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# The Star of Islam

(A CULTURAL WEEKLY)  
PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY  
Editor-in-Chief :—MAAS J. MAJID

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VOL. I. No. 4.

COLOMBO, SATURDAY, 19TH AUGUST, 1939.

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## Islam—The Perfect Religion

### Wrong Conceptions Removed

#### The True Muslim Goal

By His Holiness Maulana Muhammad  
Abdul Aleem Siddiqui

THE present age is regarded as probably the most enlightened in the history of mankind. The spirit of enquiry and research and the spread of education and knowledge which characterise it have evidently given rise to the opinion thus generally held. Still, in certain spheres of intellectual perceptions age-long prejudices have continued to warp human judgment. This seems to be the case with regard to the teachings of Islam, and added to it the deliberate distortion and misrepresentation of them and the character and life of their promulgator are not only creating a wrong and misleading impression on the minds of the non-Muslims but tend to misguide the very sons of Islam.

On the one hand, there is a general belief that Islam caters to the grosser appetites of human beings, instructs its followers in the art of warfare, tends to make of them a purely martial race, that the Muslims take up the sword in the name of religion to establish kingdoms for self-aggrandisement, and that they have no concern, whatsoever, with arts and sciences, and that Physics, Chemistry and Astronomy do not interest them; on the other hand there is a group from amongst the Muslims themselves who holds that Islam confines its preachings to piety and monasticism and that spiritual progress and access to Allah can only be attained by a complete renunciation of all the material phases of life and breaking asunder all worldly ties to retire into the jungles and engage undisturbed in the worship of the Creator.

#### Ideal Provision of Islam

Both these conceptions of Islam are utterly false and misleading. The fact is that it makes ideal provision for the utmost development of both the material and the spiritual aspects of life. If it dispenses instruction in secular progress, it does not stop at the material side, but exhorts its votary to aspire to its pinnacle by directing him to attain proficiency in all its branches of knowledge, and if fortune favours him, and chances happen to bring a territorial sway, he is not supposed to be possessed of the people and rule as a monarch to satisfy his ego in luxury and ostentatious manner, but to administer justice and feel that it is his duty to bring his people into the light of the

Islamic Shariat. His wars should not be actuated by mercenary motives—defence or relief of the oppressed rather than ambitious usurpation should be the incentive. He must establish peace and tranquility. Liberty of the press, freedom of speech and liberal provision for acquiring religious and secular education must be the features of his government.

In short, the Holy Quran repeatedly refers us to the wonders of the creation and sets before our intelligent observation various phenomena of nature, thus encouraging the study of various sciences. In fact the Book teems with logic and reason in this respect, and hundreds of verses and traditions can be quoted to demonstrate that a perfect knowledge of arts and sciences, including Mathematics, Geometry, Trigonometry, Astronomy, Optics, etc., forms as it were, the first chapter of the Teachings of Islam.

#### Spiritual And Material Progress

Side by side with secular education, it imparts lessons for the highest spiritual progress and guides its followers to Almighty Allah. At the outset, however, the Holy Quran distinctly lays down that "There is no monasticism in Islam" and thus discourages, if not actually prohibits, the Faithful from renouncing the world and leading a life of celibacy. Soothe to say, a Muslim's material advancement is also accomplished to please God, so that he may enjoy the blessings of the world which are bestowed by Him, and by gaining knowledge of the principles and causes governing nature and bringing our faculties to perfection admire the grandeur and beauty of His creation and know Him better. How convincingly yet beautifully, both these

(Continued on last page)

## His Exalted Highness

### The Nizam Of Hyderabad

#### Fifty Third Birthday

Last Thursday was the birthday of His Exalted Highness The Nizam of Hyderabad. He is a great patron of Learning and his selfless devotion to the service of his subjects is a matter of common knowledge. His piety, sincerity, magnanimity, and other innumerable noble qualities of his head and heart have won for him not only the love of his people but also that of millions outside his dominions. We feel confident we are voicing the sentiments of all Muslims in and outside Ceylon in offering His Exalted Highness our heartiest felicitations and wishing him long life and increasing prosperity on the occasion of his fifty third birthday.



HIS EXALTED HIGHNESS

## J. S. C. (English) Examination Results

### Pass List

The following Muslim candidates have been successful in the Junior School Certificate (English) Examination held in June this year:—

N. Seyed Mohamed.  
S. M. Seyed Mohamed.  
H. Sheriff.  
C. M. M. Zubair.  
S. Sheriff.  
M. M. Ameez.  
T. Mohamed.  
A. Junaideen.

## JAFFNA CALLING

### U.D.C. Member And Kathi

#### Writes A Thought-Provoking Letter

To  
The Editor-in-Chief,  
"The Star of Islam",  
Colombo.

Dear Brother-in-Islam,

Amidst the pressure of professional and other work, I found time to read a few pages of "The Star of Islam". After reading the Editorials and the articles contributed by Muslims of outstanding merit, I have no hesitation in expressing my opinion that your journal supplies a long felt want and is bound to materially help the progress of the Muslim community on lines chalked out by the Quran and Hadiths.

It pains me in the extreme to find that some Muslim youths who have been educated on Western lines and who represent the educated section of the community have failed to attach sufficient importance to the Quran and Hadiths as sources for the evolution of humanity. Whenever opportunity afforded itself to me I have never failed to point out to them the importance of these books to improve

thought out civilisation as the Islamic civilisation has at all ages helped not only the spiritual but also the material progress of man. Islam survives the test of time as the principles propounded in it never militate against the truths established by modern scientific researches; on the other hand the Islamic principles are confirmed by scientific discoveries.

Your journal serves as a bridge builder in the sense that you as an exponent of orthodox doctrines interpreted in their true spirit cut a via media between the ulema and the educated section of the Muslim community. By reading and following your Editorials and other articles appearing in your paper, the former will soon be convinced of their folly in not realising the perpetual and extensive changes of the world, and the latter will ere long come to their sense that Islam is the only religion which can answer to the world successfully the difficult questions that arise from time to time and satisfactorily solve the problems of the world which baffle the wisdom of statesmen and politicians.

Then the two sections will begin to co-operate setting before them one ideal—the ideal of true Islamic civilisation. Such a co-operation is bound to result in the achievement of the desired object—the progress of the Muslims.

You will realise that you have a great task before you and I am sure that you with your knowledge of Islamic Culture and the help of your facile pen will be able to accomplish it ere long. May Allah give you health and strength and the "Star" a long life to shine and shine brightly in the firmament of Journalism.

(Sgd.) S. M. ABOOBUCKER  
Proctor S.C. & Notary Public  
Member U.D.C.

Kathi for the Judicial Divisions  
of Jaffna, Pt. Pedro and Kays.

## It Begins With Islam

**By Miss Lubna Khaleel**

A great historian says, "The age of chivalry is generally supposed to extend from the beginning of the eighth to the close of the fourteenth century—a period, be it noted, almost synchronous with the Saracenic domination in Spain. But during this period, in spite of the halo which poetry and romance have cast around the conditions of society, women were the frequent subjects of violence. Force and fraud were the distinguishing characteristics of the golden age of Christian chivalry. Roland and Arthur were myths until the West came in contact with the civilisation and culture of the East. Chivalry was not the product of the wilds of Scandinavia or of the gloomy forests of Germany;—prophecy and chivalry alike were the children of the desert. From the desert issued Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed; from the desert issued Antar, Hamza, and Ali."

## Muslim Chivalry

While reading Islamic History I was thrilled to find hundreds of examples of Muslim charity. In the small town at my disposal here I cannot do more than all. But for this reason, dear readers I shall give two examples. The Caliph Abdul Malik was in the town of Hama, Syria, in the year 685. He found that the people were suffering from drought and famine. He ordered that the gates of the city be opened to the poor and that they be given food and clothing. He also ordered that the gates of the city be opened to the poor and that they be given food and clothing. He also ordered that the gates of the city be opened to the poor and that they be given food and clothing.

