Ibn Jauzi says that if you find any Hadith to be contrary to reason and against accepted principles, then know it for certain that it is fabricated. We need not bother about the reliability or unreliability of its narrators. Similarly, reports that are contrary to our common perceptions and observations and do not admit of any interpretation need not be accepted. Similar is the case with the sayings that threaten people with severe chastisement for trivial errors, or which promise handsome rewards for insignificant acts of virtue, such sayings are mostly current among the preachers from the pulpits and the mystics, or the Ahádith which border on absurdity, e.g., the saying that one should not eat a gourd or pumpkin without slaughtering it. Consequently, some of the Muhaddithin hold that the absurdity of the statement is itself an argument for falsehood of the reporter. The presumptions given above sometimes relate to the reports, but they may as well relate to the reporters. For example, the story of Ghiyas and Caliph Mehdi. Further, the same presumption should hold good if someone narrates a tradition which has not been narrated by anyone else and the person has not even seen the person he narrates from, or the Hadith has a single reporter, while the nature of the report warrants the knowledge of the fact to many (as Khatib Baghdádi has elucidated the point in the early chapters of his book al-Kifáyah) or if an important incident which, if true, ought to have been narrated by hundreds of persons, is narrated by a single narrator ; for instance, if someone says that an*

31 The Qur'an, 24 : 11.

32 *Ibid.*, 24 : 16.

33 *Sahih* of Tirmidhi, chapter "Wadu".

enemy force prevented the pilgrims from making the holy pilgrimage.³⁴

The sum and substance of the above statement is that the following categories of reports are to be discredited without an enquiry into the character of their narrators.

- (1) The Hadith which is contrary to reason.
- (2) The Hadith which goes against accepted principles.
- (3) The one that belies common observation and experience.
- (4) The report that contradicts the Qur'án or a continuous (*mutáwatir*) Hadith or is against absolute consensus of opinion (*ijmá' qat'i*) and which does not admit of any interpretation.
- (5) The report that threatens severe punishment for a minor fault.
- (6) The report that promises big rewards for trivial acts of piety.
- (7) The report that looks absurd on the face of it, e.g., *Eat not a gourd without slaughtering it.*
- (8) A Hadith narrated by a person who has never personally contacted the man from whom he narrates.
- (9) The Hadith that ought to have been known to all and sundry, but has only a single narrator.
- (10) Any Hadith concerning an incident so noteworthy that, if it had actually taken place, it ought to have been related by many, and yet there is but a single narrator to report it.

Mulla 'Ali Qári, in his book *al-Maudu'át*, has elaborated certain criteria for judging the authenticity of Hadith, and has cited examples which we summarize below :

- (1) Any Hadith full of nonsense, which the holy Prophet could never have uttered ; for instance, the saying, " If one recites *La-Ilaha il Lalláh* (there is no god but Allah), God creates out of his words a bird with seventy tongues, each tongue having seventy thousand words (of the *Kalimah*).
- (2) Any Hadith contrary to observation and experience, e.g., *Brinjal is the cure for all ailments.*
- (3) The Hadith that cancels another Hadith of established authenticity.
- (4) The Hadith that states something against actual experience, e.g., *One should not take his bath with the water heated in the sun, because it causes leprosy.*
- (5) Any Hadith that does not sound like a prophet's utterance, e.g., *Three things improve eyesight, namely, green meadows, flowing water and a beautiful face.*

- (6) The Hadith that predicts the future, specifying the exact date and time, e.g., such an incident is to occur on such and such a day in such and such a year.
- (7) The Hadith that looks like the words of a physician, e.g., *Harisa* (a kind of sweet consisting of wheat, meat, butter, cinnamon and aromatic herbs) *gives vigour*, or that *a Muslim is sweet and loves sweets.*
- (8) The Hadith which is obviously wrong, e.g., *E'waj Ibn 'Unaq was 3,000 yards in size.*
- (9) The Hadith that clearly contradicts the Holy Qur'án, e.g., the saying that *the life of the world is 7,000 years.* If it is true then anybody can tell when the Day of Judgment would be, although it is established from the Qur'án that no mortal knows when the Last Day would be.
- (10) The reports concerning Khidr (the peace of God be upon him).
- (11) Reports whose language is vulgar.
- (12) Reports that describe the efficacy and merits of the various chapters of the Holy Qur'án, though many such traditions are found in the commentaries of Baidáwi and Kashsháf.

It was on the basis of these principles that the traditionists rejected many a saying, for instance, the Hadith that the Prophet had exempted the Jews of Khyber from the payment of *Jizya*, and had given them a written document to this effect. Mulla 'Ali Qári, while rejecting this saying, has given the following reasons :

- (1) Sa'd Ibn M'a'z is said to have been one of the witnesses to this document ; whereas Sa'd Ibn M'a'z had breathed his last in the Ghazawa of the Trenches (much earlier than the battle of Khyber).
- (2) The scribe of the document is said to have been Mu'á'wiyah. But Mu'á'wiyah embraced Islam after the conquest of Mecca (long after the battle of Khyber).
- (3) *Jizya* had not been enforced or enjoined till that time. It was enforced after the battle of Tabook.
- (4) The document is reported to stipulate that no forced labour would be exacted from the Jews of Khyber. As a matter of fact, forced labour was not in vogue then.
- (5) The people of Khyber had offered a stiff opposition to Islam and so they could not have been exempted from the payment of *Jizya*.
- (6) Tribesmen living in distant parts of Arabia who had not shown much hostility to Islam were not exempted ; how, then, could the Jews of Khyber be exempted from its payment?
- (7) Exemption from the payment of *Jizya* would mean that the Jews of Khyber had been friendly to Islam and as such deserving of concession. But the fact was that, shortly after, they had to be banished from their land.

(To be concluded)

³⁴ The original book, *Fath al-Mughith*, Lucknow edition, is full of mistakes. Unfortunately, I had to follow its text. In fact, these principles have been framed by the traditionists and not by Ibn al-Jauzi.

THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN ISLAM

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

By The Late MAULANA MUHAMMED 'ALI

(Continued from the previous issue)

Nature of the Divine attributes

Before speaking of the Divine attributes it will be necessary to warn the reader against a certain misconception as to the nature of the Divine Being. God is spoken of in the Holy Qur'án as seeing, hearing, speaking, being displeased, loving, being affectionate, grasping, controlling, etc., but the use of these words must not be taken in any sense as indicating an anthropomorphic conception of the Divine Being.⁶ For, He is plainly stated to be above all material conceptions: "Vision comprehends Him not and He comprehends all vision" (6 : 104). And He is not only above all material limitations but even above the limitation of metaphor: "Nothing is like a likeness of Him" (42 : 11). To indicate His love, power, knowledge and other attributes, the same words had to be used as are in ordinary use, but the conception is not quite the same. We say, God sees, yet we do not mean that He has eyes like our eyes, or that he stands in need of light whereby to see things as we stand in need of it. Or we say, He hears, yet we never mean that He has ears like ours, or that He stands in need of air, or some other external agency, to convey the sound to Him. Or we say, He creates or makes things, yet we do mean that he has hands like ours, or that He stands in need of material with which to make things. Similarly, His love, pleasure, displeasure, affection, pity, are independent of the organism which in the case of man gives rise to those qualities. Even the "hands" of God are spoken of in the Holy Qur'án (5 : 64), but it is simply to give expression to His unlimited power in bestowing His favours on whom He will. The word *yad*, which means *hand*, is also used metaphorically to indicate favour (*ni'mah*) or protection (*hifazah* (R)). Thus in

2 : 237 occur the words "in whose hand" (*yad*) is the marriage tie," where the word *yad* is used in a metaphorical sense. In the *Nihayah*, the word *yad* is explained as meaning *hifz* (protection) and *difá'* (defence), and in support of this is quoted the Hadith which speaks of Gog and Magog in the words *la-yadani li-ahad-in bi qitali-him*, which signify that no one shall have power (*yadan*, lit. *two hands*) to fight with them. Hence the *hands of God* in 5 : 64 stand for *His favours* according to the Arabic idiom.

Another, and a greater, misunderstanding exists as to the meaning of *kashf 'ani-l-saq*. Here is nothing but gross ignorance of Arabic idiom that has led some to translate it as meaning *uncovering of the leg*. The expression is used twice in the Holy Qur'án, once with regard to the Queen of Sheeba (27 : 44), and once passively without indicating the subject (68 : 42). It has never been used in relation to God. The word *saq*, which means *shank*, is used in the expression *kashf 'ani-l-saq* in quite a different sense, for *saq* also means *difficulty* or *distress*, and the expression under discussion means either *to prepare oneself to meet a difficulty* or *the disclosure of distress* (TA., LL.).

'Arsh

God's 'Arsh or Throne is spoken of, yet it does not signify any place, rather representing His control of things, as a monarch's throne is a symbol of his power to rule: "The 'Arsh of Allah is one of the things which mankind knows not in reality but only in name, and it is not as the imaginations of the vulgar hold it to be. . . . And it is taken as indicating *might* or *power* and *authority* and *dominion*" (R.). *Istawa 'ala-l-'Arsh* is the form which occurs more often in connection with the mention of 'Arsh, and a reference to it is invariably made after mentioning the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in relation to the Divine control of the creation, and the law and order to which the universe is made to submit by its great author. *Istawa* followed by 'ala means *he had the mastery* or *control of a thing* or *ascendancy over it* (R.). It is nowhere said in the Holy Qur'án that God sits on 'Arsh; it is always His controlling power that is mentioned in connection therewith. A similar misunderstanding exists with regard to *kursi* (lit. *throne* or *chair*) which is also supposed by some to be a material thing, whereas no less an authority than Ibn 'Abbas explains the word *kursi* as meaning 'ilm or *knowledge* (Bai. 2 : 255), and even according to lexicologists *kursi* here may mean *knowledge* or *kingdom* (R.). *Kursi* and 'Arsh, therefore, stand only for the knowledge and control of God.

Proper name of the Divine Being

Allah is the proper or personal name — *ism dhat* — of the Divine Being, as distinguished from all other names which are called *asma' al-sifat* or names denoting attributes. It is also known as the greatest name of God (*ism a'zam*). Being

6 The anthropomorphic view which likens God to man has never found favour among the Muslims. A very insignificant sect known as the Karramiyah (after the founder, Muhammad Karram) or the Mujassimah (from *jism*, meaning body, after the doctrine advocated by them) held the view that God was corporeal, but this has always been rejected by the learned among the Muslims. In one Hadith it is no doubt stated that the holy Prophet, in a vision, felt a touch of the Divine hand between his shoulders, but it is unreasonable to take for reality what was seen in a vision. Ash'ari says: "The Ahl Sunnah and the followers of Hadith hold that God is not a *jism* (corporeal) and He is not like anything else that He is on the 'Arsh . . . and that the nature of His *istiwa* is not known (*bi-la kaif*), and that He is Light" (ML., p. 21). He also says that He has hands the nature of which is not known (*bi-la kaif*), and eyes the nature of which is not known (*bi-la kaif*), and so on. It is also laid down as a basic principle regarding the Divine attributes that "He does not resemble His creatures in anything, nor does any of His creatures resemble Him" (FA., p. 14). And further, that the attributes of the Divine Being are to be taken as referring to the ultimate end (Bai.). Shah Wali Allah is more express and says in clear words that the *bast al-yad* in His case means only *being bountiful* (Hj., p. 63); while regarding Divine attributes in general, he writes in the same strain as Baldzawi, saying that "their use is only in the sense of the ultimate end of those words", adding that His *rahmah* for instance only means the bestowal of good things, not an actual inclining of the heart (Hj.).

a proper name it does not carry any significance, but as being the proper name of the Divine Being it comprises all the attributes which are contained separately in the attributive names. Hence the name Allah is said to gather together in itself all the perfect attributes of God. The word Allah being a proper name is *jamid*, that is to say, it is not derived from any other word. Nor has it any connection with the word *ilah* (god or object of worship), which is either derived from the root *aliha* meaning *tahayyara* or *he became astonished*, or it is a changed form of *wilah* from the root *waliha* which means *he became infatuated*. It is sometimes said that Allah is a contracted form of *al-ilah*, but that is a mistake, for if *al* in Allah were an additional prefix, the form *ya Allah*, which is correct, would not have been permitted, since *ya al-ilah* or *ya al-Rahman* are not permissible. Moreover, this supposition would mean that there were different gods (*alihah*, pl. of *ilah*), one of which became gradually known as *al-ilah* and was then contracted into Allah. This is against facts, since Allah "has ever been the name of the Eternal Being" (DI.). Nor has the word Allah ever been applied to any but the Divine Being, according to all authorities on Arabic lexicology. The Arabs had numerous *ilahs* or gods, but none of them was ever called Allah, while a Supreme Being called Allah was recognized above them all as the Creator of the universe (29: 61), and no other deity, however great was so regarded.

Four chief attributes

Among the attributive names of the Divine Being occurring in the Holy Qur'an, four stand out prominently, and these four are exactly the names mentioned in the *Fatihah*, the opening chapter, which by a consensus of opinion, and according to a saying of the holy Prophet, is the quintessence of the Holy Book. The chapter opens with the proper name Allah, and then follows the greatest of all attributive names *Rabb*, which, for want of a proper equivalent, is translated "Lord". Its real significance, according to the best authority on Qur'anic lexicology, is the *Fosterer of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion* (R). *Rabb*, therefore, means the Lord Who brings all that is in this universe to a state of perfection through various stages of growth,⁷ and as these stages include the lowest and remotest, which, as we go back farther and farther, dwindle into nothingness, the word *Rabb* carries with it the idea of the Author of all existence. *Rabb*, being the Bringer to perfection, is thus the chief attribute of the Divine Being, and hence it is that prayers are generally addressed to *Rabb*, and begin with the words *Rabba-na*, that is, our Lord.⁸ Indeed, after the proper name Allah, the Holy Qur'an has given the greatest prominence to the name *Rabb*.

