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

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WAHIDS,
233, Main Street,
COLOMBO.

VOL. I. No. 7.

COLOMBO: SATURDAY, 9TH SEPTEMBER, 1939.

PRICE 5 CTS. PER COPY
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION INCLUDING
POSTAGE RS. 3/-.

Musings Of A Pensioner-V

:0:

John Gunther's Libel on The Holy Prophet's Character

A Crushing Rejoinder

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

Let me now deal fully with Mr. John Gunther and his gratuitous libel on the character of Our Holy Prophet. Much as I dislike it, it is nevertheless a sacred duty on the part of a Muslim to defend his religion against attack, but as the Quran insists, the defence has to be undertaken and conducted with clean hands; fair-play and justice being the essence of such defence. I am only replying to Gunther's abuse of the name of any Muslims, who may unfortunately be ignorant of the sublime ideals of Islam, and who may be affected by the criticisms coming as they do from an Englishman, a Christian and a fellow-subject. As verse 193 of chapter 2 of the Quran says; which this man conveniently omits from his quotation, "but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors." My reply is intended as a warning to other non-Muslims who may be inclined to libel Islam and its great Prophet, that the libels will not, in future, go unanswered and that the war may sometimes be carried into the enemy's territory, but always in accordance with justice and fair-play.

Gunther attacks Our Prophet's character directly in one or two sentences, containing many venomous adjectives, through which he spits all the poison in his mind. There is no need to pay back this direct attack in Gunther's own coin. But he indirectly lends support to his frontal attack by purporting to give the translations (from translations of the Holy Book by Christian propagandists) of two short passages from the Holy Quran, stripped from their contexts, to emphasize the two points which Christians have never ceased to level against our religion, in spite of the exposure of such tactics by competent modern Muslim writers, namely (1) that Islam was propagated by the sword, and (2) that the Muslim heaven is a sensual heaven.

Like a Pig Searching For Truffles

I need not take up too much space to disprove these two points from the Quran; my readers need only refer to Yusuf Ali's translation and Muhammed Ali's translation or his Religion of Islam, but let me expose Gunther's tactics. In the first place he quotes from translations made by our enemies for propaganda, showing that he has made no attempt to study the Islamic religion or the Quran independently. Like a pig searching for truffles—to use a favourite phrase of Robert Louis Stevenson—he has scanned through the translation made by the worst

enemy of Islam in search of what Gunther considers the best passages to support his preconceived prejudices. In the second place he takes the passages from their contexts and deliberately omits the passages preceding and succeeding his quotations which give a different meaning to the whole. For instance, he quotes a part of verse 191 and omits the rest of it. He does not quote verses 190, 192 and 193. The following is a translation of all the three verses by Mr. Yusuf Ali, C.I.E. (late of the I.C.S.):

190. "Fight in the cause of God
Those who fight you,
But do not transgress limits.
For God loveth not transgressors.
191. And slay them
Whenever ye catch them,
And turn them out
From where they have
Turned you out;
For tumult and oppression
Are worse than slaughter
But fight them not
At the Sacred Mosque,
Unless they (first)
Fight you there;
But if they fight you,
Slay them.
Such is the reward
Of those who suppress faith.
192. But if they cease,
God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

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Ceylon Moslem Educational Society Meeting

Decision To Close Hussein Boys' English School

[Last Saturday we published a letter from a reader who signed himself as "Servant of Islam" pertaining to the closing of the Hussein Boys' English School. The report of the Special General Meeting of the Ceylon Moslem Educational Society held last week which we publish here lays bare the full facts of the case and helps to remove all misunderstandings.—Ed., S. of I.]

A special General Meeting of the Ceylon Moslem Educational Society Ltd., was held on Wednesday, the 30th instant, at No. 45, Kuruwe Street, with Sir Mohamed Macan Markar in the chair. Others present were Messrs S. L. Mahmood Hadjar, A. C. Mohamado, A. Majeed Rahman, B. J. Mayon, S. L. Mohamed, A. M. Hamid, A. R. A. Razik, P. J. Iqbal, Iqbal Lebbe Marikar, Marikar Bawa (by proxy) and M. I. M. Haniffa (Honorary Secretary).

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

After the preliminaries were over the Honorary Secretary read a Report dealing with the progress and the working of Hussein Boys' School. In the course of his report he said that the progress of the School since its Registration had been very satisfactory but the working of the school for the last ten years showed an annual loss of about Rs. 500/-. The audited Balance Sheets of the Society also showed that the Annual expenditure had exceeded the annual income in each of the years from 1931 to 1938 by over a thousand rupees. In 1938 the income of the Society was Rs. 7,406.70; the Grant received from the Government for all schools of the Society was Rs. 10,073.9; yet the loss in working of Hussein School alone was Rs. 5,008.60. Even after utilizing every cent of the Society's income the balance sheet still showed that the excess of Expenditure over Income was Rs. 1,735.59. The heavy losses annually incurred in the working of Hussein School was due to the fact that the entire Manager's contribution towards the salaries of teachers in the English section was borne by the Society. In other schools this contribution was met from the collection of school fees, but in the case of Hussein English School this collection was hardly sufficient to pay the rent of the premises where it is housed. More than half the number of children in the English section did not pay any fees; the other half was always in arrears. For the last ten years the Society had been working at a loss. In close proximity to the English School there was Hadia School, another Muslim institution, which was prepared to admit all the children who were desirous of continuing their education in English. As far as Primary or Religious education was concerned the Society would still continue to manage Hussein Boys' Tamam Fatima Mixed School. The daily attendance in those two schools

(Continued on page 6)

AS OTHERS SEE US

"The Deccan Times" Review "The Star of Islam"

Mr. S. M. Fossil, the well-known writer whose learned contributions have from time to time appeared in leading journals, reviewing *The Star of Islam* in "The Deccan Times" of the 3rd September, 1939, writes as follows:—

Many of the ills and distempers from which Muslims are suffering are due to ignorance. Wherever enlightenment has been brought and Muslims have been apprised of their glorious past a remarkable awakening has come about and Islamic renaissance and reformation have resulted therefrom. There are several means of purveying knowledge and information and the most effective is the press. The Muslims of Ceylon, though some of them very opulent and highly educated, did not have a journal of their own. It certainly redounds to the credit of Mr. Majid who realising the need for a journal not only to voice forth the views and wishes of the Muslims of Ceylon, but also to disseminate the teachings of Islam has started a weekly called *The Star of Islam*. The first issue has a number of interesting and original articles dealing with important aspects of Islam. If the present level of literary excellence is kept up as we are assured it will be kept up for we are told that distinguished writers have promised to contribute to the journal, *The Star of Islam* will certainly have a bright future. I echo the sentiment expressed in the following sentence culled from the leading article: "Before long the voice of the *Star of Islam* will be heard and honoured throughout the far-flung empire of Islamic brotherhood." May the "*Star of Islam*" shine for ever!