### Example From India

To give an example nearer home, there is the instance of the Mogul Emperor Humayun who was pursued by the Afghans. He was marching towards the frontiers when he received a bracelet from the Jodhpur Queen. This was a call for succour. He at once forgot his own danger and went to her rescue. Only after he had defeated her enemies, did he attend to his own necessities.

## Duty Of Muslim Women

Antar is called "the father of chivalry", while Ali was its beautiful ideal. It was the wars of the Crusades that brought barbarian Europe in touch with the Islamic civilisation. It was this contact together with the influences of Muslim Andalusia which introduced chivalry into Europe. We can now see that all the fine stories which we read in school about the great and noble deeds of Europe owe their origin mainly, if not wholly, to Islam. The more we study Islam and Islamic History, we realise more and more that there is nothing comparable to the teachings of this glorious religion. Christian missionaries have tried to misrepresent Islam as much as possible, but nothing can conceal the truth and beauty of our noble Faith. A great duty rests on us, Muslim women. We have to teach our children from their earliest years the real conception of Islam and thereby place in their minds a firm foundation of spiritual knowledge.

## Exaggerating Trifles

**By Mrs. Hassana Kareem**

Many women waste too much time on trifles. I know several girls who spend their energies and time in lingering too long over the selection of a particular shade of ribbon or saree. It is, of course, very important and necessary that they should exercise good taste in their selections. I do not condemn this. But what I do deprecate is the waste of precious time over things which are not worth while.

There are mothers who keep the whole household irritated over non-essentials. When they find finger-prints on the furniture or some other trifling thing they cause such a fuss that the other members of the household are disgusted.

## Art of Overfolding Things

[illegible]

The temptation to exaggerate trifles is a most unfortunate habit—to make mountains out of molehills, to keep arguing and talking over a little thing until it becomes a big thing and destroys everybody's peace. As the future of the race depends on us, women, we must acquire the habit of overlooking triflings and concentrating our attention on things that really matter. We must not lose the opportunity of making the most of ourselves by cultivating a cheerful, benevolent, and gracious disposition.

### Object of Education

What a grand thing it is to see a girl, who is bent upon self-enrichment, who is trying to make her life broader and sweeter and cleaner and truer! If we are investing in helpfulness, in kindness, in unselfishness, in sympathy, in a longing to help everybody with whom we come in contact, to leave him or her a little higher up, a little further on, our lives are growing richer and sweeter every day.

The real object of education and culture is to develop us along the line of our noblest nature so that we shall be not only keen, sagacious, and shrewd, but broad-minded, evenly and sympathetically balanced, tolerant, and charitable. An education which does not bring sweetness and light, harmony and power into the life, is no education at all.

## Children's Corner

## Holy Prophet's Youth and Marriage

DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS,

Our Holy Prophet had no education in the modern sense of the term. But he knew well the legends of his nation. He had a great affection for his people, but in his ways of living and in his thoughts he was quite different from them. His heart was deeply touched by the conditions existing among them. The frequent quarrels in which blood was shed, their disregard for law and order, their sinfulness, all caused in him feelings of horror and disgust.

When he was twenty-five years of age, the Prophet went again to Syria. This time he went in charge of a trading-caravan belonging to a noble Koraishite lady by the name of Khadija. She was a relative of his. He discharged his duties so faithfully and diligently that she took a great liking to him, and wished to marry him. A marriage was arranged between the Prophet and this noble lady. She was much older than he, but the marriage was a very happy one and the tenderest devotion always existed on both sides.

By this marriage the Prophet had seven children—three sons and four daughters. The sons died when they were infants, but the daughters lived to see the triumph of Islam, the religion taught by their father. Khadija, the Prophet's wife, is a great figure among the women of Islam. She was not only noble by birth but she was also noble in her actions. She is an example to all women. She was the first to believe in the Prophet's mission. She always consoled him in his despair. At the time when no one believed in him and when the world was black before his eyes, she stood by him faithfully giving him every hope and encouragement.

After his marriage the Prophet for fifteen years was preparing himself for the great and holy work that lay before him. He used to spend most of his time in meditation and prayer. He was very sweet and gentle to all whom he met. He was very truthful and honest, had a high sense of honour, and led a pure life. These noble qualities in him made the people call him *Al-Amin*, the Trustworthy.

Dear children, I am telling you all this to show that from your very childhood the Holy Prophet possessed great and noble qualities. Everybody loved him, trusted him, and honoured him. At every stage of his life he set an example for all to follow. If you study his life carefully and follow him in all he said and did, you will never go wrong, and you will be blessed with success and happiness in this world and in the next. I shall tell you more about him next Saturday. Be sure to read the Children's Corner carefully.

# Simple Lessons in Islam

BY

**His Holiness Maulana Mohamed  
Abdul Aleem Siddiqui**

**M. I. M Haniffa, B. A. (Lond.) Advocate,**

1. Q. What is the Second Article of Faith in Islam ?
  - A. The Second Article of Faith in Islam is belief in all the Angels of ALLAH.
2. Q. Who are the Angels ?
  - A. Angels are the spiritual creatures of ALLAH ever obedient to HIS Will and Commands. They are neither males nor females. They have neither parents nor wives, nor sons, nor daughters. They have no material body and can assume any form they like.
3. Q. Do Angels eat and drink like human beings ?
  - A. No. Angels do not eat and drink like human beings, nor do they enjoy sleep.
4. Q. Who are the most important Angels of ALLAH ?
  - A. The most important Angels of ALLAH are four in number, viz.,
    - (a) Jibreel
    - (b) Meekaeel
    - (c) Israfeel
    - (d) Izraeel.
5. Q. Who are the other important Angels of ALLAH ?
  - A. The other important Angels of ALLAH are
    - (a) Ridvan
    - (b) Malik
    - (c) Raqeeb and Atheed
    - (d) Munkar and Nakeer.
6. Q. Are there other Angels besides those named above.
  - A. Yes; there are other Angels too besides those named above. Their number is known only to ALLAH.

(To be Continued.)

every week if you want to win a handsome prize. I shall announce later the date of the competition.

Editor's Reply To  
Correspondent

MAHMOUD EL-SAYED RAHMAN  
you feel that you need the  
I am not a child, I am a  
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prosperity. I am not a child, I am  
to write. I am not a child, I am  
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at

# Muslim Decadence-III

## Man's Rebellious Nature

### Criterion Of The Acceptance Or Rejection Of A Faith

By "Sheikh"

".....Verily Never Will God Change the condition Of a people until they Change it themselves (with their own souls)". (Quran xiii-ii).

In my last contribution I stated that the cause for the decadence of the Muslim Community was "that the Muslims rejected faith and became rebellious and wicked," in the words of the Holy Quran.

It now behoves us to consider in the light of the verse quoted above, in what respects changes were brought about by the Muslim community—changes which were potent factors in their decline.

Acceptance or rejection of a Faith by a person or a community of persons can only be gauged by the positive or negative acts of such person or community of persons in relation to the teachings of such Faith.

Islam is the one and only religion which prescribes in no unmistakable terms certain well defined and definite practices which should be followed and acted upon by her followers if they desire to come within the pale of Islam. I am referring to the four fundamental practices of Islam, viz:

- (1) The five daily prayers
- (2) Fasting
- (3) Zakat (Dispensation of charity) and
- (4) Pilgrimage to Mecca

It need hardly be mentioned that the well-to-do and the rich only are expected to conform to the last two requirements, but more of that later.

Man by nature is rebellious. The brute in man always gets the better of "the man" unless "the man" is trained from his infancy to suppress and conquer the brute. Man has to go through the College of Life and the University of Experience to attain the Goal of Perfection. No man ever reached this Goal with a long jump nor will he ever do it. In order to attain spiritual elevation, all religions have prescribed various remedies. Islam has prescribed hers—belief in God followed by "righteous deeds." Of the righteous deeds, the foremost are the four fundamental practices enumerated above. Islam aims at unity and uniformity, hence the observance of these practices is incumbent on every Muslim, man or woman. There is no half way house in Islam. Every man shall be the bearer of his own burden and no man shall bear the burden of another.