The order adopted by the Holy Qur'an in speaking of the Divine attributes is a highly scientific one. Allah, the proper name, comes first of all in the Opening chapter, and this is followed by *Rabb*, the most important of the attribut-

ive names. Their relative importance is further shown by the fact that while the name Allah is found in the Holy Qur'an some 2,800 times, the name *Rabb* occurs about 960 times, no other name being so frequently mentioned. Next in importance to *Rabb* are the names *Rahman*, *Rahim* and *Malik*, which follow *Rabb* in the Opening chapter. These three names in fact show how the attribute of *rabubiyyah*, or bringing to perfection by fostering, is brought into play. *Rahman* and *Rahim* are derived from the root *rahmah*, which means *tenderness requiring the exercise of beneficence*, and thus comprise the ideas of love and mercy. *Rahman* is of the measure of *fa'lan*, and gives expression to the preponderance of *rahmah* in Divine nature, and *Rahim* is of the measure of *fa'il* and gives expression to the repetition of the quality of *rahmah*. On account of this difference, *Rahman* signifies that love is so predominant in the Divine nature that He bestows His favours and shows His mercy even though man has done nothing to deserve them. The granting of the means of subsistence for the development of physical life, and of Divine revelation for man's spiritual growth, are due to this attribute of unbounded love in the Divine Being. Then follows the stage in which man takes advantage of these various means which help the development of his physical and spiritual life, and turns them to his use. It is at this stage that the third attribute of the Divine Being, *Rahim*, comes into play, whereby He rewards every effort made by man in the right direction; and since man is making constant and continual efforts, the attribute of mercy conveyed in the name *Rahim* is also displayed continually. This is true both as regards the physical and spiritual development of man. The holy Prophet himself is reported to have said: "*Al-Rahman* is the Beneficent God Whose love and mercy are manifested in the creation of this world, and *al-Rahim* is the Merciful God Whose love and mercy are manifested in the state that comes after" (BM. I, p. 17).

To bring creation to perfection, however, there is needed the manifestation of yet another attribute. As submission to the law results in the advancement of man which brings reward, disobedience to the law must result in retarding his progress or bringing down punishment upon him. In fact, the punishment of wrong is as necessary in the Divine scheme as is the reward of good, and punishment is really only a different phase of the exercise of the attribute of *rabubiyyah* (fostering); for ultimate good is still the object. Therefore, just as *Rahim* is needed to bring his reward to one who does good or submits to the law, there must be another attribute to bring about the requital of evil. Hence in the Opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an, *Rahim* is followed by *Maliki yaum-il-din* or "Master of the Day of Requital". The adoption of the word *Malik*, or Master, in connection with the requital of evil is significant, as, ordinarily, it would be expected that there should be a judge to mete out the requital of evil. The essential difference between a judge and a master is that the former is bound to do justice and must punish the evil-doer for every evil, while

⁷ The theory of evolution, to which a reference is undoubtedly contained in the word *Rabb*, is expressly referred to on several occasions in the Holy Qur'an. Thus, speaking of the first state of the heavens and the earth, it says: "The heavens and the earth were closed up and We opened them" (21: 30). This, no doubt, refers to an early stage in evolution when there was a state of chaos, out of which the present highly complicated but completely regulated system has grown up. And speaking of the creation of man, it says: "And indeed He has created you through various grades" (71: 14), showing that man has been brought to the present state of physical perfection after passing through various conditions. In another place it is said that man "shall certainly enter one state after another" (84: 19), which is in all likelihood a reference to the spiritual evolution of man.

⁸ It should be noted here that Jesus Christ addressed the Divine Being as *Ab* or Father, instead of which the Holy Qur'an adopts *Rabb*. Now while *Ab* or Father carries with it the idea of paternal affection combined with fostering, the word *Rabb* carries a far grander idea, the idea of the unbounded love and affection of the Author of all existence, Who has not only given to the whole creation its means of nourishment but has also ordained beforehand for all a sphere of capacity and within that sphere provided the means by which they may continue to attain gradually to their goal of perfection. It shows how highly the Qur'anic revelation has developed the simpler ideas of previous revelations.

the latter, the master, can exercise his discretion, and may either punish the evil-doer or forgive him and pass over even the greatest of his iniquities." This idea is fully developed in the Holy Qur'an, where we are repeatedly told that while good is rewarded ten times over or even more, evil is either forgiven or requited with its equivalent. In one place, indeed, the unbounded mercy of the Divine Being is said to be so great that "He forgives the sins altogether" (39: 53). Hence the attributive name *Malik* is introduced to link the idea of requital with that of forgiveness, and that is why, while the Opening chapter mentions the name *Malik* as next in importance to *Rahim*, in the body of the Holy Qur'an it is the name *Ghafur* (Forgiving) which occupies that place of importance, the first two, *Rahman* and *Rahim*, along with the cognate verb-forms, occurring about some 560 times, and *Ghafur*, the next in point of frequency, occurring in its noun and verb-forms about 230 times. Hence it will be seen that the Holy Qur'an gives prominence to the attributes of love and mercy in God to an extent whereof the parallel is not to be met with in any other revealed book.

Ninety-nine names

From the explanations thus given of the four names, *Rabb*, *Rahman*, *Rahim* and *Malik*, from the frequency of their mention in the Holy Qur'an, to which no approach is made by any other name, and from their mention in the Opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an, it is clear that the Holy Qur'an looks upon these four names as the chief attribute names of the Divine Being, and all His other attributes are but the offshoots of these four essential attributes. On the basis of a report from Abu Hurairah, which, however, is regarded as *gharib* (weak) by Tirmidhi, ninety-nine names of God are generally mentioned, the hundredth name being Allah, but while some of them occur in the Holy Qur'an, others are only inferred from some act of the Divine Being, as finding expression in the Holy Book. There is, however, no authority whatever for the practice of repeating these names on a rosary or otherwise. Neither the holy Prophet, nor any of his Companions, ever used a rosary. In the Holy Qur'an, it is said: "And Allah's are the most excellent names, therefore call on Him thereby, and leave alone those who violate the sanctity of His names" (7: 180). The context shows that calling on God by His excellent names only means that nothing derogatory to His dignity should be attributed to Him; for, in the second part of the verse, those who violate the sanctity of the Divine names are rebuked,¹⁰ and the violation of the sanctity of the Divine names has been clearly explained as meaning either ascribing to God attributes which do not befit His high dignity, or ascribing

Divine attributes to that which is not Divine. Hence calling on God by His excellent names merely means that only those high attributes should be ascribed to Him which befit His dignity. The particular names of God mentioned in the Holy Qur'an are:

1. As relating to His person *al-Wahid* or *Ahad* (the One), *al-Haqq* (the True), *al-Quddus* (the Holy), *al-Samad* (on Whom all depend while He does not depend on any), *al-Ghani* (the Self-sufficient), *al-Awwal* (the First), *al-Akhir* (the Last), *al-Hayy* (the Ever-living), *al-Qayyum* (the Self-subsisting).

2. As relating to the act of creation, *al-Khaliq* (the Creator), *al-Bari* (the Creator of the soul), *al-Musawwir* (the Fashioner of shapes), *al-Badi'* (the Originator).

3. As relating to the attributes of love and mercy (besides *Rabb*, *al-Rahman* and *al-Rahim*), *al-Ra'uf* (the Affectionate), *al-Wadud* (the Loving), *al-Latif* (the Benignant), *al-Tawwab* (the Oft-returning to mercy), *al-Halim* (the Forbearing), *al-Afuww* (the Pardoner), *al-Shakur* (the Multiplier of rewards), *al-Salam* (the Author of peace), *al-Mu'min* (the Granter of security), *al-Barr* (the Benign), *Rafi'* *al-darajat* (the Exalter of ranks), *al-Razzaq* (the Bestower of sustenance), *al-Wahhab* (the Great Giver), *al-Wasi'* (the Ample-giving).

4. As relating to His greatness and glory, *al-'Azim* (Grand), *al-'Aziz* (the Mighty), *al-'Aliyy* or *Muta'al* (the Exalted, or the High), *al-Qawiyy* (the Strong), *al-Qahhar* (the Supreme), *al-Jabbar* (one Who sets things aright by supreme power),¹¹ *al-Mutakabbir* (the Possessor of greatness), *al-Kabir* (the Great), *al-Karim* (the Honoured), *al-Hamid* (the Praiseworthy), *al-Majid* (the Glorious), *al-Matin* (the Strong), *al-Zahir* (Ascendant over all), *Dhu-l-jalali wa-l-ikram* (the Lord of glory and honour).

¹¹ Considerable misconception prevails as to the true significance of the name *al-Jabbar*, a recent writer in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* going so far as to translate it by the word *Tyrant*, while the next name, *al-Mutakabbir*, is rendered by the same writer *Haughty*. This rendering is no doubt due to an obsession on the part of Christian writers that the God of Islam is an embodiment of cruelty, tyranny and frightfulness, and that a Loving and Merciful God is peculiar to the Christian religion. If the writer had consulted even Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, he would not have made such a blunder. Hughes renders *al-Jabbar* as meaning *Repairer* and *al-Mutakabbir* as meaning *the Great*. The rendering in the *Encyclopaedia* is distortion of the worst type. Because, he says, the word *Jabbar* has been used for men in a bad sense, the same sense is conveyed when it is spoken of God. There are hundreds of words in every language which are used in a good as well as in a bad sense, and no reasonable person would contend that because a word has been used in a bad sense, it cannot be used in a good one. The Holy Qur'an lays it down plainly that God's are the most excellent names; would the rendering *haughty* or *tyrant* be in consonance with that statement? Again the Holy Qur'an declares on more occasions than one that God is "not in the least unjust" to men (41: 46; 50: 29), and that He does not do injustice to the weight of an atom (4: 40). Can we in the face of this description of God call Him a tyrant? If we go to Arabic lexicology, we find that the word *jabr*, from which *al-Jabbar* is derived, means originally *repairing* or *setting a thing aright by supreme power* (*islah al-sha'i bi-dzarb-in min-al-gahri*) (R). The same authority goes on to say that it is used to indicate simply *repairing* or *setting aright*, and sometimes simply *dominance* or *supreme power*. When man makes a wrong use of dominance, he becomes a *jabbar* in a bad sense. But in the Holy Qur'an itself, this word *jabbar* is used of men simply in the sense of *mighty*. When Moses asked his people to enter the Holy Land, they said: "O Moses! There are *mighty men* (*jabbarin*) in it, and we will on no account enter it until they go out from it" (5: 22). All authorities are agreed that *al-Jabbar*, spoken of God, means either *One Who sets aright by supreme power* or *the Supreme One Who is above His creation*.

⁹ It is here that the makers of the Christian creed have made their greatest error. They think that the Son of God is needed to atone or make compensation for the evil deeds of humanity, since God, being a judge, cannot forgive sins unless somebody can be found to provide a compensation. In the Holy Qur'an we are told that God is a Master and He can, therefore, forgive. In fact, the Lord's prayer belies the Christian creed, because there we are told to pray that God may forgive us our sins as we forgive our debtors. How do we forgive a debtor? Not by pocketing the money but by relinquishing the debt. And if man can forgive, why not God?

¹⁰ Sanctity of the Divine names may be violated in three ways: (1) by giving the holy names of God to other beings; (2) by giving God names which do not befit Him; and (3) by calling God by names of which the meaning is unknown (Rz.). According to Raghīb, violation of the sanctity of the Divine names is of two kinds: (1) giving Him an improper or inaccurate attribute, and (2) interpreting His attributes in a manner which does not befit Him (R).

5. As relating to His knowledge, *al-'Alim* (the Knowing), *al-Hakim* (the Wise), *al-Sami'* (the Hearing), *al-Khabir* (the Aware), *al-Basir* (the Seeing), *al-Shahid* (the Witness), *al-Raqib* (the Watcher), *al-Batin* (the Knower of hidden things), *al-Muhaimin* (the Guardian over all).

6. As relating to His power and control of things, *al-Qadir* or *Qadir* or *Muqtadir* (the Powerful), *al-Wakil* (the One having all things in His charge), *al-Waliyy* (the Guardian), *al-Hafiz* (the Keeper), *al-Malik* (the King), *al-Malik* (the Master), *al-Fattah* (the Greatest Judge), *al-Hasib* or *Hasib* (the One Who takes account), *al-Muntaqim* or *Dhu-ntiqam* (the Inflicter of retribution), *al-Muqit* (the Controller of all things).

The other names which are taken from one sect or attribute of God mentioned in the Holy Qur'an are *al-Qabidz* (the One Who straitens), *al-Basit* (the One Who amplifies), *al-Rafi'* (the One Who exalts), *al-Mu'izz* (the One Who gives honour), *al-Mudhill* (the One Who brings disgrace), *al-Mujib* (the One Who accepts prayers), *al-Bai'th* (the One Who raises the dead to life), *al-Muhsi* (the One Who records or numbers things), *al-Mubdi'* (the One Who begins), *al-Mu'id* (the One Who reproduces), *al-Muhyi* (the One Who gives life), *al-Mumit* (the One Who causes death), *Malik al-mulk* (the Master of the kingdom), *al-Jami'* (the One Who gathers), *al-Mughni* (the One Who enriches), *al-Mu'ti* (the One Who grants), *al-Mani'* (the One Who withholds), *al-Hadi* (the One Who guides), *al-Baqi* (the One Who endures for ever), *al-Warith* (the One Who inherits everything).

Of the rest of the ninety-nine names, *al-Nur* (the Light) is not really a name of the Divine Being — God is called *Nur* in the sense of being the Giver of light (24 : 35) ; *al-Sabur* (the Patient), *al-Rashid* (the One Who directs), *al-Muqsit* (the Equitable), *al-Wali* (the One Who governs), *al-Jalil* (the Majestic), *al-'Adl* (the Just), *al-Khafidz* (the One Who abases), *al-Wajid* (the Existing), *al-Muqaddim* (the One Who brings forward), *al-Mu'akkhir* (the One Who puts off), *al-Dzarr* (the One Who brings distress), *al-Nafi'* (the One Who confers benefits), may be taken from the sense. Two more attributes falling under this head will be referred to later on because they require a detailed treatment ; these are the attributes of *speech* and *will*, which are dealt with in the chapters on Revealed Books and Qadar, respectively.