ENLISTMENT AS SPECIAL CONSTABLES

Malays Called For Service

The Local Authorities are calling for enlistment of Malays as Special Constables for service in the case of emergencies. A Committee has been formed from among the Malays for this purpose, and a register is kept at the Dispensary of Dr. M. P. Drahman to enable members of the community to enroll themselves. We understand that similar arrangements will be made in the case of other communities also.

Hindu Embraces Islam

Under the auspices of the Muthialpet Muslim League, Mr. S. S. Krishna Rao, of Tulukkanpatti, Ramnad District, embraced Islam on August 19. The conversion ceremony took place at the Muthialpet Muslim League and was officiated by Moulana Moulvi Khaliurrahman Sahib Behari, Mr. Krishna Rao was named Abdul Rashid.

Women's Section

POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

Misconceptions Removed

By Miss Lubna Kaleel

Last week I referred to woman's debt to the Prophet of Islam. I now wish to enlarge upon the subject in order to remove the misconceptions that exist in the minds of many. No religion before Islam did anything, worth mentioning, to improve the position of woman. In fact Islam has brought about unparalleled improvement in her position. I can do no better than quote from Maulvi Abdul Karm's brilliant book "Prophet of Islam and His Teachings" to show what Islam has done for woman. He says:—

Islam secured to woman such rights and privileges as she had never enjoyed before. She was placed on a footing of perfect equality with man in the exercise of all legal powers and functions. In the matter of inheritance and individual right of property, the position of a Muslim woman is far better than that of women professing any other religion. "Men ought to have a part of what their parents and kindred leave", says the Quran, "and women a part of what their parents and kindred leave; let them have a stated share." Thus, fourteen hundred years ago, Islam gave woman the right to property. But she had not got that right in England until 1875, and she has not got it in France even yet.

A Muslim woman has the full right of enjoying and alienating her property. She can do business independently and enter into any contract she likes; her husband has no right of interference. After marriage she retains her distinct individuality and she has not to assume her husband's name as Mrs. So & So. Thus she is an independent co-sharer and a true partner of man.

Liberty in Choice of Husband

As regards marriage, a Muslim woman has been given full liberty in the choice of her husband. No contract is valid without her consent; she has first to declare her consent, man merely accepts her offer. No guardian can give his major female ward in marriage without first obtaining her consent. If married by the guardian in her minority, she can repudiate the marriage on attaining majority. Besides, no marriage contract is complete without the settlement of a dowry for the wife. Her claim to it, on the death of her husband, has preference over all creditors and heirs to the property of the deceased. As regards divorce, the woman also has the right to divorce the man under certain circumstances.

According to the Quran, woman has as much capacity for intellectual and spiritual progress as man. In her honour one complete chapter of the Quran has been revealed after her name. The very first verse of this chapter strikes the key-note: "O people, fear your Lord, who hath created you from one soul, and of his kind created his wife and from these hath spread abroad many men and women. And fear your God, in whose name ye ask mutual favour, and reverence the woman that bear you. Verily God is watching you."

Does this not give the lie direct to the monstrous allegation made by some non-Muslim writers that Islam recognises no soul in woman? The Quran does not even hold, as does the Bible, that woman was made for man. On the contrary, it distinctly teaches that each has obligations towards the other on an equal basis. "And if you men have certain rights on them (women), they have similar rights on you in all fairness."

(Continued on page 3)

Keeping Fit For Our Womanly Duties

THE SECRET OF YOUTH

By Mrs. Hassana Kareem

To keep ourselves mentally and physically young is a duty we owe to ourselves, to our family, and to the nation. If we are to maintain our youth despite the coming of old age, we have to make up our minds not to let the years count, not to make the best of the constant suggestions of the mind.

A great deal of the welfare of the family and nation depends upon us, women, and therefore if we are to perform our duties efficiently we must keep fit. There are many women who sow the seed-thoughts of age in youth and consequently they are perpetual invalids and old before their time.

There is a great deal in the association of ideas. We must never allow ourselves to think that we are unfit or too old to do this or that, for our thoughts will soon outpicture themselves in a wrinkled face and a prematurely old expression. We are what we think, and we become like our thoughts.

Oliver Wendell Holmes when in his eightieth year was asked as to the secret of his marvellous youthfulness. He replied that it was due chiefly to cheerful disposition and invariable contentment in every period of life with what I was. I never felt the pangs of ambition.....It is restlessness, ambition, discontent, and quietude that make us grow old prematurely by carving wrinkles in our faces. Wrinkles do not appear on faces that have constantly smiled. Smiling is the best possible massage. Contentment is the fountain of youth.

These words should be given serious thought as they help us to know the secret of youth. To remain youthful and beautiful is not a feminine vacy. But it is a necessity for the proper performance of our work as the make of the community or the nation.

It is said the greatest conqueror of age is a cheerful, hopeful, loving spirit. We must have a very charitable outlook on life. We must avoid wry, envy, malice, and jealousy—alike the small meannesses that feed bitterness in the heart, trace wrinkles on the brow and dim the eye. Then on can we hope to have youth even in old age.

Children's Corner

The Mantle of Prophethood

Dear Girls and Boys,

One night which is described in the Holy Quran as "the Night of Power and Excellence;"—in that night Allah conferred Prophethood on our beloved Prophet Muhammad. The first message that came to him was couched in the following words: "Read in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot. Read and your Lord is most Honourable. Who taught man what he know not. Nay: man is most surely inordinate."