#### Steps In The Spiritual Ladder

If one ponders over the practices mentioned above in the order in which they are given one cannot fail to realise that each practice if carried out in the manner it was intended to be carried out, not as a mechanised ritual, but as acts of ethics or piety, is a step in the spiritual ladder to elevate man from matters mundane and to make him realise the purpose of the Divine Spark in man, viz: the return to the Place of Origin: "From Him we are, to Him we return."

The principles inculcated by Islam were observed by the Muslims of the earlier generations in the spirit as well as in the letter with such religious fervour and intensity of devotion as to

win the unstinted admiration and praise of impartial non-Muslim observers.

"It is one of the glories of Islam" says Hunter in his *Our Indian Mussalmans*, "that its temples are not made with hands, and that its ceremonies can be performed any where upon God's earth as under His heaven." "Every place" says Amcer Ali in his 'Spirit of Islam' "in which the Almighty is faithfully worshipped is equally pure. The Moslem, pours forth his soul in a brief but earnest supplicatory address; his attention is not wearied by the length of his prayers, the theme of which is always self humiliation, the glorification of the Giver of all good and reliance on His Mercy. The intensity of the devotional spirit embalmed in the Church of Mohammed has hardly been realised by Christendom. Tradition, that faithful chronicler of the past, with its hundred corroborative witnesses, records how the Prophet (O. W. B. P.) wept during his prayers with the fervour of his emotions; how his noble cousin and son-in-law became so absorbed in his devotions that his body grew benumbed.

#### No Priesthood in Islam

"The Islam of Muhammad recognises no caste of priesthood, allows no monopoly of spiritual knowledge or special holiness to intervene between man and his God. Each soul rises to its creator without the intervention of priest or hierophant. No sacrifice, no ceremonial, invented by vested interests is needed to bring the anxious heart nearer to its comforter. Each human being is his own priest in the Islam of Muhammad; no one man is higher than the other.

"The institution of fasting in Islam, has the legitimate object of restraining the passions by diurnal abstinence of a limited and definite period, from all the gratifications of the senses and diverting the over-flood of the animal spirits into a healthy channel. Useless and unnecessary mortification of the flesh is discountenanced, nay condemned..... In the true spirit of the Teacher, the legists invariably laid down the rule that during the fast abstinence of mind from all base thoughts is as incumbent as the abstinence of the body.

"No religion of the world prior to Islam had consecrated charity. the support of the widow, the orphan and the helpless poor, by enrolling its principles among the positive enactments of the system.

"By the laws of Islam every individual is bound to contribute a certain

(Continued on page 7)

# Popular Muslim Leader's Tribute To "The Star of Islam"

—:OOO:—

## "A Most Popular and Valuable Journal"

### Congratulations from Mr. A. R. A. Razik

J.P., U.P.M., M.S.C., M.M.C.

*It gives me no little pleasure to be able to congratulate heartily the Editor and Publishers of "The Star of Islam" on their successful introduction to Ceylon of what must, if its first number is to be any criterion, prove to be a most popular and valuable journal.*

*To my mind it is of prime importance for all Muslims here to first of all sink sundry petty differences in the common cause, and I feel sure that a cultural weekly, in broadening one's out-look generally, apart from diffusing much-needed light on major topics current, will help considerably to achieve this.*

*It is also necessary to remember that mere subscription to a journal of this nature is scarcely enough—what is really imperative is a thorough perusal and digestion of its contents each week, if its benefits are to be derived in some appreciable measure.*

*The "Star of Islam" has embarked on a truly laudable object to guide its readers to a fuller destiny; I would therefore earnestly commend it to all Ceylon Muslims, in particular. I am confident that the general public also will find in it a journal highly interesting and illuminating.*

(Sgd.) A. R. A. Razik

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## Matrimonial Announcement

JALDEEN—AZOOR

The engagement is announced and the marriage will take place on the 3rd September, 1939 of

Mr. M. K. JALDEEN

(only son of Mr. M. H. A. Jaldeen and the late Mrs. Jaldeen and grandson of the late Mr. Allal Amit and Mrs. Amit)

of the Chartered Bank, Colombo, and

Miss NGHAI DEVI AZOOR

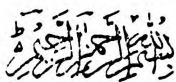
(daughter of Haji and Mrs. B. A. Azoor)

21/7, Saunder's Court,  
Slave Island,  
Colombo.

## The Star of Islam

A CULTURAL WEEKLY

COLOMBO: 19TH AUGUST 1939.



## The Necessity For Radical Changes

**M**EN of understanding and foresight have begun to realize that "under the impact of new ideas and conflicting cultural currents, so characteristic of the period in which we are living, Islam, can no longer afford to remain an its magic sleep

the safe-gu Holy Quran. Islam can, fore, never die. Many of its followers may be negligent; they may be unfaithful to its teachings, they may sacrifice the best part of their manhood and womanhood at the altar of the so-called Western civilisation. There are others, however, in whose hearts burn the light of Islam, and this light will go on burning unto eternity. Yet we cannot deny that today the greater number of Muslims, on account of their infidelity to the Islamic teachings, are groping in spiritual and moral darkness. It is of no use to conceal this fact. All Muslims have to face the situation courageously and effect drastic changes in their thoughts and actions if they are to prove worthy of the name they bear.

Many Muslims today are Muslims only in name. Gone from them are the noble qualities inculcated by Islam. Gone from them is the unflinching fidelity with which their forefathers followed the example of the Holy Prophet. The true spirit of their Faith is now with them no more. To them religion is but an empty form. Their conduct, whether at home or in the office, is a disgrace to any religion. Dishonesty, hypocrisy, duplicity, selfishness, arrogance and all the other

vices condemned by Islam, are notable traits of their character. Truly, very truly, did the late Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall say that the present-day Muslims were very poor advertisements of Islam.

We, Muslims, have to bear in mind that the conception of "worship" in Islam is different from that in any other religion. It is not restricted to the purely devotional practices, as for example, prayers or fasting; but it extends over the whole of man's practical life as well. The object of our life as a whole is the worship of Allah, and all our actions—whether at home, among friends, in business or profession, or public activities—must all be performed as acts of worship. But how many Muslims do so? Take for instance the wealthy classes. We see them making a pompous display of their wealth on certain occasions. But how many of them apply their riches to really good purposes, such as the establishment of Industrial Homes, Orphanages, Homes for the Aged, education of poor and deserving children, relief of genuine distress and other noble causes? If they will bear in mind the fact that "there is no prayer better than human service", they will utilize their wealth to alleviate human misery, to provide proper educational facilities for the poor, to organize their community on the right lines, and to make the world a sweeter, happier, better place for their brothers and sisters. To

see a sorry spectacle to see a strong uses of the which Allah has

They love to entertain equally-rich friends to lavish banquets as in the case of feasts or *kandiris* while hundreds of their poor brothers and sisters are starving in the streets. They found *Madrasas* for producing Alims without making provisions to enable them to earn a living after their theological career is over; and thus they increase the number of beggars. They spend thousands of rupees in the celebration of weddings while poor maidens are becoming old women for want of the means necessary for marriage. They allow their children to squander their money on wine, women and cards, and to become easy victims to the vices of Western civilisation. Is all this in keeping with the spirit of Islam? Are such rich folk fulfilling the great trust which the Almighty Allah has placed on them? Before it is too late, let us heed the warning of the great Austrian Muslim who said "As the things stand today, Islam is like a sinking ship. All hands that could help are needed on board. But it will be saved if the Muslims hear and understand the call of the Holy Quran: 'verily, in the Prophet of God you have the best example for everyone who looks forward towards God and the Day of Judgment.'"

From The Mimbar

# The Snares of This World

++

## Earthly Pleasures Turn To Bitterness

## Seek Salvation In Allah's Commandments

Translation of Sermon Delivered On  
Friday, the 4th August, 1939, at  
the Wekande Jumma Mosque

By Katheeb S. B. Latiff

PRAISE be to Allah Whose existence His creatures manifest, the Benefactor of His creatures by maintaining them, before Whose authority all bow their heads, before Whose might all difficulties vanish, by Whose blessings all minds are calmed and by Whose word everything exists.