Predominance of love and mercy in Divine nature

It will be seen that the attributes of God given above have nothing to do with the autocracy, inexorability, vengeance and cruelty which European writers have generally associated with the picture of Him as drawn in the Holy Qur'an. On the contrary, the qualities of love and mercy in God are emphasized in the Holy Qur'an more than in any other sacred book. Not only does every chapter open with the two names *Rahman* and *Rahim*, thus showing that the qualities of love and mercy are predominant in Divine nature, but the Holy Book goes further and lays the greatest stress in explicit words on the immeasurable vastness of the Divine mercy. The following may be taken as examples :

"He has ordained mercy on Himself" (6 : 12, 54).

"Your Lord is the Lord of all-encompassing mercy" (6 : 148).

"And My mercy encompasses all things" (7 : 156).

"Except those on whom thy Lord has mercy, and for this did He create them" (11 : 119).

"O My servants who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, despair not of the mercy of

Allah, for Allah forgives the sins altogether" (39 : 53).

"Our Lord ! Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge" (40 : 7).

So great is the Divine mercy that it encompasses believers and unbelievers alike, as the above verses show. Nay, the very foes of the holy Prophet are spoken of as having mercy shown to them : "And when We make people taste of mercy after an affliction touches them, lo ! they devise plans against Our communications" (10 : 21). The polytheists are repeatedly spoken of as calling upon God in distress, and God as removing their distress. The picture of the Divine attributes portrayed in the Holy Qur'an is, first and last, a picture of love and mercy, and while these are mentioned under many different names and repeated hundreds of times, His attribute of punishment — extractor of retribution — occurs but four times in the whole of the Qur'an (3 : 3; 5 : 95; 14 : 47; 39 : 37). It is true that the punishment of evil is a subject on which the Holy Qur'an is most emphatic, but its purpose in this case is simply to impress upon man that evil is a most hateful thing which ought to be shunned ; and, by way of set-off, not only does it lay great stress on the reward of good deeds, but goes further and declares over and over again that evil is either forgiven or punished only with the like of it, but that good is rewarded tenfold, and hundredfold, or even without measure. But at the same time it must be borne in mind that punishment itself, as described in the Holy Qur'an, is of a remedial nature, and has in it nothing of vengeance ; it is the treatment of a disease which man has brought upon himself. It is still love, for its object is still to set a man on the road to spiritual progress by healing the disease. One of the names of God, included in the ninety-nine names by the later theologians, though not mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, is *al-Dzarr*, or One Who causes distress, but this bringing about of distress is only in the limited sense that it is a punishment for wrong-doing with the underlying object of reformation : "We seized them with distress and affliction in order that they might humble themselves" (6 : 42 ; 7 : 94).

Divine attributes as the great ideal to be attained

Just as a belief in the Unity of God is a source of man's uplift, making him conscious of the dignity of human nature, and inspiring him with the grand ideas of the conquest of nature and of the equality of man with man, so the numerous attributes of the Divine Being, as revealed in the Holy Qur'an, are really meant for the perfection of human character. The Divine attributes really serve as an ideal to which man must strive to attain. God is *Rabb al-'alamin*, the Fosterer and Nourisher of the worlds ; keeping that as an ideal before himself, man must endeavour to make the service of humanity, even that of dumb creation, the object of his life. God is *Rahman*, conferring benefits on man and showing him love without his having done anything to deserve it ; the man who seeks to attain to perfection must do good even to those of his fellow-men from whom he has not himself received, and does not expect to receive, any benefit. God is *Rahim*, making every good deed bear fruit ; man must also do good for any good that he receives from another. God is *Malik*, requiting evil, not in a spirit of vengeance or even of unbending justice, but in a spirit of forgiveness, in the spirit of a master dealing with his servant ; so must man be forgiving in his dealings with others, if he will attain to perfection.

The above are the four chief attributes of the Divine Being, and it is easily seen how they serve as ideals for man.

So it is with all His other attributes. Take, for example, those of love and mercy. God is Affectionate, Loving-kind, Benignant, Oft-returning to mercy, Forbearing, Pardoner, Multiplier of rewards, Author of peace, Granter of security, Restorer of loss, Benign, Exalter of ranks, Ample-giving, Bestower of sustenance and so on ; all this man must also try to be. Again let us take His attributes of knowledge. God is Knowing, Wise, Aware, Seeing, Watcher, Knower of hidden things ; man must also try to perfect his knowledge of things and acquire wisdom. In fact, where man is spoken of as having been made a vicegerent of God (2 : 30), his chief characteristic, that which marks him out as the ruler of creation, is stated to be a knowledge of things (2 : 31). And as regards wisdom, it is written in the Holy Book that

the holy Prophet was raised up to teach wisdom (2 : 151 ; 3 : 163 ; 62 : 2). Take even His attributes of power and greatness and control of all things ; even the angels are commanded to make obeisance to man, showing that man is destined to exercise control even over them. Nay, he is told again and again that everything in the heavens and in the earth has been made subservient to him. It is true that man's love, mercy, knowledge, wisdom and control of things are all insignificant as compared with their Divine models, but however imperfectly he may achieve it, the fact remains that he has before him the ideal of Divine morals, which he must try to imitate.

(Concluded)

THE FEDERATION OF THE ISLAMIC STUDENT SOCIETIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND EIRE

46 Gloucester Place,
London, W.1.
30th June 1963.

Dear Sir,

It has long been felt there should be a body to co-ordinate the various Islamic Student Societies in the United Kingdom and Eire and to represent a common front in matters affecting Islam. With this aim in view, delegates from various university Islamic societies gathered together at a two-day conference held in Birmingham University on Saturday 29th June 1963. A constitution was discussed and adopted ; and at the close of the session "The Federation of the Islamic Student Societies in the United Kingdom and Eire" was formally inaugurated. The aims and objects of the Constitution read as follows :

- (a) To unite all the existing Islamic Student Organizations in the United Kingdom and Eire, and to encourage and to help the formation of such organizations.
- (2) To encourage and to help members to conduct congregational prayers, lectures, discussion groups and classes for Muslims in their own areas.
- (c) To create the right atmosphere for the fulfilment of the Islamic duties and to foster and to protect the interests of Islam.

Though many universities and colleges were represented at the Conference, it is possible that a few Islamic student societies may inadvertently not have been notified. The executive apologised for the unintentional omission and

request the student societies concerned to join the Federation as soon as is convenient for them. The Federation also looks forward to co-operating closely with all non-student Islamic organizations. Any enquiries concerning the Federation are welcomed, and should be directed to Hussein al-Shahristani, Vice-President, Chemical Engineering Department, Imperial College, London, S.W.7, or to Muhammad Ali Daud, General Secretary, Chancellor's Hall, 55 Augustus Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 15. (These officers may not be in this country during the summer vacation.)

Constituent Organizations.

1. Birmingham University Islamic Society.
2. Bristol University Islamic Society.
3. Dublin Islamic Society.
4. Imperial College Islamic Society.
5. Leeds University Islamic Society.
6. London Islamic Circle.
7. School of Oriental and African Studies Islamic Society.
8. Muslim Student Society in the United Kingdom.
9. Oxford University Islamic Society.
10. Sheffield Islamic Circle.
11. Wolverhampton Malayan Teachers' College Islamic Society.

Constituent Observers.

1. Islamic Cultural Centre and London Central Mosque.
2. Brunei Students' Union in the United Kingdom and Eire.

Yours faithfully,
S. KAMRUDDIN (President).

This is a combined issue for APRIL, MAY, JUNE.
All subscriptions will be extended for two months. — Manager

ON ISLAM, METHOD AND ORGANIC EVOLUTION

By DAWOOD O. KAJEE

“Islam does not recognize conflicting barriers in knowledge and in society, for in Islam — as in all nature — a system of uniformity, order and harmony is a keystone to perfection. “Each in its sphere does journey on” is a truism conceptually embodied in the harmony of nature as a whole, since the individual components of nature, whilst pursuing their own particular courses, are at the same time exquisitely blended into a unified whole. In the oneness of nature there is no room for conflict, for struggle, for violation. In the unified realm of human knowledge and phenomena, as God is one, so is all humanity bua single nation, so may we not separate belief from action, the theoretical from the practical, spirit from matter, or religion from science?”

Islamic uniformity and sources of knowledge

The Prophet Muhammad (praise be upon him) recognized the fact of individuality in his apt and expressive words of “my companions are like various stars . . .”¹ The concept of selfhood is furthermore evident from the philosophy of the Qur’án² (5 : 32).

A harmonious and uniform social relationship is concurrently emphasized, for, though the Prophet noted his companions to differ like separate stars, he furthermore added that “whomsoever you follow, you will certainly be led along the right path”,¹ whereby we are enjoined to follow, not a section of the companions, but the group as a whole, in as much as Qur’anic emphasis is placed on the practice of social good and on communion with God³ (2 : 177 ; 2 : 38 ; 20 : 123).

The opinion of an individual gains significance and becomes an accepted truth or law (in Islam) only on its acceptance by representative opinion in Muslim society. This practice is indicative of the international character of the Islamic method of research and is referred to as *Ijmá’*, or the unanimous agreement of Muslim scholars. *Ijmá’* comprises a definite source of Islamic knowledge, based on the *Qur’án*⁴ and the *Hadith*.⁵ The fourth category of knowledge is termed *Qiyás*, and is derived from laws based upon the previous three sources of Islamic knowledge.⁶

The method of science

The formulation of scientific law is initially based on the procedure of *observing* facts, from which an *hypothesis* is induced *in order to account for the observed facts*. The hypothesis is then tested by *experimentation*, or controlled observation, whence “the circumstances are artificially simplified, so that one law in isolation may become observable, several such laws of nature being required to explain most concrete situations”.⁷

Facts and laws are considered in the context of scientific knowledge in general, since science is not primarily concerned with the particular, but with the formulation of general laws. “Science, in its ultimate ideal, consists of a set of propositions arranged in a hierarchy, the lowest level of the hierarchy being concerned with particular facts, and the highest with some general law, governing everything in the universe.”⁷

The formulation of laws *towards* a greater hierarchy

proceeds by the method of *induction*, or the inferring of a law or a general statement from particular facts or instances. Mill⁸ defines induction as “the process by which we conclude that what is true of certain individuals of a class is true of the whole class, or that what is true at certain times will be true in similar circumstances at all times.”



*The writer of this article,
Mr. Dawood O. Kajee*

Particular facts may suggest a general law, which, in combination with other general laws may suggest, by further induction, a law of a higher order of generality.

Logical derivation *away* from the hierarchy, towards the particulars, proceeds by the method of *deduction*, or inference by reasoning from generals to particulars, that is, by the reverse of induction.

In the passage from observation to hypothesis, induction is used, not automatically, in the manner of a trigger mechanism where one event follows another, but always in

the context of a certain conceptual framework, or selectively, in the light of — and in harmony with — knowledge as a whole. In the words of Einstein: “There is no inductive method which could lead to the fundamental concepts of physics . . . in error are those theorists who believe that theory comes inductively from experience.”

Fowler¹⁰ recognizes the role of “chance and inspiration” in scientific method and writes as follows: “...at the hypothesis stage, the need for imagination in scientific method becomes important: ‘Learn to dream, gentlemen,’ one famous physicist once remarked to his students. ‘Only connect’ was the instruction of another. The process of ‘connection’, especially as advancing science becomes increasingly complex in form, needs, however, ‘trained minds as well as fertile imagination’. Thus Whitehead remarked that the growth of a science was not primarily in bulk, but in ideas, and G. H. Warnock has aptly commented that ‘the post-Copernician astronomer was not in possession of new truths about the heavens, but of a new conceptual system for organizing the truths he already possessed’.”

Kant,¹¹ in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, regards “impartial discovery” as being impossible, since the scientist is never able to completely eliminate the subjective factor in any study of the external, physical universe: “Whatever the process and the means may be by which knowledge reaches its objects, there is one that reaches there directly and forms the ultimate material of all thought: perception. This is possible only when the object is given, and the object can be given only (to human beings at least) through a certain affectation of the mind.”

The idea on which Kant philosophised as the perceptive element, Iqbal poetised — in Islamic light — as *khudi*, whereas science — through the realms of psychology, biology and physical science — seeks verification for as individuality or selfhood.²

The method of Islam

Islamic knowledge refers to three methods of procedure as a basis for thought and investigation: *Sama'*, *Basar* and *Fu'ad*.¹²

Sama' implies the faculties of hearing and of language expression, which, in turn, embody symbolic representation and descriptive terminology as applied to all phenomena.

Basar, or sight, is a means of *observation* and direct experience of the external universe.

Fu'ad, the moral sense deep-seated in the heart, implies insight and understanding¹³ as a basis for *Sama'* and *Basar*; it is what truly permits of knowledge, for without an initial experience, coupled with relevant interpretation and organization of facts and principles, no knowledge could ever be attained. The intuitional, the empirical and the rational counterparts of knowledge are thus characteristically blended in the method of Islam.

Man is to use his senses (the ear and the eye — *al-sam' wa al-basar*), and by coupling his intellect with his sense of intuition he will enter the way to the recognition of God (*man 'arafa nafsahu faqad 'arafa Rabbahu*).

The methods of *observation* and *induction* are evident in the teachings of the Qur'an (2 : 159, 3 : 189-190, 30 : 22,

etc.), whereas *Qiyas*,¹⁴ or knowledge derived by *deduction* from *Qur'an*, *Hadith* and *Ijma'*, constitutes one of the four sources of Islamic knowledge.

The Prophet Muhammad practised an experimental attitude, based on the collection of facts and their interpretation, as recorded in the Hadith :¹⁵

- (1) In having permitted *gheela*, or marital intercourse during the suckling period, in view of its observed harmlessness to children. In the Prophet's words: “I had made up my mind to forbid you from *gheela*, and then I saw that Persians and Romans observe *gheela* but it does not harm their bodies.”
- (2) By having allowed the cross-transplantation of dates, as a result of experimental observation, subsequent to having initially forbidden this practice as a form of superstition.