This happened in the cave of Hira. A great fear seized the Holy Prophet, and hurrying home to his wife he said, "O Khadija, what has happened to me?" He was as in a trance and lay down on his bed while she watched besides him. When he had recovered his normal state, he told her that he had become what nobody would believe of him—possessed or mad. Such was the sincerity of the man that he would not believe that he was now the chosen Prophet of Allah. His wife replied that Allah would not let such a thing befall him, for he always spoke the truth, did not return evil for evil, kept faith, led a pure and good life, was kind to his relations and friends, and was never a gossip. He then told her of his experience in the cave. Whereupon she answered, "Rejoice, O dear husband, and be of good cheer. He in whose hands stands Khadija's life is my witness that thou wilt be the Prophet of the people."

She then hastened to relate all this to her cousin, Waraka, son of Naufal, who was old and blind and knew the scriptures of the Jews and Christians. The old man exclaimed, "Holy, Holy, verily this is the *Namus-ul-Akbar* who came to *Musa*. He will be the Prophet of my people. Tell him this. Bid him be brave of heart." Subsequently when he met our beloved Prophet in the streets, he said: "I swear by Eim in whose hands Waraka's life is, God has chosen thee to be the Prophet of the people. The *Namus-ul-Akbar* has come to thee. They will call thee a liar; they will persecute thee, they will banish thee; they will fight against thee. Oh, that I could live to those days; I would fight for thee." And he kissed him on his forehead.

The fact that the Holy Prophet's wife was the first to believe in him, to dispel his doubts and fears, and to instil every confidence, speaks much for the sincerity of the man. Following her, many other members of his family and his closest friends accepted his teachings. They who could have best detected any flaws in him were his foremost followers. They devoted their lives and their all for his cause. Such devotion and sacrifice are without parallel in the history of the world.—Yours friend,

THE EDITOR.

the same time. They were revealed piecemeal to Prophet Muhammad during the last twenty-three years of his life.

8. Q. What does the *Holy Quran* teach you?

A. The *Holy Quran* teaches me to worship the Almighty Allah, Him and Him alone, to obey His orders, to follow the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, to do good to others specially to my parents and relations and to be honest and truthful in all my actions and teachings.

(To be Continued)

Simple Lessons In Islam

BY
His Holiness Maulana Mohamed
Abdul Aleem Siddiqui

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

1. Q. Name the most important Prophets to whom Commandments were revealed by ALLAH.

A. Allah revealed Commandments to Prophet Adam, Prophet Seth, Prophet Idris, Prophet Ibrahim, and Prophet Moosa.

2. Q. Name the Codes of Religion.

A. The Codes of Religion are four in number, viz;

- (a) *Taurat*
- (b) *Zaboor*
- (c) *Injil*, and
- (d) *Furqan*, or the *Holy Quran*

3. Q. Name the Prophets to whom the Four Codes of Religion were revealed.

A. *Taurat* was revealed to Prophet Moosa (Moses) *Zaboor* to Prophet Dawood (David), *Injil* to Prophet Easa (Jesus), and *Furqan* or the *Holy Quran* to Prophet Muhammad.

4. Q. Do you follow the teachings of *Taurat*, *Zaboor*, or *Injil*?

A. No. I do not follow the teachings of *Taurat*, *Zaboor* or *Injil*, because these Codes of Religion have been revealed by *Furqan* which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad. Moreover they do not exist as they were originally revealed to the *Rasools*.

5. Q. What is the Code of Religion you follow?

A. The Code of Religion I follow is *Furqan* or the *Holy Quran*.

6. Q. What is the *Holy Quran*?

A. The *Holy Quran* is the Gospel of the Islamic Religion. The previous Commandments and the Codes of Allah are also recapitulated in it. Its words were inspired and revealed by Allah to Prophet Muhammad through the Angel Jibreel and are still preserved intact in the Arabic language.

7. Q. Were the words of the *Holy Quran* revealed to Prophet Muhammad at one and the same time?

A. No. The words of the *Holy Quran* were not revealed at one and

Muslim Decadence-IV

Drinking, Gambling, and Immorality

Legacy of Western Civilisation

By "Sheikh"

(A Well-known Lawyer From an Outstation Town in Ceylon)

They ask thee (Muhammad)
Concerning wine and gambling
Say: "In them is great sin,
And some profit, for men;
But the sin is greater
Than the profit (Al Quran-ii-219)
Oh Ye who believe!
Intoxicants and gambling,
(Dedication of) stones,
And (divination by) arrows,
Are an abomination,
Of Satan's handiwork:
Eschew such (abomination)
That ye may prosper (V-93)
Satan's plan is (but)
To excite enmity and hatred
Between you, with intoxicants
And gambling and hinder you
From the remembrance
Of God, and from Prayer:
Will ye not then abstain? (V-94)

The three verses give in a condensed form the essence of what moralists or religious teachers have expounded in voluminous writings on the evils of intoxicants and gambling.

At the time of the advent of Islam, over thirteen hundred years ago, Arabia was the darkest spot in that darkest age of the World's history. Drinking and gambling followed by their concomitant immorality reigned supreme. The Arabs had no moral, religious or social regulations to restrain their mad career. Human sacrifice and the burial of girls alive at birth were prevalent. Freeman became slaves at the gambling table. In fact vice was taken for virtue. "In this primitive and abject state," says Gibbon, "which ill deserves the name of society, the human brute, without arts and laws, almost without sense and language, is poorly distinguished from the rest of the animal creation." The debasement and the degradation of the then society were to a very large extent due to the use *ad infinitum* of intoxicants and the vice of gambling.

On the promulgation of the verse relating to intoxicants and gambling the jars of wine in every household in Arabia were emptied into the drains, the gambling dens were literally set on fire and the Arabs were, so to say, broken in, from their wild career, overnight. Islam then became and yet continues to be, the most powerful total abstinence association in the world, without the paraphernalia of Presidents, Secretaries, subscriptions or reviews. In spite of prohibitions contained in the teachings of the other religions, these vices have taken a firm grip on the followers of such religions.