I praise Him for His particular and general blessings, His early and subsequent helps, His great and small gifts, and His commandments.

I bear witness that there is no God (worthy of being worshipped) but Allah alone, and that He hath no partner—the Eternal to whose eternity there is no beginning, the Mighty who hath no equal or match. And I bear witness that Muhammad is Allah's Servant and Messenger appointed to the highest rank, the choice of the nobility selected from the respected house of Luwai ibnu Ghalib, the elite of Quraish. May Allah bestow His blessings on Muhammad and on his followers—Blessings, that would give them the highest of ranks and fulfil their farthest wishes.

O servants of Allah! I advice you and myself of the observance of the duty unto Allah. Lo! It is the strongest of fortresses and the surest way to salvation. Whoever observes it, wins and is safe, and whoever neglects it will be thrown out and shall regret.

I warn you of a House (the world) the dangers of which encircle you; its business is a loss; its calamities falling on you and its signs professing its vanity. Whoever prides in it is humiliated; the seeker for more of it gets less. It deceives those who trust in it and betrays its refugees. It evades those who seek it, and follows those who avoid it. Its safety is pested with sickness, its youth condemned with old age. It never gives happiness but to follow it up with sorrow, and never gives ease but to follow it up with trouble. It plunders all ages freely and spreads sin abundantly.

Reflect well, O brethren (may Allah bless you), on what it dealt to its lovers and those who depended on it. It makes them taste its killing poisons,

aims its unfailing arrows at them, spreads for them misfortunes day and night and at the end waylays them with the sword of death, so that their pleasures are transformed to far-off dreams.

Brethren! why get deceived by a piece the description of which is manifestly unfavourable and surely many of you would have experienced it to their cost time and again.

Certainly Allah hath described it clearly to those who understand and unveiled its vices to those who consider and said "Know that the life of the world is only play, and idle talk and pageantry."

O those of clear understanding, think. O those who have had experiences, take warning. O those of insight, consider. O carriers of the Quran, reflect before the pits receive you and before sand and stones cover you and all news and signs of you vanish. On that day man will cry, "whither to flee?" Alas! No refuge! Unto thy Lord is the recourse that day.

"The similitude of the life of the world is only as water which we send down from the sky, then the earth's growth of that which men and cattle eat mingled with it till, when the earth hath taken on her ornaments and is embellished, and her people deem that they are masters of her, our commandment cometh by night or by day and we make it as reaped corn as if it had not flourished yesterday. Thus do we expound the revelations for people who reflect."

May Allah screen us all from punishments, send upon us the curtain of mercy and blessing, and help us to attain our highest wishes accompanied by His forgiveness and pleasure.

A'meen.

(Translated by Moulvi M. A. Latiff)

# Musings Of A Pensioner

II—(Continued)

## Man's Appreciative Self

### Interpretation of Philosophers

By M. T. AKBAR, K.C., B.A., LL.B., (Cantab),  
Formerly Senior Puisne Justice of Ceylon.

LET me end this article by giving extracts—long extracts, I am afraid—from Iqbal's Six Lectures and Bergson's Laughter, to enable my readers to judge whether I have correctly understood these philosophers.

Bergson wrote as follows:—

"What is the object of art? Could reality come into direct contact with sense and consciousness, could we enter into immediate communion with things and with ourselves, probably art would be useless, or rather we should all be artists, for then our soul would continually vibrate in perfect accord with nature. Our eyes, aided by memory, would carve out in space and fix in time the most inimitable of pictures. Hewn in the living marble of the human form, fragments of statues, beautiful as the relics of antique statuary, would strike the passing glance. Deep in our souls we should hear the strains of our inner life's unbroken melody, a music that is oftentimes gay, but more frequently plaintive and always original. All this is around and within us, and yet no whit of it do we distinctly perceive. Between nature and ourselves nay, between ourselves and our own consciousness a veil is interposed, a veil that is dense and opaque for the common herd, thin, almost transparent, for the artist and the poet. What fairy wove that veil? Was it done in malice or in friendliness? We had to live, and life demands that we grasp things in their relations to our own needs.

#### Selection made by the Senses

"Life is action. Life implies the acceptance only of the *utilitarian* side of things in order to respond to them by appropriate reactions: all other impressions must be dimmed or else reach us vague and blurred. I look and I think I see, I listen and I think I hear, I examine myself and I think I am reading the very depths of my heart. But what I see and hear of the outer world is purely and simply a selection made by my senses to serve as a light to my conduct; what I know of myself is what comes to the surface, what participates in my actions. My senses and my consciousness, therefore, give me no more than a practical simplification of reality. In the vision they furnish me of myself and of things, the differences that are useless to man are obliterated, the resemblances that are useful to him are emphasised; ways are traced out for me in advance, along which my activity is to travel. These ways are the ways which all man-kind has trod before me. Things have been classified with a view to the use I can derive from them. And it is this classification I perceive, far more clearly than the colour and the shape of things. Doubtless man is vastly superior to the lower animals in this respect. It is not very likely that the eye of a wolf makes any distinction between a kid and a lamb; both appear to the wolf as the same identical quarry, alike easy to pounce upon, alike good to devour. We, for our part, make a distinction between a goat and a sheep, can we tell one goat from another, one sheep from another? The *individuality* of things or of beings escapes us, unless it is materially to our

advantage to perceive it. Even when we do take note of it—as when we distinguish one man from another—it is not the individuality itself that the eye grasps, i. e., an entirely original harmony of forms and colours, but only one or two features that will make practical recognition easier.

#### Outward Display of Our Mental State

"In short, we do not see the actual things themselves; in most cases we confine ourselves to reading the labels affixed to them. This tendency, the result of need, has become even more pronounced under the influence of speech; for words—with the exception of proper nouns—all denote *genera*. The word, which only takes note of the most ordinary function and commonplace aspect of the thing, intervenes between it and ourselves, and would conceal its form from our eyes, were that form not already masked beneath the necessities that brought the world into existence. Not only external objects, but even our own mental states, are screened from us in their inmost, their personal aspect, in the original life they possess. When we feel love or hatred, when we are gay or sad, is it really the feeling itself that reaches our consciousness with those innumerable fleeting shades of meaning and deep resounding echoes that make it something altogether our own? We should all, were it so, be novelists or poets or musicians. Mostly, however, we perceive nothing but the outward display of our mental state. We catch only the impersonal aspect of our feelings, that aspect which speech has set down once for all because it is almost the same, in the same conditions, for all men. Thus, even in our own individual, individuality escapes our ken. We move amidst generalities and symbols, as within a tilt-yard in which our force is effectively pitted against other forces; and fascinated by action, tempted by it, for our own good, on to the field it has selected, we live in a zone midway between things and ourselves, externally to things externally also to ourselves. From time to time, however, in a fit of absent-mindedness, nature raises up souls that are more detached from life. Not with that intentional, logical, systematic detachment—the result of reflection and philosophy—but rather with a natural detachment one innate in the structure of sense or consciousness, which at once reveals itself by a virginal manner, so to speak, of seeing, hearing or thinking. Were this detachment complete, did the soul no longer cleave to action by any of its perceptions, it would be the soul of an artist such as the world has never yet seen. It would excel alike in every art at the same time; or rather, it would fuse them all into one. It would perceive all things in their

(Continued on page 6)

# Pilgrimage to Mecca

## The Fifth Pillar of Islam

### Message to Muslims

(Last Saturday on the eve of His Holiness Sheikh Muhammad Ibraheem's departure from Ceylon, we published extracts from his Message to the Muslims in Ceylon. At the special request of several of our readers, we give here the full text of the Message.—Ed.)