The strict demarcation of the intuitive or subjective from the objective, non-personal method of investigation developed with the growth of materialism,¹⁶ or the tendency to lay stress only on the material or unspiritual aspect of life. As a result of a drift towards materialism, the objective method — as being uncoloured by private thoughts or feelings — gained emphasis and was labelled as *science*, whereas the personal or subjective method of investigation faded in its appeal and was considered as superstitious practice. The fear of being termed “superstitious”, however, was greater than that of being known as ignorant, as a result of which social factor, two streams of thought emerged within the folds of both science and religion: the *esoteric*, or what was considered as private, confidential or meant only for the initiated; the *exoteric*, or what was regarded as popular, commonplace, ordinary or meant for the masses in general.

Islam does not recognize such conflicting barriers in knowledge and in society, for in Islam — as in all nature — a system of uniformity, order and harmony is a keystone to perfection. “Each in its sphere does journey on” (The Qur'an, 36 : 37-40)¹⁶ is a truism conceptually embodied in the harmony of nature as a whole, since the individual components of nature, whilst pursuing their own particular courses, are at the same time exquisitely blended into a unified whole. In the *oneness* of nature (The Qur'an, 16 : 10-21), there is no room for conflict, for struggle, for violation. In the unified realm of human knowledge and phenomena, as God is one (The Qur'an, 7 : 59, 65, 73, 85 ; 11 : 25, 50, 61, 84), so is all humanity but a single nation (The Qur'an, 2 : 213 ; 10 : 19), so may we not separate belief from action, the theoretical from the practical (The Qur'an, 2 : 177 ; 29 : 58), spirit from matter (The Qur'an, 62 : 10 ; 57 : 28), or religion from science (The Qur'an, 3 : 189, 190).

The *Maulana* Muhammad 'Ali¹⁶ most aptly comments as follows: “The wise ones are here¹⁷ described as possessing two characteristics; they remember God and they reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth. Reflection of things clearly stands for scientific pursuits, for science is nothing but knowledge gained by systematic observation, experiment and reasoning, and it is to this that the Holy Qur'an draws attention when it points out that the right course of those endowed with understanding is that they should observe all that has been created, whether it is on the earth or in the heavens, and ponder over it. To men of understanding it thus recommends the remembrance of God

with the pursuit of sciences, combining moral greatness with material advancement, spirituality with science."

The philosophy of evolution

The term evolution was introduced by Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) in order to specifically express an idea which, in truth, is as old as human thought itself, namely, the view that all things change. As stated by Saleeby:¹⁸ "The philosophy of evolution teaches that all phenomena change, in accordance with certain laws, and attempts to give these laws expression. It explicitly denies that there are any exceptions. The law applies to stars and souls, to atoms and oak trees, to states and religions alike."

The operation of change, when applied to *life*, is referred to as *organic evolution*, or the theory that all plants and animals, as existing species, are evolved from other less complicated forms;¹⁹ when applied to solar and stellar systems, is termed *cosmic evolution*; when in connection with atoms, is spoken of as *atomic evolution*.

The term evolution, in Spencer's connotation, is therefore all-embracing in being applicable to "dust, dynasties and dogmas alike", whilst emphatically *not* being synonymous with the idea that man descends from monkeys.

The basis of change

All progeny differ from one another in specific parts of their bodies and in their systems as a whole. In commenting on evolution, Charles Darwin²⁰ notes as follows: "The proportions and forms of every part of the frame, inside and outside, appear to vary in very slight degrees: anatomists dispute what is the "beau ideal" of the bones, the liver and kidneys, like painters do of the proportions of the face". He refers to the truth of "the proverbial expression that no two animals or plants are born absolutely alike" and states that "under certain conditions organic beings even during their individual lives become slightly altered from their usual form, size, or other characters," whilst also having observed of "some species varying more than others" and that "single individuals are occasionally born considerably unlike in certain parts or in their whole structure to their parents: these are called by horticulturists and breeders 'sports'; and are uncommon except when very strongly marked."

Individual differences may be expressed biologically² or socially^{1, 3} with relevance to organic function. The fact of variation or heterogeneity — as embodied in the science and philosophy of selfhood — is not only the basis of all change, but is also — according to von Baer,²¹ the great founder of embryology — the basis of all progress in the universe.

It remains a matter for continued research as to the significances of environment (biological and social) and genetics in the promotion of change. Whereas some organic evolutionists may find appeal in a purely biological orientation to the problem, others may delight in its religious and social aspects. It accords with the spirit of all-embracing enquiry, with a knowledge of the unity of science and religion, that the two aspects of the problem be regarded as compatible, as inter-dependent and as inseparable.

The fact of change

The term *Rabb* is a divine attribute (of God) which occupies first prominence in the Qur'an, being the name

whereby the Almighty, after the name of Allah, is most frequently addressed in prayers and occurring 965 times in the Qur'an. Whilst *Rabb* is translatable as *Lord*, its true significance, according to Raghīb,²² embodies the idea of evolution, as the "*fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of perfection*". A similar outlook is conveyed in the Qur'an:¹⁷ "And indeed He has created you through various grades" (71: 14). "Glorify the name of thy Lord, the Most High, Who creates, then makes complete, and Who makes (things) according to a measure, then guides (them to their goal)" (87: 1-3).

The goal of perfection may be attained through evolutionary change as being operative *within* the set limits of "a measure" according to which all things are made. Reference to Divine creation is no testimony to the idea that the myriads of organisms are divinely created by so many distinct acts of creation, whereas its use *in the evolutionary context* of relevant verses *does* suggest to the contrary.

The concept of organic evolution need not be incompatible with the idea of a Creator, inasmuch as "the law of gravity" does not refute the act of the Creator. In the words of Charles Darwin:²⁰ "Doubtless it at first transcends our humble powers to conceive laws capable of creating individual organisms, each characterized by the most exquisite workmanship and widely-extended adaptations. It accords better with (our modesty) the lowness of our faculties to suppose each must require the fiat of a creator, but in the same proportion the existence of such laws should exalt our notion of the power of the omniscient Creator" (p. 87).

"What would the astronomers say to the doctrine that the planets moved not according to the law of gravitation, but from the Creator having willed each separate planet to move in its particular orbit?" (p. 59).

"Although the planets move in courses conformably to the law of gravity, yet we ought to attribute the course of each planet to the individual act of the Creator" (p. 154).

The story of Adam is the story of man in general, since Adam was not a perfected being, created at a particular time in history, nor was he an individual, since "he" is referred to as depicting more than two individuals, whose society comprised of savages initially, later to be guided by prophets and to evolve in mind, morals and behaviour:¹⁶

"We said: Go forth from this, *all*,²⁴ so surely there will come to you a *guidance from Me*,²⁵ then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve" (2: 38).

"And they both ate of it, so their evil inclinations became manifest to them, and they both began to cover themselves with leaves of the garden,"²⁶ and Adam disobeyed his Lord, so his life became evil (to him)" (20: 121).

"He said: Get forth you two therefrom, *all (of you)*,²⁴ one of you (is) enemy to another. So there will surely come to you *guidance from Me*,²⁵ then whoever follows My guidance, he shall not go astray nor be unhappy" (20: 123).

All men are created "from dust" (The Qur'an, 18: 37, 22: 5, 32: 7, 40: 67), whereas Qur'anic reference to the

creation of Adam truly refers to the creation of man in general :¹⁶

“When thy Lord said to the angels: I am going to create a mortal from dust” (38 : 71).²⁷

“And when thy Lord said to the angels, I am going to create a mortal of the essence of black mud fashioned in shape” (15 : 28).²⁷

“And when thy Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth one who shall rule in it” (2 : 30).²⁸

The *Maulana* Muhammad ‘Ali¹⁶ writes as follows in regard to Adam: “The Holy Qur’ān does not state when Adam was born or how he was born; it does not even state that he was the first man. The great Muslim divine, Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali al-Bāqir, one of the twelve Shi’a Imams, is reported to have said that ‘millions of Adams passed away before our father Adam’, and Ibn Arabi, the head of the Sufis, writes in his great work, the *Futuhat*, that forty thousand years before our Adam there was another Adam. There is also a report accepted by the Imamiyyah according to which there were thirty Adams before our Adam, and this earth remained a waste after them for fifty thousand years, then was Adam created.”

The process of mental, moral and behavioural evolution, whilst being paralleled by the fact of concurrent social and ecological change, is concomitant with the evolution of anatomical structure and physiological and pathological function in the sense that we could only fully conceive, for example, the act of hearing in terms of an auditory mechanism, of vision by way of a visual apparatus, or of the emotions in terms of the brain and of the body as a whole, whereas clinically, for instance, memory is improved by the bodily-occurring substance, ribonucleic acid (R.N.A.),²⁹ which, when administered to sickly children,³⁰ will promote an improved appetite and a friendlier, livelier, talkative and more agile disposition. It would be interesting to follow up subsequent research on the transforming properties of this nucleic acid on human personality.

The fact of biological change is commonplace in standard scientific literature,³¹ in spite of which there persists a tendency to glibly dispell of organic evolution in a manner as typically as the following would wrongfully tend to suggest: “We know of no instance where one form of life has gradually changed into another. . . .”³²

Bacterial transformation was for the first time, in 1928, experimentally induced by Fred Griffith.³³ He inoculated a mixture of *living* pneumococcal organisms of one type, with *dead* pneumococcal organisms of a different type, into a mouse. Subsequent examination showed the presence of *living* organisms of what were inoculated, as one component of the mixture, as *dead* organisms. The *living* pneumococci (of the mixture) were transformed into strains of the *dead* forms of the organisms (of the mixture), as a result of the presence of these *dead* organisms. The incubation of a similar mixture of organisms in *test tube* resulted in the same biological change of organisms.

The active principle — as a constituent of the *dead* organisms — responsible for inducing this change, was shown to be the substance desoxy-ribonucleic acid (D.N.A.),³⁴ which is also known to evoke new viral formation within a bacterial cell when the bacterium has been infected by such a virus,³⁵ referred to as a bacteriophage. In the process of infection, only the D.N.A. of the virus, or bacteriophage,

enters, its protetin moiety remaining outside (the bacterium) and plays no direct part in infection, whereas when only the nucleic acid of a virus is introduced into a tobacco plant, there is evoked the formation of the characteristic nucleoprotein of the virus,³⁶ the concentration of ribonucleic acid being known to be associated with the intensity of protein formation.³⁷

It was suggested, and it has been revealed, that bacteriophages are analogous to genes,³⁸ in that phage particles, on entering bacteria, behave like genes, or germ cell material specifically considered to be carriers of heredity.

Human cancer cells are considered to display a similar virus-like behaviour in their capacity to transform bodily cells into cancer cells.³⁹

The process whereby organisms and cells use ready-made organic substances for their metabolic functions — referred to as the process of *heterotrophism* — is considered to be extremely ancient, whereas *autotrophism*, or the ability to *synthesise* substances required for metabolism *within* the organism, is regarded as having subsequently arisen in the course of organic evolution.

Several organic substances — amongst which are glucose, fructose, sucrose, peptones, glycerol and salts of organic acids — have been shown to reversibly transform unicellular forms of green algae from their autotrophic way of life into the heterotrophic mode of development, with the assimilation of these substances.⁴⁰ Thus *Euglena gracilis* may be reversibly transformed by sucrose administration in the dark, whilst a peptone-supplemented medium of life, in the absence of light, would permanently change the organism (and its progeny by way of hereditary transmission) into the phylogenetically earlier method of heterotrophic metabolism, concomitant with associated structural changes in the organism.

The mechanism of evolutionary change: basic scientific theories

J. B. P. Lamarck (1744-1829) propounded to the effect that *modifications of structure and function (in animals), that are acquired* — in order to adapt the organisms — as a result of environmental conditions — *are hereditarily transmissible to the progeny*.

He regarded the mechanism of the inheritance of acquired variations as the main mode of organic evolution.

Charles Darwin²⁰ (1809-1882) stated that “in animals, the size and vigour of body, fatness, period of maturity, habits of body or consensual movements, habits of mind and temper, are modified or acquired during the life of the individual, and become inherited,” whereas “the most frequent cause of variability may be attributed to the male and female productive elements having been affected prior to the act of conception”. He expressed the role of heredity in evolution in his principle of *natural selection*, or the process of specific (or selective) sexual crossing whereby resultant variations in the progeny consequently promote different and higher forms of life. In Darwin’s words: “Favourable variations would tend to be preserved, and unfavourable ones to be destroyed. The result of this would be the formation of new species.”⁴¹

Thus *variation and selection*, according to Darwin, comprise the mechanism of organic evolution.

August Weismann (1834-1914) rejected Lamarck’s view,

whilst upholding "natural selection" *only*, as the mode of organic evolution. This standpoint is termed the doctrine of *neo-Darwinism*.

Weismann considered the germ plasm, or germ cells⁴² — which he sharply distinguished from the rest of the body — as being unalterable in the course of life and consequently as the only basis of heredity and of individual and species change. He regarded the environmentally-unchangeable continuity of the germ plasm as being maintained by its growth and division: it "never arises anew but grows and reproduces itself uninterruptedly".⁴³

The Islamic concept of change transcends the limits of life

Whilst the hand of death brings to term the pulse of life on earth, the philosophy of the Qur'an foresees of continued and endless flux of change in a life hereafter, wherein the individual evolves through ever loftier levels of spiritual excellence — in accord with the "much superior" state of "a great kingdom" — as doth surpass all human comprehension, for its nature is as of "what you know not":

"O soul that art at rest! return to thy Lord, well-pleased with them, well-pleasing Him: so enter among My servants and enter into My paradise" (The Qur'an, 89: 27-30).

"God originates the creation, then reproduces it, then to Him you shall be brought back" (The Qur'an, 30: 11).

"We have ordained death among you and We are not to be overcome, that We may change your attributes and make you grow into what you know not" (The Qur'an, 56: 60-61).

"And when thou seest thither, thou shalt see blessings and a great kingdom" (The Qur'an, 76: 20).

"...and certainly the hereafter is much superior in respect of degrees and much superior in respect of excellence" (The Qur'an, 17: 21).

The *Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi*⁴⁴ (1207-1273) conceived of organic evolution as merging into further, unending transformations in a life after death: "Dying from the inorganic we developed into the vegetable kingdom. Dying from the vegetable, we rose to the animal. And leaving the animal we became men. Then what fear that death will lower us? The next transition will make us angels. From the angels we shall rise and become what no mind can conceive; we shall merge in infinity as in the beginning. Have we not been told, 'All of us will return unto Him'?" (The *Mathnawi*, pp. 424, 425).