Drinking Sanctified in Christianity

Says a Christian writer, "We not only have no prohibition of drinking but we in some sort sanctify it by its use in our so-called sacraments. That use of wine as representing the blood of Christ (to which we attribute such extraordinary virtue) is not only a very low form of superstition but greatly increases the difficulty of dealing with the liquor question."

Ponder over what is happening in spiritual India to-day? The teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism on drinking have been discarded and the Demon Drink in stalking the country with giant strides. The Congress Ministry in India realising the demoralising effect of intoxicants on humanity is trying a unique experiment by intro-

ducing total prohibition in the Presidency of Bombay.

To achieve its object the Ministry had to flood both the business centres and the suburbs of Bombay with bulletins, books and posters. Publicity was given to a mass of literature through the Press. Cinema films were shot and hired and exhibited and every citizen who picked up a letter or a match box was told in slogan or picture of the horrors of drink and the advantages of prohibition.

The appeal is even being made through ballad singers, who parade the busy thorough fares in special lorries, morning, noon and night, extolling the virtues of prohibition.

Prohibition laws in democratic America have failed. Will they succeed in India? Can morality be enforced with the aid of the policeman's baton?

The unlettered Prophet of Arabia (O. W. B. P.) had only the three verses from the Holy Quran to convert the pagan Arabs. These three verses have held, and will hold sway over the millions of true followers of Islam. If without any propaganda of the type adopted in Bombay, Islam could exercise a restraining influence on the evil propensities of a large portion of mankind why have the other religions failed to exercise the same kind of wholesome influence? How is it that Muslim countries are to a very large extent free from these abominable

(Continued on page 5)

POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

(Continued from page 2)
Ideal of Wifehood

The Prophet of Islam enforced respect for woman as one of the essential teachings of his creed. He symbolically placed Paradise at the feet of the mother, and declared that "woman is sovereign in the house of her husband". The ideal of wifehood in Islam is love and affection and no subordination and subservience. The Muslims regard woman as a safeguard against sin, and not "the road to iniquity": as a strong fortress against the inroads of Satan and not "the gate of the devil"; as a lighthouse of virtue that saves man from moral shipwreck when tossed by the raging waves of passion; and not "the instrument which the devil uses to gain possession of our souls." To a Muslim it is the pure love of a virtuous woman that transforms the brute of a man into an angelic being.

Such is the exalted position to which Islam raised womankind. Their position in Muslim countries is infinitely better in certain respects than that of their sisters in other countries. In some places Muslim women are backward in education and enlighten-

London Matriculation Results

Six Muslim Candidates Pass

The following six Muslim candidates have been successful in the Matriculation Examination of the London University held in June this year:—

Pakier, Akbar Samsudeen Amjadeen—St. Joseph's College.
Sameer, Mohamed Ismail—Royal College.
Hamid Kamza, Oona Navanna Kader Saibo—Zahira College and Private Study.
Jaldin, Mohammed Saliheen—Royal College and Private Study.
Samsudeen, Mohamed—Zahira College and Private Study.
Ozeer, Mohamed Sahid Mohamed—Zahira College and Private Study.

ment and do not occupy their proper place in society or even in their homes, it is due to lack of culture in the community, and not to any flaw in Islamic laws or tenets. It would be doing a great injustice to Islam to judge it by the life led by many of its present-day followers.

"Three Lions" is a first-rate Swadeshi product.

A. R. A. RAZIK, M.S.C., M.M.C.

Read the opinion of Ceylon Celebrities about "Three Lions".

"Hajara Villa,"

Fareed Place,

Bambalapitiya South.

22nd May, 1939.

I will always appeal to all those who smoke or sell cigarettes to pay special attention to "Three Lions" as a first-rate Swadeshi product produced by 100% Ceylonese Labour.

Messrs. Rothmans must have the support of Ceylon for their admirable ideals.

(Sgd.) A. R. A. RAZIK

Rothmans hold similar recommendations from Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike, K.C.M.G., Sir J. C. Ratwatte, Chief Adigar, The Hon. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, Mr. D. S. de Fonseka, Deputy Speaker, etc., etc.



THREE LIONS

For Quality, Purity and Flavour!

Notice to Readers

The Editor-in-Chief of "The Star of Islam" regrets that due to want of space he has been compelled to withhold the publication of the usual "From the Mimbar" Sermon from this issue.

The Star of Islam

A CULTURAL WEEKLY

COLOMBO: 9TH SEPTEMBER 1939



Ceylon's Duty In The Present Crisis

AS apprehended last week the war has broken out and serious fighting is taking place on the Polish and German frontiers. We have already indicated our attitude in this crisis and we must repeat that the Muslims of Ceylon are in perfect accord with Great Britain and her Allies in their decision to wipe off from the face of Europe, and perhaps of the World, the greatest menace to peace. In HITLER and Hitlerism we have the implacable enemies of world peace and unless they are completely destroyed we can never know when they will raise their heads again and threaten the existence of peaceful nations.

HITLER has shown no restraints in his lust for power and possession, and he has been aptly described as an international gangster and racketeer. His senseless ambition has plunged the world into a state of panic and restlessness, but it must be said to the glory of the British and French peoples that today they stand firm and unshakable in their determination to end the lunacy of this man. As the British Premier pointed out, Britain is not waging war against the German people, but against the present regime of barbarism and brutality. Britain and her Allies fight today for a vital principle and for all that is best and noblest in human nature. They fight confident of their strength and confident of victory.

The gallant resistance shown by the Poles has been a terrible shock to HITLER and his confederates, who expected them to give in tamely after a little show of fight. The Poles are not only successfully repelling German attacks but in some places they have carried the war into the enemy's territory. With the might of Britain and France to help them, the Poles should be able to make HITLER eat humble pie. Victory is certain, but what we are anxious to have is a speedy victory. Reports say that French

Forces have crossed the German frontier and we hope it will not be long before they penetrate the Siegfried line.