"Most surely the first House appointed for men," declares Al-Quran, "is the one at Bekka (Mecca), blessed and a guidance for the nations. In it are clear signs; the standing place of Abraham, and whoever enters it shall be secure, and Pilgrimage to the House is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) every one who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves then surely Allah is Self-sufficient above any need of the worlds."

The Pilgrimage to Mecca is the fifth pillar of Islam by which the Almighty Allah has completed His religion and perfected His Blessings on His servants. It is an annual Pilgrimage made to the most sanctified spot of the world by the Muslim Believers, who worship Allah in one harmonious voice on the sacred place there.

Those of whom Allah has showered His Blessings perform the Pilgrimage at least once in their life-time. Through this Pilgrimage every individual, who is blessed with opportunity, learns by undergoing all the hardships of such a long and arduous journey—by the grace of Allah, there is not much of hardships spoken of in times of

endured today, afforded every satisfaction can supply the privation and separate him from the company of those near and dear to him.

#### Allah's Message

Prophet Muhammad (O.W.B.P.) was enjoined by Allah in these verses to proclaim the Pilgrimage to his fellow-men thus:—

"And proclaim among men the Pilgrimage: they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, coming the advantages for them and mention the name of Allah during stated days over what He has given them of the cattle quadrupeds, then eat of them and feed the distressed one, the needy." (Al-Quran XXII 27-28).

Those that hearken to the Clarion Call of this Divine Message meet their brothers from the remotest corner of the globe. The Chinaman from the far-east recognizes a brother in the dark-skinned Negro from the West. The universal brotherhood and equality of the human race are nowhere more clearly manifested than in the institution of the Hadj (Pilgrimage).

On Mount Arafat either king or slave, high or low, rich or poor, are all brought to the level of one whole human race. Clad in the unsewn garb of humility, the different nations of the world—from the monarchs in the throne to the mendicants on the road, irrespective of class, colour or country—stand before the Almighty Allah, all in one harmonious voice saying: "O Allah, here am I at Thy service." Truly no fetch of religious genius could have conceived a better form of the League of Nations than the institution of Hadj.

#### Blessings of the Pilgrimage

During the days of the Pilgrimage Almighty Allah showers His choicest

blessings on His servants and accepts their prayers. Staying on Mount Arafat, say the Muslim Theologians, expiates sins. In a nutshell, the blessings and the benefits which are derived in this world and for the next by performing the Pilgrimage can easily be comprehended from the following sayings of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (O.W.B.P.):—

"Whosoever performs this Pilgrimage faithfully, he is forgiven all his sins and he becomes like an infant just born."

"Whoever performs this Pilgrimage and Minor Pilgrimage (Umrah) consecutively gets purified from his sins, poverty, etc., like purifying the metals from their alloys."

"The Umrah (Minor Pilgrimage) is an expiation between one Umrah and another and the reward for an accepted Pilgrimage shall be naught but Heaven."

It is incumbent on every one who has believed in one God (Allah) and his prophets (O.W.B.P.) that they should perform the Pilgrimage.

of Islam. While an ordinance authorized by the Government is scrupulously observed by the people, the injunctions of the Almighty Allah are easily forgotten and neglected.

Hence, whoever is blessed with the facilities to perform the Hadj, let him answer the call of the Almighty Allah and his Apostle and avail himself of the first opportunity, for time and tide wait for no man, and reap the rich harvest accruing therefrom.

#### Modern Facilities

Today we Muslims are greatly indebted to His Gracious Majesty Ibnu Saud and his Government who are in every way providing the much needed comfort and convenience to the pilgrims who gather there from every nook and corner of the globe. Special journeys by motor cars, aeroplanes and camels are organized from Jeddah to Mecca and thence to Medina by the Saudi Government. Apart from this the Saudi Government has also established Hotels, restaurants and hospitals for the convenience of the pilgrims. Roads and paths are made quite secure from danger and loss of property or lives.

It is hoped that the Muslims here will take this opportunity and respond to the Call from the High to perform the Pilgrimage to Mecca and thence visit the sacred tomb of the Holy Prophet (O.W.B.P.) at Medina.

May Almighty Allah help us to perform the Pilgrimage to His Holy House and include us among his devoted ones. O Allah, accept my prayers as Thou hast accepted the prayers of Thy chosen ones. Ameen.

(Sgd.) Mohamed Ibraheem Alfaz

## Musings Of A Pensioner

[Continued from page 5]

native purity: the forms, colours, sounds of the physical world as well as the subtlest movements of the inner life. But this is asking too much of nature. Even for such of us as she has made artists, it is by accident, and on one side only, that she has lifted the veil. In one direction only has she forgotten to rivet the perception to the need. And since each direction corresponds to what we call a *sense*—through one of his senses, and through that sense alone, is the artist usually wedded to art. Hence, originally the diversity of arts. Hence also the speciality of predispositions.

### The Inner Life of Things

This one applies himself to colours and forms, and since he loves colour for colour and form for form, since he perceives them for their sake and not for his own, it is the inner life of things that he sees appearing through their forms and colours. Little by little he insinuates it into our own perception, baffled though we may be at the outset. For a few moments at least, he diverts us from the prejudices of form and colour that come between ourselves and reality. And thus he realises the loftiest ambition of art, which here consists in revealing to us nature. Others, again, retire within themselves. Beneath the thousand rudimentary actions which are the outward and visible signs of an emotion, behind the commonplace, conventional expression that both reveals and conceals an individual mental state, it is the emotion, the original mood, to which they attain in its undefiled essence. And then, to induce us to make the same effort ourselves, they contrive to make us see something of what they have seen: by the language of words, and

Others, these joys and sorrows pinch, be translated into language, grasp something that has nothing in common with language, certain rhythms of life and breath that are closer to man than his inmost feelings, being the living law—varying with each individual—of his enthusiasm and despair, his hopes and regrets. By setting free and emphasising this music, they force it upon our attention; they compel us, willy-nilly, to fall in with it, like passers-by who join in a dance. And thus they impel us to set in motion, in the depths of our being, some secret chord which was only waiting to thrill. So art, whether it be painting or sculpture, poetry or music, has no other object than to brush aside the utilitarian symbols, the conventional and socially accepted generalities, in short, everything that veils reality from us, in order to bring us face to face with reality itself."

### Practical Self of Daily Life

The extract from Iqbal is as follows:—"What do I find when I fix my gaze on my own conscious experience? In the words of Bergson, 'I pass from state to state. I am warm or cold. I am merry or sad. I work or do nothing. I look at what is around me or I think of something else. Sensations, feelings, volitions, ideas—such are the changes into which my existence is divided and which colour it in turns. I change, then, without ceasing.' Thus there is nothing static in my inner life; all is a constant mobility, an unceasing flux of states, a perpetual flow in which there is no halt or resting place. Constant change, however, is unthinkable without time. On the analogy of our inner experience, then, conscious existence means life in time. A keener insight into the nature of conscious experience, however, reveals that the

self in its inner life moves from centre outwards. It has, so to speak, two sides which may be described as appreciative and efficient. On its efficient side it enters into relation with what we call the world of space. The efficient self is the subject of associationist psychology—the practical self of daily life in its dealing with the external order of things which determine our passing states of consciousness and stamp on these states their own spatial feature of mutual isolation. The self here lives outside itself as it were, and, while retaining its unity as a totality, discloses itself as nothing more than a series of specific and consequently numerable states. The time in which the efficient self lives is therefore the time of which we predicate long and short. It is hardly distinguishable from space. We can conceive it only as a straight line composed of spatial points which are external to one another like so many stages in a journey. But time thus regarded is not true time, according to Bergson. Existence in spatialised time is spurious existence.