Yet, in spite of the great depth of beauty and truth of the Islamic philosophy of change, it undoubtedly is largely through the comprehensive researches of Charles Darwin, that the idea of evolution, in the course of history, gained widespread appeal and compelled universal attention in all walks of life and throughout human knowledge.

This humble study is concluded with a magnificent passage from his *Origin of the Species*: "There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved" (p. 88).²⁰

The author is grateful to Mr. S. M. Tufail, Editor of *The Islamic Review*, for having been referred by him to some of the literature, pertaining to Islamic method, in the preparation of this article.

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- 24 Refers to more than two individuals.
- 25 Implies guidance through subsequent prophets.
- 26 Having initially been naked, they learned to cover their bodies in the course of subsequent evolution.
- 27 In general, applies to all men and not only to Adam.
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so even in the case of isolated individuals in the laboratory, under domestication and in a state of nature, whereas organisms of the same and of a different kind may constitute a functional organic unity in natural life.

42 Qur'anic reference is made to "a small life-germ in the seminal vesicles" (75:37). "Have you considered the life-germ? Is it you that create it or are We the creators?" (56:58, 59). Consider

the nature of divine creation in the Qur'anic context of verses 24:45, 41:10, 71:14, 84:19, 87:1-3 and of God as not the only creator, though "the best of creators" (23:14).

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THE CONCEPT OF CAUSALITY IN AL-GHAZZALI

By PROFESSOR A. F. M. HAFEZULLAH BHUYAN, B. A.

Al-Ghazzali was born at Tus in 450 A.H. (1058 C.E.), and died in 505 A.H. (1111 C.E.). The greatest, the noblest and the most original thinker of the Ash'arite School was al-Ghazzali. He gave final shape to the Ash'arite teachings and is regarded as the highest authority of the Sunni school. He is the only teacher of the later generation ever put on a level with the four great Imams.

Left an orphan at an early age, he was educated by a Sufi friend, and then attended the school at Naisabur. As his education progressed he cut loose from Sufi influence and became an Ash'arite, and in 484 A.H. he was appointed President of the Nazmite Academy at Baghdad. Gradually however, he became a prey to spiritual unrest, and in 488 A.H. resigned his post and retired to Syria, when he spent some years in study and practices of devotion. In 499 A.H. he returned to active work as a teacher in the Nazimite Academy at Naisabur, where he became the leader of a modified Ash'arite system strongly leavened by mysticism, which may be regarded as the final evolution of orthodox Muslim theology.

The conflict between the Mu'tazilite traditionalism toned down by reason and the Ash'arite traditionism dominated by faith was virtually set at naught by the chief of the Ash'arites, al-Ghazzali, who found the culmination of traditionalism in a mystical awareness. In Islam al-Ghazzali is the great bridge between traditionalism and mysticism, activism and intuitionism.

He established an orthodox mysticism by rendering philosophy subordinate to theology and thus succeeded in restoring the fear of God when the element of fear was tending to be thrust into the background, at least by the educated. So he is rightly called *Hujjat-ul-Islam* — the defender of Islam.

Al-Ghazzali anticipated the main features of the entire philosophy of the West from Rene Descartes to Henri Bergson. If in his initial process of doubt al-Ghazzali resembled Rene Descartes, in his view of causality he reminds us of David Hume.

The popular view of a cause is that it is a power, force or energy which produces the effect. It involves the idea of a necessary connection between the cause and the effect.

When we say that A is the cause of X, we mean also that A, by virtue of its inherent power, produces X; and we believe that there is a necessary connection between the causal energy and the effect produced, so that when the cause occurs, the effect necessarily follows.

Hume, while analyzing the contents of human knowledge, tells us that all the contents of mind resolve them-

selves into two — impressions and ideas.

Our experience consists of a series of unrelated and disorganized impressions. Whatever relation is asserted between two impressions is due solely to their connection in the individual's consciousness and not to anything inherent in nature.

One of such relations which he has examined is that of causality. In brief, Hume points out that necessity is a mark which cannot belong to any proposition derived from experience. Experience gives us only contingents and never essentials. About causal relation, all that we experience is succession of events without any impression of necessity or universal connection.

The idea of necessary connection that we have in our minds between two events is nothing but a tendency of the mind, and does not imply any objective connection between the two events.

The belief in causality is only a habit of mind as a result of repeated succession of two ideas of the events. Consequently, when we think of the one we think of the other. Therefore, the real connection is one between ideas, and we wrongly ascribe it to the impressions. Thus, according to Hume, cause and effect are not objective phenomenon but subjective.

Now al-Ghazzali, seven hundred years before Hume, believed in natural causation as a God-established system of precedence and sequence with no inherent physical necessity. We see one definite phenomenon (cause); regularly succeeded by another definite phenomenon (effect); but how the latter results from the former is but an enigma for us.

There is no proof to testify that there exists a necessary relation between a cause and an effect, except that we see, for example, a lump of cotton whenever it comes in contact with fire burn down. All that can be proved by such observations is that their coming together, on conjunction, is responsible for the actual burning which apparently takes place. That is to say, there is a relation between the fire and the burning of the cotton, like that between the condition and the conditioned (*Ashshart wa al-mashrut*). But this by no means proves that one is the efficient cause of the other. Besides, fire is an inanimate object having no power of its own. How could fire then create the burning in the cotton?

However, says al-Ghazzali, if they mean by cause and effect the same thing as they usually mean by the relation between the sun and sunlight, we have no objection to offer. We do not begrudge them using the terms. But they have to remember that sunlight, according to their argument, is an "accident of the sun", and subsists in it. That is to say,

sunlight is a part of the sun, a quality which inheres in the sun. So that the same thing would be the cause and the effect at the same time, which is absurd, or, let us point out, that the sun has no power over the sunlight inasmuch as it cannot resist the light in any way, so that it would be fallacious to take the sun as the efficient cause or the creator of the sunlight.

Again, says al-Ghazzali, we can hardly prove that one particular event is intrinsically or inherently connected with any other particular event, for the reason that any amount of assertions as to the occurrence of one event does not involve the occurrence of any other event; nor does the negation of one involve the negation of the other. That is to say, from the facts of observation what we can preferably hold is that one event is independent of any other event, so much so that "this event is not that event, nor that event is this event" (this is wholly this and that is wholly that).

Thus he asserts that the connection between cause and effect, though apparently universal, cannot logically be proved as necessary. The will of God is imminent in the world and is the efficient cause of all things. He is the efficient cause of all things and His will is the ground of all causality. Causality is thus reduced to a relation of time, a succession of events. We know only the simultaneous, never the causally connected. Causality is nothing but the will of God, which ordains that two things should ordinarily follow one another. Laws of nature never exist, they are only the expression of an habitual fact.

Now it may be asked if God is the ultimate cause of all that happens, how can we account for the causal connection in the orderly succession of events? The answer to this question, says al-Ghazzali, lies in the correct understanding of the nature of causation. Nothing causes anything. Antecedents have consequents. All that is seen in experience is that one definite phenomenon is definitely followed by another phenomenon, known commonly as the cause and effect. God alone is the efficient cause in all causes. It is only the ignorant who have misunderstood and misapplied the word power in the succession of events.

In fact it is God who links the antecedents to the consequents, and because there is a Divine purpose behind all activities, the existing succession of events is orderly and not chaotic with the least break or irregularity. Thus there is uniformity in nature. Surely there is a set purpose pervading the universe? The uniform succession of events is not at random. There is no such thing as chance. People who are capable of seeing things through the light of intuition see the hand of God in all that happens.

A comparative study between Hume and al-Ghazzali

Thus al-Ghazzali virtually denied that there is a real causal connection in the events as experienced by us, and here he unmistakably anticipates Hume. So Duncan B. Macdonald has rightly remarked in an excellent article on the life of al-Ghazzali, with special reference to his religious experiences and opinions, in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. XX, Part I, that "Seven hundred

years before Hume, he cuts the bond of causality with the edge of his dialectic and proclaims we can know nothing of cause or effect, but simply that one thing follows another."

This discussion regarding the theory of causation might suggest that the position of Hume and al-Ghazzali is the same and that one should be put by the side of the other in the history of thought. So Macdonald has here sounded a note of warning. Al-Ghazzali's end is very different from that of Hume. We are thrown back on revelation; that given immediately by God to the individual soul or that given through prophets. All our knowledge is derived from these sources.

This view of Macdonald is also shared by other authorities who point out that the position of al-Ghazzali and Hume are quite different. Al-Ghazzali's is that of theism and Hume's that of naturalism.

From Hume's point of view the necessity of causation is merely subjective. Whatever connection there appears to be between the cause and the effect is one between ideas and not between the events themselves. If we accept Hume's position our situation becomes rather serious. All our thoughts and actions, all scientific investigations and generalizations, are based upon our belief in the rigidity of causation. If facts are simply individual entities without any necessary connection, all knowledge, all science, will be a mere fraud and the progress of civilization based on the discovery of causal relationship will be a mere probability.

Al-Ghazzali, on the other hand, has managed to save himself from such a predicament by bringing in the intervention of God, which links every phenomenon with another. And this linking of phenomenon is not at random. It has definite order and regularity in it. So there is the uniformity of nature which Hume's system could not provide.

The view of al-Ghazzali seems to gain added significance when compared with the modern scientific findings which, again like Hume's, fail to establish any necessary connection between a cause and an effect. In the words of Dr. George Thomas White Patrick: "... Science knows nothing of any such necessary connection..." and he substantiates this view by quoting G. P. Conger from his *New Views of Evolution*: "It appears that our scientific knowledge at its very foundations is indefinite and loose, based upon selection of certain radiations with accompanying neglect or ignorance of others. And our laws of causation must then carry with them something of this initial defect."

Thus we see that science itself tends to lend its support to the view of Hume. It is now up to the reader to consider whether or not we are again thrown in the midst of perplexing uncertainties and insoluble mysteries if we also accept this view of science.

But the view of al-Ghazzali seems to explain more satisfactorily the law of uniformity of nature, and thus arouses optimism in us by killing all germs of scepticism.

A DREAM WHICH MIGHT COME TRUE

The Universal Temple of Divine Wisdom

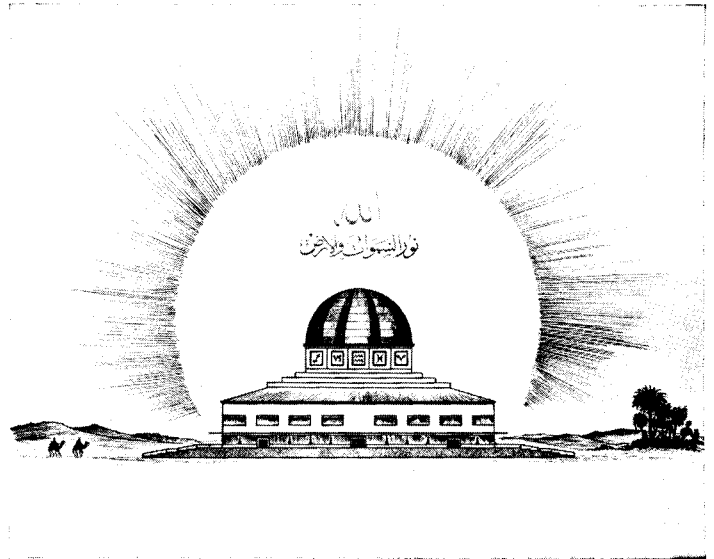
Members of different religious persuasions met in London on 7th December 1962 for the purpose of discussing a plan for a Universal Temple of Divine Wisdom, designed to be one of many such spiritual and cultural headquarters, to be built all over the world. They will be available for teaching and conference purposes, leading towards the establishment of a Spiritual United Nations (S.U.N.). The Universal Temple of Divine Wisdom will not be for the exclusive use of any one system of thought, but will include many different religious, metaphysical and philosophical teachings; the higher aspect of culture, arts and science will also have their place in this new centre.

When completed it would be a modern building with proper facilities for Hindus, Jews, Christians, Muslims, etc., to worship and hold their gatherings. There would also be an hotel built nearby where people could stay for an indefinite period. Again, it is intended to build this centre in a spacious park-like setting in approximately 7 acres of land. Some of the illustrations printed here show the visionary concepts of Joseph Busby, the President of the Steering Committee. This is a dream which might come true because there are hundreds of people everywhere who feel that such a temple is not only a possibility but has become a world-wide necessity.

A steering committee was formed to study a project for building such a temple in Great Britain.

Since the formation of the plan, a number of other spiritual workers have joined forces with this New Age move-

ment towards unity and co-operation, in an all-out effort to bring the diverse groups closer together, for the common purpose of finding ways and means to serve humanity as



An artist's view of the Universal Temple of Divine Wisdom in Great Britain. This Temple, when completed, would be available for use by Hindus, Jews, Christians, Muslims, etc., for worship, teaching and holding conferences.