What we wish to emphasize is that there is no necessity for fear and panic among the people in Ceylon. The chances are very remote for the enemy to attempt an attack on this Island. They are too busily occupied in maintaining their own position in their country, attacked as they are by the Polish, British and French forces. But even if they should venture to cover the thousands of miles that lie between Germany and Ceylon and make an attempt on this Island, our local Defence Forces are fully equipped to repel such attacks. But as we have already pointed out it is only a very remote possibility, and it is heartening to observe that the local authorities are not taking any chances. We would, therefore, request the people of Ceylon to co-operate with and help the local authorities by remaining calm and unfurried in the present situation. The greatest service the Ceylonese can render themselves, the Island, and the British Empire at this juncture is to maintain peace and order among themselves and be ever ready to pay heed to and carry out all instructions issued by the Government from time to time. We, the people of Ceylon, should be proud and happy that we form a part of the British Empire, and let us in these critical times demonstrate our loyalty and allegiance to the British Throne effectively and convincingly.

At a time such as this, the greater issues take precedence over the smaller ones. Hence we have been obliged to refer to the present international situation although there are local matters which call for attention. These things can, however, wait for a while until we, the Muslims and others in this Island have contributed, in however small a measure towards the triumph of Right and Justice over the brute forces for which Hitlerism stands and towards the restoration of Peace to a peace-hungry world. Apart from the little help that Ceylon can render by way of offering her gallant sons to the service of the Empire, she can also do much by maintaining a correct frame of mind by remaining calm, resolute, and hopeful, and confident of victory through all the vicissitudes of the war. Sometimes we may receive contradictory information but this should not affect our morale and our confidence in the ultimate triumph of the cause for which Great Britain and France are so determinedly fighting. The entire German strength is no match against the might of Britain and France, and we are sure that before long it will be proved that even the so-called impregnable Siegfried line is no more than a big Hitlerian bluff.

The Causes That Led To The Degeneration of The Muslims

Disparity Between Theory And Practice

By Mrs. Iqbalunnisa Hussain, B.A.,

Diploma in Education (Leeds),
of The Mysore Educational Service

THE stability of any religion depends upon a thorough understanding of its principles and the ideals which it puts before its followers. It also necessitates the first-hand knowledge from the book written by the founder of that particular religion. The Holy Quran, the most elaborate work of Art, that was ever written by any Prophet, is written in Arabic which is a foreign language to the Indian Muslims. The overwhelming majority of them being illiterate even today could neither understand the sacred book nor followed its principles in their daily life. The only way left to follow the religion started by Muhammad, the Prophet, was to recite the Quran like parrots. When the realities and the real Islamic principles professed by the Prophet could not be literally followed, Muslims were contented with superficial knowledge of the religion. Sometimes a second-hand knowledge or that of booksay or hearsay were the only sources of information. Even the recital of the Quran was a boon which only a few could boast of. Such people, the gifted few, were proud of their achievements and separated themselves from the rest. This seeming, intellectual advancement was a formidable instrument in the hands of Moulvies and Mullahs, who made use of it for mere mercenary motives. Undue reverence was attached to them as they were considered super-human beings. Such a condition naturally created inferiority complex among the unfortunate beings who form seventy per cent. of the Muslim population.

Mere cramming of a Book so rich in ideals and principles, so true to nature, so practicable, so universal and impartial in its treatment of humanity, kept its followers ignorant and groping in the dark. Human nature is a combination of good, evil, intelligent and unintelligent individuals. In the absence of one's own high ideals, nature demanded an imitation of those of others. Spontaneous and some times an indiscriminate imitation followed which resulted in producing the present specimens who are struggling hard to meet both ends. No doubt the translation of the Quran was attempted in some of the Indian languages, unluckily the copies of such a translation could not reach an average Muslim, man or woman. The reformers or leaders did arise and tried to enlighten the unfortunate members of their community. The number of such people was not legion and their efforts were not adequate to meet the needs of the millions. The chronic poverty of the community, the scarcity of the press facilities and the rapid growth of the number of Muslims (especially in the less intelligent class) disabled the selfless reformers to see that every member of Islam was a real Muslim and to care more for quality than for quantity. A thorough understanding of the religion was possible only when its teachings could penetrate the soul of every man and could make an appeal to his imaginative and spiritual powers. This was possible only when every member of Islam was literate and the ideas were expressed in his own mother tongue and were put into practice in his daily life.

Islam gives equal rights and respects to woman both in spiritual and temporal matters. No prophet of no religion in the whole world had been so farsighted and so knowing regarding the conditions and rights of womanhood as our Prophet. The extent of his deep insight, broad vision and liberal outlook on life can be gauged only when one notices the misery and the hard struggle, the women of other communities have been having to get the same rights as those of their Muslim sisters. Is it not the irony of fate that there should be a disparity between the theory and practice? Is it not due to the incompre-

hensive knowledge of the real principles advocated and practised by the Founder? The education of woman, without any regard to her intellectual, physical and social development, made man concentrate his attention towards her beauty. All his thoughts and cares being devoted to the cage bird and her belongings, his vision was narrow and his knowledge and information were limited. His activities in all other spheres of human life, intellectual or otherwise, gradually began to dwindle. The results of such great sacrifices is not very praise worthy. He maintained and reared women who are intellectually dwarfed and physically unfit for any strenuous work. Women's education or their intellectual development is more important for the regeneration of the nation than that of man. It is the woman who inspires ideals and ideas in her children. It is she who lays the foundation of character and that of education in them. She is responsible to guide a man in his normal emotional and social activities. She repairs the natural defects in man by her culture, tact, gentleness of manner, patience in doing things and her persuasive power. His treatment of her as a reasonless or despicable being made man struggle hard, single-handed, to fulfil many responsible duties. He is expected not only to earn but also to supply all the needs of home and children, and be an escort to his woman folk in the bargain. Naturally he could not pay an equal attention to all important aspects of life. The elevation of any nation is possible only when every member of it, both man and woman, are efficient, self-supporting and enlightened. Elevation of a nation is possible only when the women are made to help man in every aspect of his life. Good and useful education that makes woman differentiate between artificial and real things, that will make her be above all silly expensive social customs and take pride in "simple living and high thinking" will solve the problem. The educated women will pass the stage of ideology and acquire that of realities. Unless and until this is attempted effectively the regeneration of the nation will be a thing of the past and it will remain incomplete.