### Inner Centre of Experience

"A deeper analysis of conscious experience reveals to us what I have called the appreciative side of the self. With our absorption in the external order of things, necessitated by our present situation, it is extremely difficult to catch a glimpse of the appreciative self. In our constant pursuit after external things we weave a kind of veil round the appreciative self which thus becomes completely alien to us. It is only in the moments of profound meditation, when the efficient self is in abeyance, that we sink into our deeper self and reach the inner centre of experience. In the life-process, this deeper ego the states of consciousness melt into each other. The unity of the appreciative ego is like the unity of the germ in which the experiences of its individual ancestors exist, not as a plurality, but as a unity in which every experience permeates the whole. There is a numerical distinctness of states of the ego, the multiplicity of its states is, unlike that of the efficient self, wholly qualitative. Movement, but this movement is indivisible; their elements inter-penetrate and are wholly non-serial in character. It appears that the time of the appreciative self is a single 'now' which the efficient self, in its traffic with the world of space, pulverizes into a series of 'nows' like pearl beads in a thread. Here is, then, pure duration unadulterated by space. The Quran with its characteristic simplicity alludes to the serial and non-serial aspects of duration in the following verses.

"And put thou thy trust in Him that liveth and dieth not, and celebrate His praise Who in six days created the Heavens and the earth, and what is between them, then mounted His Throne; the God of mercy. (25:60).

All things We have created with a fixed destiny: Our command was but one, swift as the twinkling of an eye."

### Process of Creation

If we look at the movement embodied in creation from the outside, that is to say, if we apprehend it intellectually, it is a process lasting through thousands of years; for one Divine day, in the terminology of the Quran, as of the Old Testament, is equal to 1,000 years. From another point of view the process of creation, lasting through thousands of years, is a single indivisible act, "swift as the twinkling of an eye." It is, however, impossible to express this inner experience of pure duration in words, for language is shaped on the serial time of our daily efficient self. Perhaps an illustration will further elucidate the point. According to physical science the cause of your sensation of red is the rapidity of wave motion the frequency of which is 400 billions per second. If you could observe this tremendous frequency from the outside, and count it at the rate of

2,000 per second which is supposed to be the limit of the perceptibility of light, it will take you more than 6,000 years to finish the enumeration. Yet in the single momentary mental act of perception you hold together a frequency of wave motion which is practically incalculable. That is how the mental act transforms succession into duration. The appreciative self, then, is more or less corrective of the efficient self, inasmuch as it synthesizes all the 'heres' and 'nows'—the small change of space and time, indispensable to the efficient self—into the coherent wholeness of personality. Pure time, then, as revealed by a deeper analysis of our conscious experience, is not a string of separate, reversible instants; it is an organic whole in which the past is not left behind, but is moving along with, and operating in, the present."

[Third Article of this great series next Saturday.]

## "The Star of Islam"

### Notice to Readers

"The Star of Islam" has firmly established its position in the field of Journalism in an incredibly short time. Its rapidly increasing popularity in and outside Ceylon bears eloquent testimony to its high literary quality and the wealth of useful knowledge it contains. Therefore join the large circle of its readers comprising a great Intellectual and Spiritual Brotherhood by sending the following form, duly filled, together with a P.O. for Rs. 3 to the Manager.

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## Greetings from Mauritius & Singapore

### "The Star of Islam" Welcomed as a Great Asset

Mr. Eshack Abdullatif, a prominent Muslim of Port Louis, Mauritius, writes as follows:—

"It is indeed with the greatest pleasure I have learnt that under your capable editorship, a cultural weekly has been started. I wish 'The Star of Islam' full success and prosperity and pray the Almighty Allah that the paper may become the star of Islam, in the true sense of the word.

Today the Power of the Press is the first and the foremost weapon in the life of a community. Without a press, the community is lifeless. The Muslim community has suffered a lot, through the absence of a press of its own. Most particularly, the Ceylon Muslims are in dire need of an organ of the type you issue. In the absence of an English paper, Muslim opinion cannot fully reach those circles, which have the framing of policies in their hands.

In the missionary field too, your weekly will be indeed a great asset, and a valuable addition for the dissemination of Islamic Culture.

The Acting-Editor of "The Genuine Islam", Singapore, writes as follows:—

Every new publication on Islam is verily an asset to us Muslims and we need many more in every country and in every known language truly to discharge our responsibilities in spreading the true religion of God. We therefore welcome your Islamic Journal as our great ally and as assisting us to do our work more satisfactorily. So, we send you and the other Muslims of Ceylon responsible for launching this Godly venture our sincere "Mubarak" and congratulations. We pray for the long life of the Journal, its success and continued improvement.

"The Star of Islam's" List of Agents has been held over for publication next Saturday due to want of space in this issue.

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## All-Ceylon Kathis' Conference

### Registrar-General Addresses Gathering

#### Muslim Marriage Law To Be Amended

"YOU are Conciliation Judges intended to help the community, and greater public service is expected of you than in the case of the paid Judges in other Courts", said Mr. C. E. de Pinto, the Registrar-General, addressing the All-Ceylon Kathis' Conference at the Zahira College Hall last Sunday.

Mr. De Pinto paid a tribute to the manner in which the provisions of the Ordinance were being administered by the Kathis.

Mr. A. M. Saheed, Kathi, Galle, and Chairman of the Conference, presided.

In this speech Mr. Saheed referred to the "peculiar position of the Kathis," who had to perform the roles of Judges, interpreters and binders combined, and asked that better facilities should be provided for them to work the ordinance.

Mr. de Pinto said that he did not know whether that was not an advantage because the ordinance never intended that Kathis should be a replica of any other Court.

"You are a distinctive Court by yourself," said Mr. de Pinto. "Before the Kathis were appointed, Muslim ladies had to go before Gentile District Judges to get redress, but now they have the privilege of appearing before a co-religionist Judge. You are Conciliation Judges intended to help the Community."

Mr. de Pinto went on to say that the deficiencies of the law had to be found out in the course of its working and that the ordinance was now being revised by a Special Committee appointed by the Government, which included Mr. M. T. Akbar, Mr. M. I. M. Haniffa and Mr. T. E. Jayah and several others.

#### Move To Reduce Number Of Officiating Priests

The amending ordinance was expected to be as nearly perfect as possible, at least, an ordinance which might not require amendments for several years to come.

"They were contemplating the reduction of the number of officiating priests which was a departmental matter entirely and had nothing to do with the Committee," said Mr. de Pinto. He had noted from the number of petitions received that there was a lot of opposition to this step and he hoped they would help him to arrive at a satisfactory decision.

The Muslim population was reckoned to be 350,000 and they had 300 officiating priests, whereas the non-Muslim population—Tamils, Sinhalese and all others—were about five millions and they had only 750 Registrars of Marriages. Some Muslim officiating priests did not even register four entries a year and some of them four a quarter, and yet they had to provide offices for those priests, issue books, inspect their work, send out investigating officers and do various other things which the administration of the Ordinance involved, at a cost a certain amount of avoidable expenditure was incurred.

It was, therefore, thought desirable to have some of those superfluous posts abolished and he had written to the provincial Registrars for a list of officiating priests not having sufficient work. He was, however, prepared to receive his opinion in the light of advice which he received. It was also being considered whether the officiating priests should be paid a fixed fee.

Mr. M. T. Akbar, after paying a tribute to Mr. Pinto, the Ceylonese Judiciary and the European Judges, said that when that ordinance was first mooted he had grave doubts of having a successful Kathi System, but it was decided to give it a trial. The Kathis, of course, had not all the advantages of trained judges nor had they a big fixed salary to keep them from temptation, but they had their religion to guide

them and they wanted the Muslim community to be given a chance.

There were stories about Kathis, and he warned them against the danger of yielding to temptation and polluting the administration with anything that was foul.

Some people thought that they should provide for punishment against adultery but there were practical difficulties in the way of putting such provisions into actual practice.

Mr. Akbar said that he was very happy that his work was bearing fruit. He reminded them that to become a Kathi was no "fun". Kathis held the position of Judges and they had a sacred responsibility to be discharged.

#### Mr. M. T. Akbar Thanked

Mr. T. B. Jayah also joined in the tribute paid to the Registrar-General for the great interest he took in all matters affecting the working of the ordinance.

He also thanked Mr. Akbar for his invaluable services in the drafting of the Ordinance and engaging himself actively in promoting the satisfactory working of the ordinance. He had no doubt that the Kathis approached their task with a high sense of justice and fair play and courage.