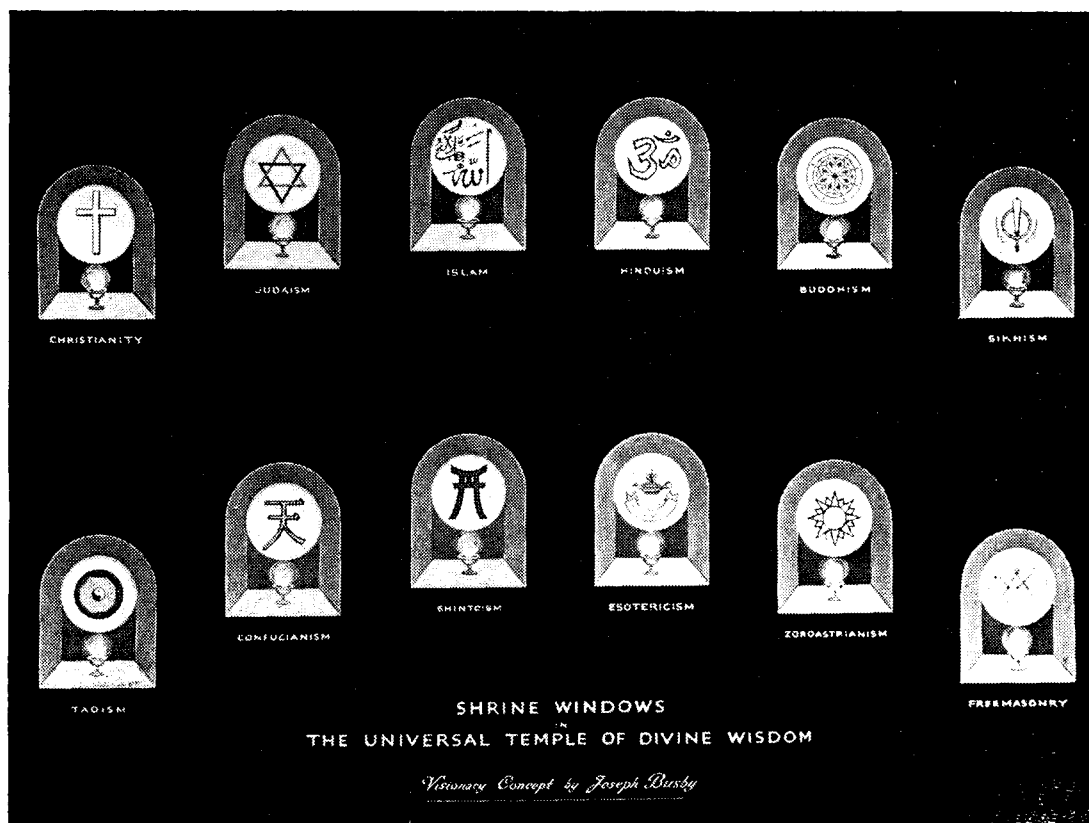
The first gathering of people who came together to discuss the possibility of founding a Universal Temple of the S.U.N. in the United Kingdom; reading from left to right, front row: Mrs. Sheila Foster, Voice H.Q. staff; Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail, Imam, the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey; Mrs. Clarice Toyne, Churches' Fellowship for Physical and Spiritual Studies; Joseph Busby, Editor of the Voice Universal; Swami Purnananda, Vedantist; and Mrs. Grace Dyson, subscription manager of the Voice Universal; back row: Mrs. Edith Webb, President of the Brighton Theosophical Lodge; Mr. George C. Gander, Treasurer of the Voice Universal; Mr. Kenneth Bayes, Anthroposophical Society; Major Ripley Webb, author; Mr. Ronald Dyson, General Manager of the Voice Universal; Mr. John Coates and Mr. Peter Rendel, Theosophical Society.

a whole. This dawning sense of "togetherness" was wholeheartedly supported by all present and a foundation was laid, which has already attracted the interest of various religious groups. The plan is one of many signs that a New Age vision of the sharing principle in action is fast gaining recognition.

Conferences and lectures to advance the basic idea of the

Universal Temple of the S.U.N. are being planned during the next three years.

All relevant correspondence should be sent to *The Voice*, 8 Walting Road, Southwick, Brighton, Sussex, where it will be forwarded to the steering committee for attention.



An artist's view of the Shrine windows of the Universal Temple of Divine Wisdom in Great Britain. It is planned that such temples would be built all over the world to bring about a better understanding and co-operation among the adherents of various faiths and ideologies. This is a dream which might come true because there are hundreds of people everywhere who feel that such a temple is not only a possibility but has become a world-wide necessity.

IN MEMORIAM OF DR. M. W. A. QUARAISHI

"Ryburn,"
63a Westfield Avenue,
Woking, Surrey.
8th August 1963.

Dear Sir,

May I, through the columns of your valued paper, express something of the deep sense of shock which I received upon hearing of the death of Dr. M. W. A. Quraishi on 16th June 1963 at Wazirabad, West Pakistan. He was the son-in-law of the late Khwajah Kamal-ud-Din and Honorary Secretary of the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust, Lahore, Pakistan. Our hearts go out to his wife and family in their great loss.

Dr. Quraishi was a man for whom I felt a great affection and love. He had infinite charm and endeared himself to all

with whom he came in contact. He represented all that was good and upright and I came to look upon him as a guide, philosopher and friend who exerted a lasting influence upon me. I shall always remember him with gratitude for having so enriched my life during his short stay at the Mosque, Woking.

Islam has within its ranks many wise and learned men, but I have seen none more zealous than Dr. Quraishi, within whom burned the true pioneer spirit and the naked flame of truth. He was a man of vision, whose influence will remain as a beacon of light to guide us into new fields of endeavour and service. Let us remember him with brotherly love.

Yours sincerely,
GEORGE FOWLER,
An English Muslim.

ISLAM IN ENGLAND

The Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust

7th January 1963. Members of Toc H, Woking, visited the Mosque at 8 p.m. Mr. Tufail welcomed them and replied to their questions about Islam. Afterwards they were given light refreshments. The visit was arranged by Mr. A. G. Bishop of 6 Holy Oak Avenue, Horsell, Woking.

15th January 1963. The North Surrey branch of the World Congress of Faiths held a series of lectures on the theme "Religion in my Life". Mr. Tufail represented Islam. Mr. L. Rampton took the chair.

30th January 1963. Mr. Abdul Majid, Editor-in-Chief of *The Islamic Review*, went to address the scholars of the County Secondary School, West Common, Haywards Heath, East Sussex. After his talk on Islam he replied to the various questions raised by the class. The talk was arranged by the Headmaster, Mr. J. Bulled.

Lady Evelyn Zainab Cobbold passes away

Lady Evelyn Zainab Cobbold, probably the first British woman to have had the honour of making the pilgrimage to Mecca, died in Inverness, Scotland, on 25th January 1963. The following note about her appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, London:

"Lady Evelyn Cobbold, who has died aged 95, was the first Englishwoman to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. She made the journey in April 1933, at the age of 66, when she had already been a Moslem for many years. Christians are forbidden to enter the holy city of Islam. . . . By making the pilgrimage, Lady Evelyn acquired the dignity of a Haji. After travelling



Lady Zainab Cobbold at her estate in Glencarron.

across the desert by car from Jeddah she performed the Moslem religious ceremonies, walking with other Moslem women seven times round the Holy Kaaba. . . . Lady Evelyn was the eldest daughter of the Seventh Earl of Dunmore. In 1891 she married John Dupois Cobbold, of Ipswich, who became Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Suffolk, and who died in 1929. They had one son, killed in the 1939-45 war, and two daughters, one of whom died. . . . A fluent Arabic speaker, Lady Evelyn also had the reputation of being

a first-class shot and deer-stalker. She wrote two travel books, *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, in 1934, and in the following year *Kenya: The Land of Illusion*¹ (28th January 1963).

According to her will her funeral service was to be performed by a Muslim, and the Qur'anic verse "Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth" was to be inscribed on her grave.

Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail went to Scotland to offer the funeral service for Lady Cobbold. *The Press and Journal*, Inverness, carried this news as follows:

"Thirty people stood on a lonely West Highland hillside yesterday afternoon and watched a full burial ceremony of the Muslim faith. They were attending the funeral of Lady Evelyn Cobbold, of Glencarron, Achnashellach, who died in Morven Nursing Home, Inverness, on Saturday, aged ninety-five.

"The eldest daughter of the Seventh Earl of Dunmore, Lady Evelyn married Mr. John Dupois Cobbold, of Ipswich, Suffolk, who was later Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Suffolk. Mr. Cobbold died in 1929. Lady Evelyn, who had been resident at the Inverness Nursing Home for four years, was buried on the hillside within her Glencarron Estate, 200 yards above a stalking track. As a Moslem she was interred facing the east — and Mecca.

"Officiating at the service in Glencarron Lodge and at the hillside burial was Mr. Muhammad Tufail, who travelled from Woking to the Highlands on Wednesday. Among the family members present were Lady Evelyn's eldest grandson, Mr. A. I. Sladden, Basingstoke, and grand-daughter Mrs. Leslie Melville, Hopetoun Estate, Linlithgow. Mr. Sladden said after the funeral: "I had been to the East with my grandmother on occasions and have seen Moslem ceremonies there, but this has been the first time I have seen a Moslem funeral ceremony, and I was very impressed indeed."

On his way back from Glencarron, Sir John and Lady Stirling were kind enough to invite Mr. Tufail to stay the night at their place, Fairburn, Muir of Ord, Ross-Shire.

At this point we should like to reproduce what Lady Zeinab wrote in 1934 about her accepting Islam:

"I am often asked when and why I became a Muslim. I can only reply that I do not know the precise moment when the truth of Islam dawned upon me. It seems that I have always been a Muslim. This is not so strange when one remembers that Islam is the natural religion that a child left to itself would develop. Indeed, as a Western critic once described it, 'Islam is the religion of common sense. . . .'

"The more I read and the more I studied, the more convinced I became that Islam was the most practical religion, and the one most calculated to solve the world's many perplexing problems, and to bring to humanity peace and happiness. Since then I have never wavered in my belief that there is but one God; that Moses, Jesus, Muhammad and others were prophets, divinely inspired, that to every nation God has sent an apostle, that we are not born in sin, and that we do not

¹ Another book which was issued for private circulation was the *Wayfarers in the Libyan Desert* (published by Arthur L. Humphreys, 187 Piccadilly, London, 1912).—Ed.

need anyone to intercede between us and God, Whom we can approach at all times, and that no one can intercede for us, not even Muhammad or Jesus, and that our salvation depends entirely on ourselves and our actions.

"The word 'Islam' means surrender to God. It also means peace. A Muslim is one who is 'in harmony with the decrees of the author of this world', one who has made his peace with God and His creatures.

"Islam is based on two fundamental truths, on the Oneness of God and on the Brotherhood of Man, and is entirely free from any encumbrances of theological dogma. Above everything else it is a positive faith.

"The influence of the Hadj cannot be exaggerated. To be a member of that huge congregation gathered together from the four corners of the earth, on this sacred occasion and on this sacred spot, and to join with them in all humility in the glorification of God, is to have one's consciousness impressed by the full significance of the Islamic ideal, is to be privileged to participate in one of the most soul-inspiring experiences that have ever been granted to human beings. To visit the birthplace of Islam, to tread the sacred ground hallowed by the memories of Muhammad's long toil and sufferings and his struggle to call erring humanity back to God, is to re-live those glorious years of sacrifice and martyrdom, is to have one's soul kindled by that celestial fire which lighted up the whole earth. But this is not all. The Hadj above everything else makes for unity among Muslims. If there is anything that unifies the scattered forces of Islam and imbues them with mutual sympathy it is the pilgrimage. It provides them with a central point to which they rally from all corners of the earth. It creates for them annually an occasion to meet, and know one another, to exchange views and compare experiences and unite their various efforts to the common good. Distances are annihilated. Differences of sect are set asunder. Divergences of race and colour cease to exist in this fraternity of faith that unites all Muslims in one great brotherhood and makes them conscious of the glorious heritage that is theirs. Then, when the religious duties are over, merchants from all lands discuss trade and commerce and transact business with each other, theologians and jurists discuss questions of religion and jurisprudence, scientists the latest advances in science, men of letters literature, financiers problems of finance, politicians and statesmen questions of national and international politics. The institution of Hadj does not represent to the Muslims merely a sacred institution, but also a League of Nations, an International Academy of Art and Science, and an International Chamber of Commerce all in one."—Reproduced from *Islam Our Choice*.

7th February 1963. At the request of Mr. H. W. Marrat, Head of the Divinity Department, Borough Road College, Isleworth, Middlesex, Mr. S. Muhammad Tufail gave a lecture on Islam to the first-year students of the college. The talk was followed, as usual, by questions and answers.

'Id al-Fitr at the Mosque, Woking

25th February 1963. Though distantly situated from London, and London itself having a new sprinkling of several Islamic centres and mosques, the traditional attraction of Woking Mosque remained undiminished and drew a crowd of 2,000 despite the inclemency of the biting chilly weather during the 'Id al-Fitr celebration. People far out-

numbered the space provided.

The celebration received wide publicity and was given special coverage by all the three Woking papers. In his sermon, the Imam, the *Maulana* Muhammad Yakub Khan, drew out the striking similarity between Islam and Christianity, as is not found between any two other religions. To this direction the Holy Qur'an has drawn a pointed reference as early as thirteen hundred years ago, said the Imam. The Prophet Muhammad went so far as to permit the followers of the Christian religion to say their prayers in the mosques. The Imam then visualized Divine Providence and expedience in the establishment of the Woking Mosque in the British Isles. For Christianity itself had its sparking spot situated in the very land which was now the foremost in working for the collaboration of Islam and Christianity. No wonder, therefore, that the British Isles might one day become the beacon light for the illumination of the world with the Islamic teachings.

Before the prayers the *Maulana* Muhammad Yakub Khan accepted the declaration of Islam by Mrs. Rana Parary, of 133 Manor Lane, Sunbury, Middlesex. After the prayers and the sermon, Mr. S. M. Tufail initiated two other persons to Islam — Miss Anne Quirk, of 39 Queensborough Terrace, London, W.2, and Mr. James Digbey Beckett, of 69 Havant Road, N.E. Portsmouth.

12th March 1963. Mr. S. M. Tufail went to the County Grammar School, Godalming, Surrey, to address the Sixth Form on the subject of Islam. The talk was arranged by Mr. R. L. Lewis, head of the Religious Knowledge department.

13th March 1963. A religious symposium was held at Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Hampstead, London, N.W.3, where Jewish, Catholic and Muslim speakers, after giving introductory lectures on their faiths, replied to questions raised first by the Chairman, Rev. Harvey, and then by the audience. This was rather a new experiment by the chapel in bringing leaders of different faiths on a single platform. The meeting was a success, and those present showed great interest in the discussion. Mr. Tufail represented the Muslim faith.

24th March 1963. Mr. Tufail addressed some of the members of the Muswell Hill Congregational Church, Highgate, N.6. The talk was arranged by Miss Helen Faraday.

26th April 1963. Mr. Brian Westwood, F.R.I.B.A., gave an illustrated talk on Brazilia at Goldsworth County School, Woking, under the auspices of the Workers' Educational Association, Woking. Mr. Tufail was asked to take the Chair.