[To be continued]

Why I Believe In Islam?

Man's Inherent Sinlessness

By C. Vaitylingham

(Headmaster, Bakeyathul Hasanath Free English School, Colombo, and formerly Inspector of Police, C. I. D., Colombo.)

Islam provides a perfect code as is revealed in the Sacred Book of the Muslims—the Holy Quran.

It lays bare what is noble and good forms the fundamental basis to enlist equilibrium that natural urge within man and man.

Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, was the last prophet of the Faith. And his followers accept all other prophets of the world, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus as having revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

The Bible of the Muslims (i.e., the followers of Islam,) is the Holy Quran. They believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book; in as much as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Holy Quran, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former gospels.

The articles of faith as revealed in the Book are seven in number: (1) Belief in Allah; (2) Belief in Angels; (3) Belief in Books from God; (4) Belief in Messengers from God; (5) Belief in a Future Existence; (6) Pre-measurement of Good and Evil; (7) Resurrection after Death.

Life After Death

The life after death as revealed in the Holy Quran is not a new life. It is only a continuance of the life bringing its hidden realities to the surface and hence to light. It is a life of unlimited progress. And those who qualify themselves in this life for progress will enter into Paradise which is another name for the progressive life after death. But those who get their faculties stunted in this life by seeking after the cravings of Self or illusion by their misdeeds in this life indeed qualify themselves to be denizens of Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. The state after death is an image or reflection of the spiritual state in this life.

Now Pre-measurement of good and evil has been open to confusion, doubt and debate by some as to whether or not it is Fatalism. However, a Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination. He believes in Pre-measurement on the ground that everything created by God is good in the given use and under given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

My belief in Islam was wrenched after a long, long mental and psychic struggle in the process of comparative study of religions though I respect all other religions all the same. What established firmly my belief in Islam is the illumination I received in the declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, prayer and fasting and almsgiving and the belief in the continuance of life in the hereafter.

The Muslims worship one God—the Almighty, the All knowing, the All just, the Cherisher of all the worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

What is meant by Faith?

We are told that Faith without action is a dead letter. Now, what is meant by Faith? I reckon that faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. We understand that the worlds were framed by

and latently rich in man. It therefore mutual understanding and set at equilibrium to be at peace in mind and soul between

was the last prophet of the Faith. And of the world, including Abraham, the Will of God for the guidance of

the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Faith by itself is insufficient unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sins.

God is the prototype of man, and His attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. A life, therefore that is led completely in harmony with Divine Attributes is a step forward towards Spiritual progress which is very very essential in this "whirling of time" when we hear of "war and rumours of war."

The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature that is made of the goodliest fibre and is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the Angels, and leading him to the borderland of Divinity. Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, equipped with equal capability for intellectual, and spiritual attainments. Islam places man and woman under the like obligations, the one to the other and points out the unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are things brought out by accident. But virtue and the service of humanity are matters of real merit. Distinction of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and white into one fraternal whole. And my mind is pained to see Muslims in Ceylon are not real Muslims as depicted in the Holy Quran—Comment is unnecessary, but true Muslim leaders are an absolute necessity in Ceylon to be torch-bearers of Islam to-day.

What struck me most while going through the Holy Quran (English Version) is that Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion which according to the sayings of the Holy Prophet (May His Soul rest in Peace) is a blessing of God.

Local Muslims Backwardness

Another potential factor that gripped me fast was that the pursuit of knowledge was a sacred duty in Islam to dispel ignorance which is the cause that retards spiritual and material progress. How many Muslims are there in Ceylon who can really understand the language in which the Holy Quran is written? Is it only the privilege of Alims and priests to understand Arabic? I know a number of Muslim men and children who read the Holy Quran fluently but when I wanted the meaning of certain passages, lo! they hold their hands up with an expansive smile and take in defeat as it mattered nothing. Some doubted my sanity and rebuked me saying: "Infidels like me cannot understand Arabic." I took my hat off to them with full of regret and sympathy at their inability to know their own religion and masquerading as Muslims. Perhaps they did little realise that it is the acquisition

of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

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

These are the vital essence of the Holy Quran which I had noted down during my spare time and it gives me spiritual comfort when I meditate on these.

And that is why I believe in the teachings of Islam and feel genuinely sorry for those Muslims who are not torch-bearers of the most precious revelation ever given to mankind on the face of this Solar System

MR. ABDULLA PHILBY ON FRENCH AND BRITISH SHORTSIGHTEDNESS

Le Journal, Paris, publishes an interview which its representative had with Al Haj Mr. Abdulla Philby, former Adviser to H. M. Sultan Ibn Saud, on the situation in the Near East.

Mr. Philby stated that the Arabs had believed in the promises made by France and Britain in 1915. Today those promises were forgotten and was no knowing when those promises were going to be fulfilled. Arabs fear that the two Governments wish to keep under their heel both Syria and Palestine for all time.

Mr. Philby speaking on the cession of the Sanjaq of Alexandretta by France to Turkey, characterised the deal as one more evidence of French heartlessness. And that it has created a furor throughout the Arabic world. Sanjaq, said Mr. Philby, was an integral part of Syria and could never justifiably be separated from the country.

Mr. Philby was further of the opinion that the French methods in Syria and the British in Palestine will leave no course open for Arabs but to adopt a hostile attitude towards these Powers in the coming war.

Muslim Decadence-IV

(Continued from page 3)

vinces? I desired to say that the Muslim countries were absolutely free; but the peaceful (was it peaceful?) penetration of Western trade and civilization have brought with them the vices drunkenness, gambling, and prostitutions, and these have taken to themselves a few votaries of the Muslim Community.