Referring to objections to lawyers appearing, he said it was quite natural when, for instance, on one side there was a poor helpless woman and on the other side a rich person who wanted to have his own way. If lawyers were permitted to appear before Kathis, the rich man would be in a position to engage the services of the best lawyers, and unless the Kathis were guided by a strong sense of justice and fair play and courage, it would be almost impossible to do their work impartially.

#### Idea Of Conciliation

With reference to the peculiar position of the Kathis having to perform various work, Mr. Jayah said that whether Kathis were remunerated or not, they should remember that the idea which actuated the prime movers responsible for that ordinance was conciliation. Sometimes they were apt to forget that ideal.

They need not fear that because they were not well versed in law they would not be able to carry out the provisions of the ordinance. As Muslims they were expected to know the law which related to ordinary private family matters, and the law that dealt with marriage and divorce was not so complicated and so full of pitfalls that an ordinary Muslim would not be capable of administering it, provided he was a good Muslim.

#### Office-Bearers

Mr. M. I. M. Haniffa spoke next on the work of the Board of Kathis, and after a vote of thanks to the speakers the Conference ended and was followed by a business meeting of the All-Ceylon Kathi Association at which the following office-bearers for the ensuing year were elected:—

Chairman, Mr. A. M. Saheed (Galle); Vice-Chairmen: Messrs. S. M. Aboobucker (Jaffna) and C. B. Meedin (Colombo); Joint Honorary Treasurers: Messrs. M. M. Ahmed Lebbe (Gampola) and S. A. K. Hameed Husain Marikar

## Muslim Decadence-III

(Continued from page 3)

part of his substance towards the help and assistance of his poorer neighbours. This portion is usually one part of forty or 2½ per cent on the value of all goods, chattels, emblems, on profits of trade, mercantile business etc. But alms are due only when the property amounts to a certain value and has been in the possession of a person for one whole year.

#### Freemasonry and Brotherhood of Faith

"The wisdom which incorporated into Islam the time honoured custom of annual pilgrimage to Mecca, and to the shrine of the Kaaba, has breathed into Mohammad's religion a freemasonry and brotherhood of Faith in spite of sectarian divisions. The eyes of the whole Muslim world fixed on that central spot, keep alive in the bosom of each some spark of the celestial fire which lighted up the earth in that century of darkness. Here, again, the wisdom of the inspired Lawgiver shines forth in the negative part of the enactment, in the conditions necessary to make the injunction obligatory—(1) ripeness of intelligence and discernment (2) perfect freedom and liberty, (3) possession of means of transport and subsistence during the journey (4) possession of means sufficient to support the pilgrim's family during his absence (5) the possibility and practicability of the voyage."

#### The Fundamental Practices As Observed Today

I have given as briefly as possible a short but comprehensive description of the four fundamental principles (righteous deeds) of Islam. Let us now consider the changes effected by the present generation of Muslims.

#### Prayers

The observance of the five daily prayers has now become a mere ritual performed by human beings, no religious fervour or intensity of devotion. The process of the various genuflections is gone through mechanically with the varied utterances in the forms of "Mantras." The slipshod manner in which the prayers are offered, the slovenly methods of the large majority of the Lebbais (priests) and Muezzins; the dilapidated and neglected state of the Mosques, the paucity of the worshippers at the appointed times of prayers, the relegation of the worship of the Creator for six days and the sudden remembrance of Him on the seventh day at the Jumma service on Fridays, have tended to bring disrepute to Islam and Islamic principles. In short prayers are offered without the presence of the heart. There is no accord of the heart and lips. The lips utter the words and the mind enjoys the freedom of the wild ass. The simple reason is that the worshippers do not understand and realise the effect of the meaning of the context of the prayers.

#### Fasting

In the matter of fasting I should like to pay my humble tribute to the women folk of the Muslim Community. They truly and honestly do fast, and realise the significance thereof; but the men ostensibly fast when they are in the

(Puttalam); Honorary Joint Secretaries: Messrs. Y. S. Hameed (Gampola) and H. M. Saheed (Alutgama); Committee: Messrs. M. C. Abdul Jawad Hadjar (Kandy), A. R. Jamaldeen (Nawalapitiya), A. E. S. Hameed (Kurunegala), S. A. I. Deen (Negombo), A. L. M. Sameen (Panadura), M. S. M. Lafir Alim Sahib (Beruwala), U. Meera Lebbe (Batticaloa), T. K. Burah (Hambantota), A. K. M. Yooseof (Tangalle), P. K. M. Zahir (Nuwara Eliya).

house and when out of it they break the fast and they do it again when they return to their homes in the evening. To many the breaking of the fast in the evening is the signal to indulge in gluttony. Many even ridicule the fast as if it had no meaning and reason.

Fasting was intended to train the Muslims to lose their craving for things not permitted, for things harmful and unnecessary, to curb their passions and suppress the animal spirit, to realise, in the case of the fortunate Muslims, the pangs of hunger and thirst which the less fortunate brethren undergo in times of want and distress.

But how many Muslims of the present generation realise the real significance of the fast? I know the time when even non-Muslims respected the days of the Muslims' fast. They refrained from eating, drinking or even smoking in the presence of Muslims; But alas! in these days Muslims invite the non-Muslims to partake of the pleasures of food, drinks, and tobacco during the time of the fast.

#### Charity

The principal rule underlying this institution is "Let not thy right hand know what thy right hand giveth." Can the Muslims of the present generation say that they give a one fortieth part of their "Goods", Chattels, Emblems &c to the poor? How many evade the divine law by their subterfuges and arguments such as that the payment of income tax had wiped out their obligation to pay the Zakat? How many clear their conscience by investing their profits and earnings before the lapse of the year and arguing that it is not obligatory on them to pay the Zakat as they had not had the money in their possession for one year. To such muddle-headed mules, I can only say that "It is not your money or the Zakat, it is Allah's that must be given to the poor." The Prophet (O.W.) has said: "Whoever has this institution have been totally disregarded. Many of our Muslims loosen the strings of their purses when a Muharrishan or a J.P. ship is desired and securely fasten the strings round the purses after the investiture. The few who dispense charity have, as I have stated earlier in the first contribution encouraged poverty and placed a premium on begging. To them the dispensing of Zakat means "throwing a dole into every beggar's begging bowl."

#### Pilgrimage

Many of the so-called Muslims under take the performance of the pilgrimage lured by the privileges enjoyed by the use of the prefix "Al-Hajj" or the suffix "Hadjar." When one ponders over the abominable acts committed by some of these so-called Hadjars one wonders whether these people ever went to Mecca and realised the significance of the pilgrimage. If one well and truly performs the pilgrimage he must like Abraham of old be ready to sacrifice his all and every thing that he holds dear in the service of God. The best form of service to God is to render service to humanity. Have the Hadjars realised the significance of the sacrifice of Ismail by Abraham?

I have briefly indicated the changes wrought by the followers of Islam... changes which in my opinion were the causes for the downward trend of the Muslim Community.

#### An Appeal

Let the Muslims gird up their loins and put their shoulders to the wheel of progress in the light of Quranic teachings. Let them once again gain an encomium as good as, if not better than that passed by Major A. G.

(Continued on page 8.)

## Islam--The Perfect Religion

(Continued from page 1)

aspects have been summed up in the following verse of the Quran:—"Lo, in the creation of the Heavens and the Earth and in the alternation of the night and the day, there are signs for men of understanding."