'The 'Id al-Adha at Woking

The Muslim festival of the Sacrifices ('Id al-Adha) was celebrated at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Saturday 4th May 1963. Before the prayers started, Mr. S. M. Tufail initiated the three children (aged 12, 11 and 6) of Mr. A. M. Carr, 121 Halcot Avenue, Bexley Heath, Kent, into Islam. (The details about them will appear in a subsequent issue of *The Islamic Review*.) On the same day a German girl, Miss Margrit Schumacher, also declared her faith in Islam. The 'Id prayers were led by the *Maulana* Muhammad Yakub Khan. The following is a summary of what he said in his sermon:

"The image of Jesus Christ that emerges from the Bishop of Woolwich's much-discussed book *Honest to God* is identical with the one believed by the Muslims,

and as such, should bridge perhaps the biggest doctrinal gulf between Christianity and Islam, thereby bringing the Christian and Muslim peoples closer together in mutual understanding and co-operation in building the new world on the foundations of moral and spiritual values.

"As to the image of God which the book is out to demolish, it leaves the Muslims' faith in a Personal God not only unshaken, but greatly reinforced. The anthropomorphic conception of the deity which in Christianity stems from the doctrines of incarnation and ascension has no relevance to the Islamic conception of God. The nature of God, according to Islam, is beyond all comprehension. Any mental image formed of Him is as false as images carved out of metal. He is imageless — beyond all forms and shapes. Muslims also believe in the Ascension of Jesus Christ, but in a spiritual, not corporeal, sense. The Qur'an speaks of Jesus' going-up as an ascension towards God — not to any place in space. The image of God as a "Grand Old Man" sitting somewhere in space, which derives from the Christian tradition of Jesus Christ sitting in the skies by the side of God, has no place in Islam.

"The humanist argument relied upon in the book that since man has now come of age and with his mature mind he can manage the business of life alone, without any need for God, forgets that maturity is a relative term. So much of scientific knowledge considered mature in the past is considered child's play in the light of greater advances in scientific knowledge. Every new advance in scientific knowledge comes as a fresh revelation of man's ignorance in the past. Whatever the height or depth scientific knowledge may attain, science can never tell what life is. That is where God comes in. God is the Supreme Source of all life.

"It is not correct to say that modern man has no use for God. What is wrong with him is that he has carved out too many gods of his own, and it is these that he worships. It is these false Gods that are elbowing out the true God from his mind.

"The poison of Godlessness which is sapping the foundations of society poses a threat as much to the East as to the West. This makes it all the more imperative for Christianity and Islam to pool their spiritual resources to combat this all-sweeping tide.

"God-idea is the linchpin of the social fabric, and once that is drawn out the whole fabric will go to pieces. Discovery of God by means of revelation was the greatest

achievement of the human mind : it remains mankind's greatest need ; with it is bound up the whole of its future. This Festival of Sacrifice commemorates that discovery by the Patriarch Abraham, and the fact that it was made 5,000 years ago does not make it any the less relevant to the modern age. Indeed, the need for it is all the greater in this age, when even from within the Church one hears a voice describing God as a relic of man's immature mental level, which has no relevance in this space age."

Marriages solemnized

19th January 1963. Mirza Hamid Shikoh Taimuri and Miss Christiane Marie Louise Laloux. *Address :* 14 Garlinge Road, London, N.W.2.

26th January 1963. Mr. Riaz Hussain Sheikh and Miss Arshad Tufail. *Address :* Sea Scale, Cumberland (or 3 Arras Avenue, Morden, Surrey).

9th March 1963. Mr. Khalid Azam and Miss Eva Elizabeth Dunn. *Address :* 37 West Cromwell Road, London, S.W.5.

10th March 1963. Mr. Kalam Azad Abraham and Miss Homida Nisa Khan. *Address :* Inverness Estate, via San Fernando, Trinidad, British West Indies.

13th April 1963. Mr. Adnan Ahmed Almulla Hussein and Miss Sylvia Spencer. *Address :* 26 Nightingale Road, Southsea, Hants.

14th April 1963. Mr. Ebrahim Husain Subedar and Miss Zohra Sultana. *Address :* 30 Gray Lane Road, New Malden, Surrey.

17 April 1963. Mr. Harith Kaddouri and Miss Patricia Hines. *Address :* 21 Florence Road, Ealing, London, W.5.

20th April 1963. Mr. Muhammad Afzal Mufti and Miss Betty Joan Crouch. *Address :* 28 Bulstrode Road, Hounslow.

21st April 1963. Mr. R. A. Khan and Miss Jameela Rahman. *Address :* 115 Southgate Road, London, N.1.

1st June 1963. Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury and Miss Ivy Rosalin Roberts. *Address :* General Hospital, Llanelly, Wales.

15th June 1963. Dr. Muhammad 'Aziz and Dr. Isabella Veronica. *Address :* Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.2. Miss Isabella accepted Islam a few days before her marriage and took the Islamic name 'Iffat.

16th June 1963. Mr. Abdul Hanif and Miss Farida Zulfikar. *Address :* 63 Margaret's Grove, Islington, London, N.1.

16th June 1963. Mr. Awni Ajjour and Miss Augusta Gomez Branquinho. *Address :* 49 Wellesley Road, Slough.



MODERN ISLAM: THE SEARCH FOR CULTURAL IDENTITY, by Dr. G. E. Von Grunebaum. Published by the California University Press, Los Angeles, U.S.A. Agents in the United Kingdom : Cambridge University Press, 200 Euston Road, London, N.W.1. Pp. 303. Price U.S. \$19.00 or £3.

Recently Western orientalists have been giving considerable thought and attention to the study of Muslim society in various ways. As it would have been impossible for one author to make a comprehensive sociological study of Islam, therefore, each author has chosen a theme or two for his study of this subject, and has his own particular

reason for selecting this line of research. F. W. Fernau believes that a faithful study of world cultures and mode of thinking will bring about more co-operation between nations, and therefore he states: "If understanding is shown on both sides and is not frustrated by overbearing arrogance, the road will be clear for partnership between the West and the world of Islam" (*Moslems on the March*, London 1955, p. 294). Ilse Lichtenstadter makes a discovery that: "Neither amongst the illiterate, poverty-stricken masses, nor amongst the intellectuals, the cultural and political leaders, has Christianity found any widespread entrance or acceptance. Atomic scientists, zoologists and mathematicians remain convinced Muslims. It is significant to note that there have been no conversions among the many Muslim students in Western countries, however 'Westernized' their outlook may have become. This is not an accident. It proves that Islam has values not only for the ignorant, but satisfies as well the religious and emotional needs of the cultured intellectual whose demands upon the scientific accuracy in the secular sphere are becoming increasingly higher" (*Islam and the Modern Age*, London 1959, p. 28). W. Montgomery Watt took up the subject because "a study of the achievements of Islam may throw some light on how the integration of world society is likely to come about, and may even suggest ways in which man may consciously contribute to the process" (*Islam and the Integration of Society*, London 1961, p. 1). W. C. Smith in his book *Islam in Modern History* (Princeton 1957) took up a few lines of investigation, but his two main points of study appear to be: (a) the impact of Islam on Western civilization and vice versa; and (b) the conflict between religion and secularism in Muslim countries. Reuben Levy in his book *The Social Structure of Islam* (Cambridge 1937) set out to examine the principal changes brought about by Islam in different periods and in different peoples. H. A. R. Gibb tried to examine "the process by which its (Islam's) institutions were moulded into a coherent unity and given their specifically Islamic stamp" (*Studies on the Civilization of Islam*, London 1962, p. 5). Dr. Grunebaum, in his present book, presents a far deeper study of the subject than has been undertaken to date, and as the subtitle of his book suggests, he feels that Muslims, having lost their previous world position, are now at a loss what to do. He naturally considers the results of Muslim contact with the West.

There are two complaints one has about the book. First, there are passages in German and French, some of them are quite lengthy, and appear both as notes and as part of the text such as, on pages 94, 101, 170 and 177. Unfortunately every reader of English books is not equally qualified in Continental languages, and such passages are sure to present difficulties to such readers. Secondly, the book is in fact a collection of eleven articles, written over a period of six years, and published in about six different languages. Each chapter thus has its own distinctive features, and enough editing has not been done to make the progress from one chapter to the next smooth and easy.

In the final passage of this book the author praises Indian leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru for his *Autobiography* (1936) and N. C. Chaudhuri for his *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (1951), because he concludes: "Both are aware that their society is in transition and that, in a sense, they are walking on quicksand. Yet they are certain also of its elements, their origin and growth, and the aspirations that give them their cohesiveness and unity. Could it be that a touch of doubt of their cultural identity is still preventing the Arabs from realizing the collective self-perception, the analytical plausibility of the Indians, whose sensibilities,

too, had been sharpened by a confrontation with the West" (p. 288). The author does not state which particular sections of the books of these Indian leaders impressed him, but when one looks at the *Autobiography* by Nehru, one only finds about half a dozen passages that specifically have any bearing on the topic, and the one which can be considered as representative of the lot reads as follows: "The so-called Westernization in India has actually, for the time being, strengthened feudalism, and instead of solving any of our problems has simply intensified them . . . under present conditions the rich man is no longer a necessary or a desirable part of the productive system or of society as a whole. . . . To try and understand the complex problems of the modern world by an application of ancient methods and formulae when these problems did not exist, to use out-of-date phrases in regard to them, is to produce confusion and invite failure" (pp. 520 and 521). One fails to understand how this or similar passages from Nehru's book are any plainer and precise than the long passages the author has quoted from Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir's book *The Philosophy of the Revolution* on pages 231 and 214, which in the view of the author are "a faithful reflection of political realities" (p. 214).

There is one passage from the aforementioned book of Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir which could have been helpful to the author, but unfortunately he deletes it from the reference he quotes. It runs as follows: "If anybody tells me that the place for us means the capital where we live, I differ with him. And if anyone tells me that the place for us means the political boundaries of our country, I also differ. If the whole matter were limited to our capital, or our political boundaries, it would be much simpler. We would shut ourselves in, and live in an ivory tower, and we would try to our utmost to get away from the world, its problems, wars and crises, which all burst in on us through the doors of our country and influence us, though we have nothing to do with them. The age of isolation is gone. . . . No country can escape looking beyond its boundaries to find the source of the currents which influence it, how it can live with them . . ." (*The Philosophy of the Revolution*, Washington 1956, p. 84). Moreover, the author considers Riza Shah Pehlevi of Iran as "anti-clerical" and Kemal Ataturk as having "secularized Turkey" (p. 134). These qualifications given by the author himself are indicative of the fact that these two Muslim leaders were clear in their minds what they had set out to do. The Muslim world, even in its present condition, is quite sure of its identity, but its main difficulty lies in the fact that it has found that it has failed to sustain its interests and take any initiative to assert its identity in face of constant Western onslaughts. It is an established fact that but for the Russian threat to launch missiles, the Suez operation would have been a success. W. C. Smith has grasped this point with a vision that has somehow eluded Dr. Grunebaum (see *Islam in Modern History*, London 1957, p. 95). One would have readily agreed with Dr. Grunebaum if he would have said that the Muslim world has not been able to produce a continuous supply of sound and wise leaders like the West, and that this has been a major cause for its decline.

Dr. Grunebaum shares the view of Kenneth Cragg and W. C. Smith that Muslims "have no grasp of the serious and strenuous efforts that the West has been making to understand Islam" (p. 46). He further complains: "Interest in the West, in the form of effort to acquire historical-analytical understanding of its cultural aspirations and, in this sense, an end in itself, is slight in the Arab world. An Eastern orientalist as counterpart to the Western orientalist has not come forward. What is lacking is not the study of the

foreign culture, but self-construction, self-manipulation, in the light of Western phenomenon that must be mastered, whether by partial assimilation or by purposive recourse to the past" (p. 157). The observation is perfectly true and it cannot be over-emphasized that Muslims in their respective universities should establish departments for the study of Christianity, Western culture, and undertake comprehensive studies of Muslim countries.

Dr. Grunebaum's present book contains a wealth of information. On page 241 he makes an interesting observation: "In the long run the political centre of the Muslim world may move east into Pakistan (and Indonesia); at the moment Pakistani dedication to Islamic solidarity is not adequately reciprocated by the Arabic-speaking world. . . . It is noteworthy in this context that a writer like Malik Bennabi views the displacement of the centre of the Islamic world into Asia as an accomplished fact, and that, moreover, he appears to view this displacement as an encouraging fact as well. For agricultural Pakistan and Indonesia will instil more creative attitudes into a revitalized and historically younger Islam than could have been evolved by Mediterranean Islam, which has been lulled to sleep by its safe majority position and which is burdened by its dynastic, tribal-nomadic, and narrowly dogmatic habits of thinking and organization". The only comment one would like to make on this point is that even in its early days, the spiritual attention of the Muslims was directed towards the Ka'bah in Mecca, but the seat of its growth and dynamism was situated away from it, in Medina. And afterwards, although the Ka'bah continued to remain the spiritual centre of Islam, but for its vitality, strength and progress it chose a number of other centres. It will be quite in accordance with its past, if Islam chooses to move from the Mediterranean into Asia and the Far East for a fresh source of inspiration.

On page 10 Dr. Grunebaum makes a point, for which he cites no authority, and which is sure to be criticized by Muslim readers. He states: "The Prophet himself was careful to insist on his humanity. But the traditions and the needs of the converts throughout the Middle East demanded otherwise. . . . Not only was the extra-human uniqueness of the Prophet accepted, but he was allowed to become the emotional centre of worship."

Another remark of Dr. Grunebaum, which occurs on page 17, is subject to objection. He says: "Only under Islam does the introvert find a place in society; only in Islam is the thinker felt closer to God than the doer." If by the word "Islam" Dr. Grunebaum means Islam as it exists in its physical form, then he should not have used the words "only under Islam", because such a situation exists in at least two other religious names, Hinduism and Buddhism. If by "Islam" he means the teachings of the faith, then he is certainly mistaken.