Soul Force

In my opinion there is something lacking in man-made religions, that elusive, nay, inexplicable, something which is to be found in Islam—the divinely inspired religion. It is that "something" which has exercised and which will continue to exercise its influence on the true followers of Islam and restrain them becoming victims to the Demons of drinking and gambling. Call that "something" what you will, I call it "Soul-Force". It was this "Soul-Force" a dynamic force without parallel the result of the teachings of Islam generated in the deserts of Arabia by the unlettered Prophet (O. W. B. P.) which electrified and illumined the darkest age of the World's History. It was this "Soul-Force" which led the Muslims to success after success. It was this "Soul-Force" which prevented the Muslims from becoming worshippers of Bachchus and the votaries of the roulette. But alas! the dazzling glitter of the glamour of Western civilization made its presence felt amongst the ranks of the Muslim community. Many so-called Muslims began to worship Bachchus and the goddess of gambling did not fail to exercise her evil influence on such followers of Bachchus. There are today many so-called Muslims who are addicted to drinking, gambling and prostitution. These vices have been contributory factors in the decline of the Muslim community, hence my inclusion of these vices in these articles on "Muslim Decadence".

I shall, Insha Allah, deal categorically with each in my next contribution.

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Lofty Thoughts For Lonely Moments

The Water of Eternal Life

Every form you see has its archetype in the placeless world;
If the form perished, no matter, since its Original is everlasting.
Every fair shape you have seen, every deep saying you have heard,
Be not cast down that it perished; for that is not so.
Whereas the Spring-head is undying, its branch gives water continually;
Since neither can cease, why are you lamenting?
Conceive the Soul as a fountain, and these created things as rivers;
While the Fountain flows, the rivers run from it.
Put grief out of your head and keep quaffing this River-water;
Do not think of the Water failing, for this Water is without end.

The Finding of the Beloved

I was on that day when the Names were not,
Nor any sign of existence endowed with name,
By me Names and Named were brought to view
On the day when there was not "I" and "We."
For a sign, the tip of the Beloved's curl became a centre of revelation;
As yet the tip of that curl was not.
Cross and Christians, from end to end, I surveyed; He was not on the Cross.
I went to the idol-temple, to the ancient pagoda;
No trace was visible there.
I went to the mountains of Herat and Candahar;
I looked; He was not in that hill-and-dale.

I gazed into my own heart;
There I saw Him; He was nowhere else.

Life in Death

When my bier moveth on the day of Death,
Think not my heart is in this world.
Do not weep in the devil's snare: that is woe.
When thou seest my hearse, cry not "Parted parted!"
Union and meeting are mine in that hour.
If thou commit me to the grave, say not "Farewell, farewell!"
For the grave is a curtain hiding the communion of Paradise.
After beholding descent, consider resurrection;
Why should setting be injurious to the sun and moon?
To thee it seems a setting, but 'tis a rising;
Tho' the vault seems a prison, 'tis the release of the soul.

Shut thy mouth on this side and open it beyond,
For in placeless air will be thy triumphal song.

Aspiration

Haste, haste; for we too, O soul, are coming
From this world of severance to that world of Union.
O how long shall we, like children, in the earthly sphere
Fill our lap with dust and stones and shreds?
Let us give up the earth and fly heavenwards.
Let us flee from childhood to the banquet of men.
Behold how the earthly frame has entrapped thee!
Rend the sack and raise thy head clear.

The World Gave Thee False Clues

The world gave thee false clues, like a ghoul:
Thou took'st no heed of the clue, but wentest to that which is without a clue.

Since thou art now the sun, why dost thou wear a tiara?
Why seek a girdle, since thou art gone from the middle?
I have heard that thou art gazing with distorted eyes upon thy soul:
Why dost thou gaze on thy soul, since thou art gone to the Soul of soul?
O heart, what a wondrous bird art thou, that in chase of divine rewards
Thou didst fly with two wings to the spear-point, like a shield!
The rose flees from autumn—O what a fearless rose art thou,
Who didst go loitering along in the presence of the autumn wind!
Falling like rain from heaven upon the roof of the terrestrial world
Thou didst run in every direction till thou didst escape by conduit.
Be silent and free from the pain of speech: do not slumber,
Since thou hast taken refuge with so loving a Friend.

Selections from *Divani Shamsi Tabriz*

Malay Political Association Meeting

Malay Town Guard Proposal Supported

At a meeting of the Malay Political Association held at Wekande on September 3, presided over by Mr. J. A. Cuttilan, the question of a Malay regiment and Malay Town Guard was considered.

The Chairman said that there were Malay settlers in Ceylon in 1267. A Malay regiment was formed in 1505 under the Portuguese, and another in 1638 under the Dutch. In 1796 the British had the Ceylon Rifle Regiment composed mostly of Malays, Bengalis and Tamils. That was disbanded in 1873, 66 years ago. In 1914 a Malay Town Guard was formed and there were Europeans, Burghers and Muslims, and that was disbanded in 1920.

He moved:—
That the formation of a separate Malay Regiment is not advisable in Ceylon.

That the formation of a separate Malay Town Guard has the support of all Malays.

That the resolution be submitted to Government.

The meeting agreed to the proposals.

Jama-Athus Salihya Burdha Majlis

At a meeting of the above Majlis at 132, New Moor Street, Colombo, on Sunday, the 10th instant, at 8-30 a.m., Janab S. O. S. Idroos Moulana (Khaleefathus Shazuly) will give a talk on the Teachings of Sheikh-ul-Akbar Muhyideen Ibnul Arabi.

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The Story of Aligarh

Its Origin and Development

By C. M. Mohamed
(Formerly of the Aligarh Muslim University and now of the Govt. Technical College, Colombo.)

The present Aligarh Muslim University is the outgrowth from the famous M. A. O. College, Aligarh, which had won for itself a unique position in the educational life of India. The M.A.O. College was founded in 1875 by the great Muslim patriot and leader, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, with the purpose of bringing about a cultural and educational renaissance among the Muslims of India whose progress and welfare had suffered a very severe set-back since the Mutiny of 1857. Sir Syed realised that his community could not play its part worthily in the life of the country and could not organize itself effectively without utilising to the fullest the opportunities offered by the new system of English education. But he was also anxious that this institution should not only provide modern education of the best and highest quality but also give moral and religious instruction and provide scope for social training and physical development. It was the ideal of an all round development which inspired Sir Syed Ahmed and his colleagues who had the insight and imagination to realise that it could be fulfilled most adequately only in a residential institution of the type of Oxford and Cambridge Universities. M. A. O. College was thus the first and most important institution for the cause of Muslims in India to exploit all possible educative resources of a residential institution to attempt a combination of religious instruction with western knowledge and science. It promoted an active and vigorous corporate life which was one of its most distinguishing characteristics; it won an all-India reputation for the high standard of its games and sports; its sons acquired prestige for themselves and their *alma mater* by proving their worth and capacity in various walks of life particularly in the higher posts of responsibility.