Whether it be the study of the sciences for the analysis of the constituents of the multifarious compounds and learning the properties of the elements of the Law of Gravity or the rules governing the revolutions of the planets or the knowledge for understanding those controlling the alternation of day and night or the movements of stars, etc., all the knowledge and learning equip the intelligent better to appreciate the wonders of the creation, for just as no one can devote himself even to a game without taking an interest in its originator, the human mind is pushed by an invincible force towards Him and every fresh scientific discovery serves to remind one of Him for Islam does not want its votary to be satisfied with superficial knowledge of things but expects him to devote himself to the study of these with the object of getting at the root of things, so that he may comprehend the intrinsic value of all and constantly remember Him, as the verse indicates, "And contemplate on the creation of the heavens and the earth." "Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying on their sides," or take it this way that in the beginning his attention is attracted by the material objects which leads him to study their nature, and thus perceiving the manifestations of Divine Attributes, he proceeds further and achieves spiritual progress by constant remembrance of Almighty Allah and attains the stage of the Attributes themselves.

i.e., neither art nor science. Thou art true and the manifestation of Truth are in Thy Creation. After negotiating this stage of the appreciation of the attributes, he moves forward in search of the Being Himself and says:—O Creator, Thy Being is not only free from all defects and deficiencies but it is so perfect that it transcends the limits of our visual horizon. The human soul is now immersed in such high preoccupations and absorbed in contemplation of the Ideal of Art, the Ideal of Science, the Ideal of the Fatherland, the Ideal of all the virtues, that getting intensely restless, its only desire is to be with Him and prays for relief from the acute distress of separation:—"Preserve us from the doom of fire."

### What Is There Beyond ?

When the human mind is enticed and captivated by the wealth of imagery and the beauty of perfection that one discerns around him, he is inevitably led to think of the inexpressibly exquisite beauty and charm of the Maker of all these, the Creator. Consequently the more one studies and thinks about the material objects, the more his affection grows for the real Originator of them all, the Immaterial, the genuine Creator and observing the incomprehensible skill and craftsmanship of the creation of the world and realising the limitations of a human mind and knowing that the problem of creation is beyond his mental powers he is inevitably led to ask, "what is there beyond? What is there beyond in space? What is there beyond time?" and he is compelled to acknowledge that there is someone beyond it all and that someone, none else than God, the Almighty Allah, the Creator, otherwise the wonderfully faultless and efficient working of all the phenomena that we notice could not last and thus

side by side with the increase in knowledge and learning, it is irresistibly brought to bear upon him that He alone is at the back of it all, and when such is the beauty and charm of His creation, what would be the grandeur and splendour of the Creator. The realisation of this fact naturally tends to make him eager, so to say, to improve his acquaintance with Him, and traversing the stage of curiosity, he cultivates friendship and intimacy till it all ends in that burning love which makes him yearn for that spiritual union with Him and the fire of separation and suspense that consumes him, urges him to exclaim ceaselessly:—"Preserve us from the doom of fire".

Hence if we survey the present day state of affairs with insight, we shall arrive at the inference that the world in the grip of materialism thinks mundane prosperity and proficiency in secular knowledge to be the highest point of human progress. But in contrast to this Islam allots to these the place of preliminaries in the code of life that it prescribes for the guidance of human beings. A Muslim is expected to utilise them as stepping stones on his march towards the ultimate goal. Their acquirement from the first is consecrated to spiritual progress. The consecration is a double one. There is one advantage of the votary freeing himself from the cares of the world. The other is that equipped with knowledge of the arts and sciences, he can respond to the intimacy of nature greater and richer than himself and joining himself to the fellowship of a splendid society, he can trace their origin and development through a series of evolutionary stages to the Almighty Allah. His preference may be for any branch of knowledge and he may engage himself in any walk of life which may vary according to his temperament, inclination or capacity, but whatever be the mode that he adopts, it will be a widening and a deepening of experience and a part of the life-process of his equipment for the journey he has undertaken to carry him to that Allah, the Lord of all the

Universe, the pinnacle of a materialists perfection is the starting point of a Muslim. Khawja Naqshaband sums it up beautifully in a couplet viz. "Our beginning is the end of every aspirant and our goal, complete annihilation of the instinct of desire", i.e. the fire of love consumes everything except the beloved. Firstly no one has a place in the heart of a lover except the beloved, and then the lover himself is consumed by the fire of love to such an extent that he loses himself in it. A Sufi says—Love is such a fire that it burns up everything except the beloved."

### The Via Media

If we examine the situation under these perspectives, Islam provides the via media, the golden mean, between the two extremes. On the one hand, it directs its followers to achieve the utmost progress in all the material walks of life, and on the other, its comprehensively high code of ethics which is unique for many reason equips him for his journey towards that ultimate goal of a sincere seeker after truth.

On one side it warns that class of human beings who not only neglect to pay any attention to the Divine Being but actually deny the existence of God and think luxury and indulgence of passions to be the Alpha and Omega of a human being's life, that there is a Creator of this world without the slightest doubt—yes, it warns them the whole universe is His creation, and just as we have His obligations on us to discharge, so have we our duties to perform in relation to our fellow-creatures. If all human beings were engaged in the pursuit of their own objects of desire and altruism had no place in the original nature of man, it would follow that the natural state

would be a state of contention, enmity, and war, and peace and tranquility will be only transitory.

Islam deprecates the separation of material from spiritual progress, for it adopts the medium course, and for a Muslim, increased economical and social prosperity side by side with increased progress in the study of arts and sciences signifies an increased capacity and desire for an advance which is more vital i.e. these should help him to penetrate the true essence of the objects and appreciate the intrinsic value of God Almighty's blessings and lead him to bow down his head before him.

On the other hand it admonishes the group of persons who maintain that it is useless to have anything to do with the world as it is to be reduced to nothing and that as long as one is absorbed in mundane matters, it is impossible to approach God and urges them to partake of the blessings bestowed by God, for it is a matter of pleasure to Him and that it is not so commendable to devote oneself to the worship of that Almighty by renouncing the world altogether and severing all connections with one's fellow-creatures, as it is to remember Him in the midst of all the worries and responsibilities of worldly affairs.

(To be continued).

## JAMA-ATHUS BURDHA MAJLIS

### Talk by Shaikh Abdul Rahman Alim

The usual weekly recital of *The Burdah* will take place on Sunday, the 20th inst. at 8-30 a.m. at the Salih Thakya, 132 New Moor Street, Colombo under the Chairmanship of Mr. S. L. Mahmood Hadjar, J. P., and will be followed by a talk on "The Philosophical meaning of 'Know Thyself and Liqa-ullah'" by Janab Shaikh Abdul Rahman Alim. All Muslims are cordially invited.

## Muslim Decadence-III

(Continued from page 7.)

Leonard in his "Islam Her Moral and spiritual Value." Says he, "In speaking of Islam and of Moslems as I have done, I have spoken of them as I have found them. Apart from a careful study of the Quran, my knowledge of both is based on personal facts and experiences as varied as they are extensive. In every clime and under a variety of conditions, I have been in touch with Moslems of all classes and shades, and have always found them animated by the same spirit; for race or colour makes no difference to the spirit of Islam. Always consistent and devout, always God-fearing and sincere as regards their faith. Before all things religious their cult, the creed of Muhammad i.e. El Islam or self surrender. Afghan, Arab, Baluchi, Somali, Turk, Egyptian, Berber, Handendowa, Senegalese, Fulani, Hausa, Yoruba, Mandingo, Malay, I found them in the main Islamic to the very core. In peace or war, in camp or cantonment, working or fighting with or against them, my experience of their moral consistency and spiritual stamina has been the same. Their fidelity to their faith, their belief in the greatness of Muhammad, and their veneration to God is something that once it is rightly understood can only be respected and appreciated at its true value. For my part seeing as I have seen their splendid heroism in their own cause and their touching devotion to those whose salt they have eaten, my feeling towards them is not only one of un-mixed admiration and respect but also of deep esteem and regard. Such men are worthy of Islam as Islam is worthy of them. Only the soul...the moral and spiritual essence of Islam...could have made them what they are, could have turned out of dregs of barbarism a human material so truly splendid." Are the Muslims of the present day "Islamic to the very core?" Are the Muslims of today "worthy of Islam as Islam is worthy of them?"

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Printed and published for the Proprietors of "The Star of Islam" by Hari Cassim Camball, No. 37, Glennie Street, Slave Island, at the Colombo Adana Press, No. 39 & 41, Glennie Street, Slave Island.