In the course of his analysis Dr. Grunebaum makes a number of significant observations, all of which cannot be enumerated in this review, but a few are given for the benefit of the reader. First, he points out that in Muslim countries the educated remain in the cities because "life outside the capital . . . is felt to be exile; rural districts are often without teachers and physicians" (p. 196). This makes it plain that there is a gulf that separates the population in the rural areas from those living in the cities, and the bulk of the population in Muslim countries is deprived of the opportunity of being acquainted with contemporary progressive ideas and thoughts. Secondly, in favour of Islam, the author states: "In other words, in striking contrast to the Christian attitude . . . the Muslim *umma* is willing to allow acceptance on the basis of a unilateral declaration of inten-

tion to belong to the people of the Prophet. This attitude had greatly facilitated the trans-cultural effectiveness of the Muslim mission. It has also had the consequence of permitting different patterns of a Muslim life to coexist in different parts of the world, and in different ethnic or social strata of the same political society. . . . Here, in my opinion, is one of the principal factors, if not, in fact, the most important single factor, accounting for the amazingly strong emotional cohesiveness of the Muslim community, a cohesiveness that, after all, is not as a rule buttressed by any kind of formal organization" (p. 68).

Thirdly, while discussing the rise and fall of Islam, he finds in its history reasons both for praise and lamentation. In the following passage he states: "In short, the companions of the Prophet were distinguished by the fact that they united 'religion, morals, strength and political ability'. Their victory ushered in the best period in history, that of the rightly-guided Caliphs, with its perfect balance of religious and political, practical and spiritual, aspirations and activities. Much for the benefit of mankind Islam began to exercise a growing influence on the direction in which mankind was moving. Consciously and unconsciously the Islamic model formed views and attitudes in Christendom; standards of thought, law, the social order, and political organization were affected. In a sense, one could speak of a universal movement towards Islam. The world would have been fortunate had this tendency continued" (p. 184).

Students and followers of Islam will find every reason to agree with Dr. Grunebaum on this point. An extensive circulation of this book would help Muslims in understanding their problems, their errors and their illusions, and also in appreciating the value of their social cohesiveness and unity.

I. A.

A REFUTATION OF THE MIRACULOUS CONCEPTION, DEATH, RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF JESUS (NABI-ISA) AS TAUGHT IN THE KURAN, by Dawood Sydow. Published from 49 Kweper Laan, Bridgetown, Athelone, Cape Town, South Africa.

In the past there have been instances when some people pretending to be Muslims have succeeded in introducing un-Islamic ideas and practices into the stream of Muslim social life. Rituals carried out at the shrines of Muslim saints; conceptions of heaven and hell prevalent among the illiterate Muslim masses; the belief that Jesus is alive in heaven in his earthly form and will descend during the final period of this planet's existence; are all extraneous elements that have been introduced into the Muslim community. It now appears that a certain Mr. A. H. Obaray, who claims to be a Muslim, has written a book called *The Miraculous Conception, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus (Nabi-Isa) as Taught in the Kuran*, in which he has attempted to prove the correctness of the main beliefs of Christianity with the help of verses from the Qur'an. He could have had only two motives for doing this: either he wanted to bridge the gulf which separates the two faiths by trying to show that Christian beliefs were actually upheld by the Qur'an, or he tried to be impertinent and strike at the very roots of Islam, in which case his claim to be a Muslim is subject to doubt. Whatever may have been his object, he chose the wrong means of achieving it. Naturally his book has been severely condemned by Muslims, and we now have before us for review a refutation of the above book by a South African Muslim, Dawood Sydow. The logical analysis and arrangement of facts, taken from already published Muslim sources, is so effective and forceful that it reduces Obaray's book to a

position that makes one wonder whether it was worth Dawood Sydow's effort to attempt a refutation at all.

Dawood Sydow has treated the subject as a theological controversy and has confined himself, in his discussion of the subject, to the scriptures of Islam and Christianity. Modern scholarship has unearthed many historical evidences to prove the inaccuracies in Christian beliefs. Robert Graves and Joshua Podro have made two valuable contributions in this field in the form of *The Nazarene Gospels Restored* and *Jesus in Rome*. The result of such researches has been that recent years have seen considerable rethinking by Christians. The Bishop of Woolwich's book, *Honest to God*, and the protest of the new Canon of Southwark, the Reverend John Pearce-Higgins, against the 39 articles, which are short summaries of the Christian dogma, are plain indications of a growing realization by Christians of the inadequacies of their present beliefs. Mr. Obaray's book is to be condemned not only for the factual inaccuracies and his choice of a pernicious subject, but also for the fact that it runs contrary to modern trends in Christian thinking. Dawood Sydow could have strengthened his arguments by referring to such evidences and trends.

Another matter which would have enhanced the contents of Dawood Sydow's refutation would have been to give more importance to the comparison of Jesus described by the Gospels and the Jesus portrayed by the Qur'an. He has touched upon the subject, but only very briefly, on pages 58 and 59. This would have widened the scope and effect of his book, particularly for our Christian friends, by emphasizing that Jesus of the Qur'an is a far more historically accurate, reliable and superior person than Jesus of the Gospels. However, we hope the book succeeds in preventing any other ill-informed and ill-intentioned Muslim writer from attributing any preposterous ideas to the faith of Islam. To present Islam in false colours is not only morally unsound, but is also sure to have tragic consequences. Dawood Sydow's book is a warning to such adventurers and should receive the support of every Muslim.

I. A.

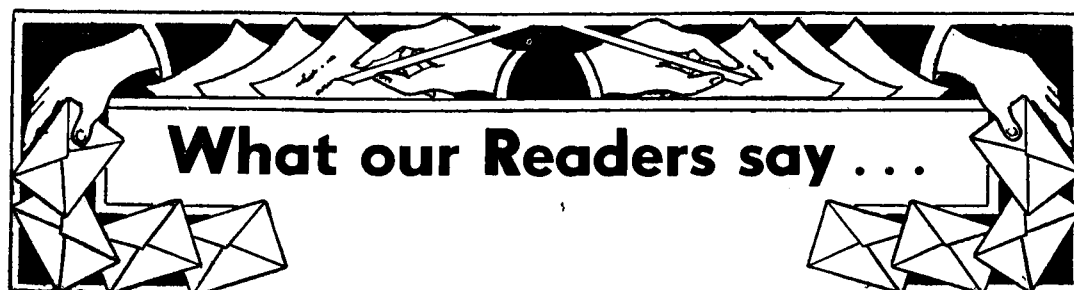
SHORT NOTICES

PARCHAM-I ZIA (Urdu), by Brahm Nath Dutt. Published by the author from 17 Krishna Market, Amritsar, India. Could also be obtained from Nigar Book Agency, Lucknow, India. Price Rs. 2.75 (approx. 4/-). 1962. *Parcham-i-Zia* is a short collection of the fundamental moral teachings of all the great religions of the world. It is one of the few books in Urdu literature on this subject. The book itself is of great literary value.

TAUHID, Vol. II (Urdu), by Muhammad Sultan Nizami. Published by Shirkat Adahiyyah Punjab, Shahi Muhallah, Lahore, West Pakistan. Price Rs. 1.50 (approx. 2/6). 1962. A critical analysis of Shi'ah practices and beliefs.

HUSSAIN WA YAZID (Urdu). Translation of Imam Ibn Tamiyyah's article on that subject. This booklet contains a small biographical sketch of the Imam by Muhammad Sultan Nizami. The article itself is rendered into Urdu by the *Maulana* 'Abdur Razzaq, of Malihabad.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AFTABUD DIN AHMED HOMEOPATHIC DISPENSARY, Jami' Street, No. 9, Brandreth Road, Lahore 7, West Pakistan. The late *Maulana* Aftabud Din Ahmed was the Imam of the Woking Mosque just before the Second World War. When he returned to India (now Pakistan) he founded a free Homeopathic Dispensary at Lahore in 1943. After his death in 1955 his friends turned it into a proper institution in memory of the late *Maulana*. During the last twenty years it has helped thousands of people in distress. From November 1961 to October 1962 over 2,000 people were treated free of charge for all kinds of ailments and diseases. Some of the cases were considered hopeless by other doctors. The head of the institution is Sh. Muhammad Hussain, who gives almost all his spare time for this noble cause. The dispensary is, however, run by voluntary donations.



ENVER PASHA

14 Nuriefendi Sok,
Samatya, Istanbul.

1st June 1963.

Dear Sir,

I have read with interest the article of Dr. Mahmud Muftic on Enver Pasha in your issue of March, and also the criticism of Mr. C. Howard Ellis in the issue of October-December 1962. I congratulate them on their erudite treat-

ment of the subject. However, I beg your permission to make a few observations against the opinions of Mr. Ellis concerning the Sultan 'Abdul Hamid II, and these observations are based on the opinions of the same Young Turks as are referred to by Mr. Ellis. This becomes an imperative duty, more so because one wishes to confer the title of "Abdul Damned" on this Sultan. It is worth taking the trouble of depicting in a few lines the background of events that led to calumniate this noble Sultan.

During the period of the decadence of the Ottoman

Empire, a markedly critical phase commences with the beginning of the 19th century. The rebellions of non-Muslim elements were followed by the retreat of the imperial armies. Aided by their co-religionists, the so-called Great Powers of the West, these rebels obtained first an autonomy under the presidency of some prince selected from among the royal houses of Europe. This prince owed nominal allegiance to the Ottoman Empire. A second series of the rebellion insured them complete independence, and also increased area of the territory. In case the rebellion failed, the intervention of the Great Powers insured the maintenance of the *status quo ante* in favour of the vanquished.

In the history of Ottoman Empire, the word "islahat" signifies a series of administrative reforms, but the same term, when it concerns the Christian subjects, means a series of "arrangements" which facilitated the creation of Christian States to the detriment of the Muslim populations of the same regions.

After the Greeks, Rumanians, Serbs and Bulgars came the turn of the Armenians. The setting up of the question on the scene for the first time did not move well, for evident reasons and thanks to the vigilance of the really great monarch, which was Abdul Hamid II.

The demand of the Armenians for a homeland concerned the so-called "Vilayat Sitta" (six provinces), according to the then administrative appellation — which means half of the present-day Republic of Turkey. It is to be noted that in these regions the Armenians were not only in the minority as against the Muslims, but also part of these territories had become land of Islam in the time of the Omayyads; others were later colonized by the Turks who had been living there for 900 years. It was the motherland of the Ottoman Turks. Alparslaan had snatched them not from the Armenians but from the Byzantines.

Under the well-wishing administration of the Turks, the Armenians had preserved not only their culture, but were also exempt from military service. They were prosperous, and they entered in the administration and attained to even such high posts as ministers.

Sultan Abdul Hamid thwarted the machinations of the Western diplomats, and energetically opposed the "arrangements" which would have resulted in the subjugation of the Muslim majority to the Armenian minority.

The Armenians rebelled several times, and were each time successfully repressed. No doubt this repression gained for the Sultan Abdul Hamid the title of "Great Criminal" in England and "Red Sultan" in France, the terms having been circulated by the Armenian agents in Western Europe. But the real question is the following: If a sovereign represses in his own territory the rebellion of his own subjects — and for that reason merits such titles in the West — how should one style the Indian action of Queen Victoria in 1857 (when she was not even a *de jure* ruler, some Englishmen having been employed by the Great Moghal under the grand of "Diwany", and it was the behaviour of these English employees which resulted in what Englishmen are pleased to call the "Mutiny", deposing the innocent Mughal Emperor and abolishing his empire)? That is not all. At the same time, these same British authorities were collaborating with other Powers to create Christian States in the lands of Islam. Again, how to name the French authorities in this second half of the 20th century who let flow the blood of hundreds of thousands, if not actually millions, during the six years of the struggle by the brave Algerians to recover

their independence?

What is sad in the history of Turkey is that the Young Turks appropriated to themselves these false accusations, and repeated them again and again in their articles and books compiled before and after the deposition of Sultan 'Abdul Hamid. In her book *Conflict of the East and West in Turkey* (Delhi 1939), Halide Edip Hanum speaks of the "convoys of the exiled" disembarking in far-off points of the empire. Yes, but if one studies closely the adventures of these exiled men, one has interesting perspectives on both the "oppressor" and the "oppressed". One of those exiled published his memoirs in 1910, compiled as early as 1897. An objective analysis of these informs us of the fact that the Sultan had commuted *all* capital punishments into perpetual detention; that only ten months afterwards 87 of these interneers of the fortress of Tripoli (Libya) received amnesty (including those condemned to perpetual detention) and were nominated to various administrative posts in the city. To the exiled, however, this graceful pardon of the Sultan was only a political manoeuvre, and the author of the said memoirs loudly insults the Sultan for not giving "liberty" to the people (consisting of half a dozen races, professing as many religions and speaking as many languages).

But when this "liberty" came, and as a complementary act they deposed the Sultan, these same Young Turks were unable to maintain it. They caused the assassination of the journalists who displeased them, and sent to prison and exile the political opponents. Their bad administration led to the revolts of Albanians and Druzes, and they were unable to avoid successive and disastrous wars in which they lost within ten years a whole empire which used to extend from the Adriatic to the Perso-Arabian Gulf.

Compare Sultan 'Abdul Hamid to them. The intelligence and cleverness of this latter was such that in the course of his thirty years of rule there reigned a pace which is unknown in the history of this country. Apart from the unfortunate war of 1877 in the beginning of his rule, he lost not an inch of territory. He understood Islam in its pristine purity. Under his rule, the Turks, the Kurds, the Arabs, the Albanians, the Bosnians (Yugoslavs), the ommaks (of Bulgaria), the Circassians, etc., all lived in peace, concord and perfect harmony, without the least racial hatreds. Probably this is what Mr. Mahmud Muftic alludes to when he speaks of the "Islamic policy" of the Sultan.

The Young Turks, blind imitators of the West, introduced under Ziy Gokalp a nationalism of the Western type, which shattered first this harmony among descendants of the same Adam and Eve, and in forty years resulted in the destruction of the Turkish language (not to speak of other disasters).

One of these exiled persons, condemned to perpetual detention in 1897, to whom we have referred above, was a sincere Muslim who died a few years ago at the age of 90. He was then convinced that he had unwittingly contributed to the mining and blasting of a rampart of Islam.

Yours in Islam,

KEMAL KUSCU.

P.S.—The article of Mr. C. Howard Ellis requires a little rectification. Tal'at Pasha and Jamal Pasha were assassinated by Armenians — and not by nationalist Turks — respectively at Berlin and at Tiflis.

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