This fact was freely and generously recognized by all who came into contact with the College and its alumni. Sir Auckland Colvin, H.E. the Governor of U.P., bore public testimony to it in a speech delivered in 1892. "To have been an Aligarhian is, I have over and over again found, a passport to the respect and confidence of both the Englishmen as well as the Indians. They carry with them, the stamp of their training, the impress of the mind of the man under whom that training has been accomplished."

During its early years, the College was not only fortunate in having Sir Syed, but also many great and sincere co-workers. The most prominent of them were, Nawab Mohinul Mulk, Nawab Faqarul Mulk, Moulana Hali, Calipha Syed Mohamed Hassan and C. S. M. Hussain and Moulvi Samiulla Khan. Moreover westerners like Mr. Theodore Beck, Sir Theodore Morison and Sir Thomas Arnold also worked faithfully and sincerely on the staff. Under these auspices the College continued to grow vigorously in faith and prestige and came to be recognized as the central national institution of Indian Mussalmans, to which students came from every nook and corner of India and outside students of other communities were also welcomed and made perfectly at home.

[To be continued]

BOARD OF KATHIS

Appeals Decided on Sept. 2.

No. 136.—Galle—Mohamed Saly Kadija Hany vs. Abdul Caffoor Mohamed Abdul Cader.—Appeal dismissed.
No. 137.—Colombo (Waradana)—Raihan daughter of Jaffoordeen vs. Rahim, son of Baba Rahman.—Maintenance reduced and appeal dismissed.

Ceylon Moslem Educational Society

(Continued from page 1)

was over 300. The Directors of Board felt that there was no need for two English Schools in the locality for Muslim children. Further, the crying need of the Muslim Community today was a College for Girls on Islamic lines and it was therefore in the best interests of the Community that whatever saving could be effected by the closing down of the English Section should be utilized for the establishment of such a College.

SIR MOHAMED'S REMARKS.

While commenting on the Honorary Secretary's Report, Sir Mohamed said that the shareholders of the Muslim public should not form the impression that they were to consider education in terms of Rupees and Cents. Education did not necessarily mean English education. Since the establishment of the Society some twenty years ago they had been imparting primary education to poor children on Islamic lines and they would still continue to impart that education to this class of children. When it comes to a question of English education, which was so costly these days, he felt that no useful purpose would be served by competing with other Muslim institutions of similar standing in the same locality. All their available resources should be for the greatest good of the Muslim Community. The course they were adopting was not only the most practical one but perhaps the best in the interests of the Community. The sixty or seventy children in the English Section of the school could easily seek admission to Hameedia School and any saving that could be effected by the amalgamation of the English Section with Hameedia could be more profitably and beneficially utilized for the establishment of a College for Muslim girls. If funds permitted the Board might also consider the establishment of scholarships for poor deserving Muslim students.

THE RESOLUTION.

Mr. A. R. A. Razik then proposed and Mr. A. Majeed Rahman seconded "That Hussein Boys' English School be closed down with effect from 1-9-39 and the services of the members of the staff discontinued." The resolution was unanimously passed and the meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the chair.

SAUDI ARABIA

Oil Concession to American Co.

An oil concession covering 89,000 square miles of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been granted to the Standard Oil Company of California by King Ibn Saud, it was announced by the Company.

For the concession the King received a sum of £230,000, and in addition he is to receive £53,000 a year while prospecting is going on.

As soon as oil production begins in any part of the concession area he is to receive royalties, which will increase with production.

For years, it is stated in Beirut. Italy has been trying to get an oil concession, and within the past year renewed efforts have been made by Italians, assisted by Germans and Japanese.

Both the German Minister in Iraq and the Japanese Minister in Cairo went to Jidda to attempt negotiations with King Ibn Saud, but nothing was achieved.

Political Motives

The King apparently did not trust the Axis Powers, because he told the American Company's representative that the Japanese had offered twice as much money for one third of what the American firm was obtaining, but that he had refused.

He explained that all the European Powers had political motives in seeking a concession and that he preferred to grant the rights to an American concern as a purely business deal with the United States, which had no political design on his country.

Musings Of A Pensioner-V

(Continued from page 1)

And fight them on
Until there is no more
Tumult or oppression,
And there prevail
Justice and faith in God;
But if they cease,
Let there be no hostility
Except to those
Who practise oppression."

Gunther's Method Compared To Nazi Propaganda

The reference is only to defensive wars, and when you are at war the opponents try to kill each other and not to turn the other cheek. We all know the dilemma which the Western Powers had to face in the Great War when they were confronted by this turning-the-other-cheek policy quoted by conscientious objectors. We also know how this policy works at the present time by the tense situation created in Europe. Mr. Gunther's method of procedure is on an exact par with the Nazi propaganda against Great Britain by which we have been entertained recently. Chapter 2, verse 256 is clear:—

"There is no compulsion in Religion" and the reason for this is given immediately afterwards as follows:—"The right way is clearly distinct from error."

It is invited, in the case of my non-Muslim readers, to the following verses of the Quran and Muhammad Ali's chapter on *Jihad* in his *Religion of Islam* and Amir Ali's *Spirit of Islam* and other books, to show that fighting was allowed as a defensive measure.

22-39 "permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made, because they are oppressed"; 22-40; 4-75; 9-13; 9-24; 22-32 &c.
32 contains this magnificent passage:—"Whoever slays a soul, unless it be for manslaughter or for mischief in the land, it is as though he slew all mankind; whoever keeps it alive, it is as though he kept alive all mankind."

As regards the second libel, the Muslim sensual heaven, Gunther quotes 78-33 from a translation which interprets "Kawaib" as virgins with swelling breasts. In this connection I would refer my readers to note 2649 of Muhammad Ali's translation of the Quran, his *Religion of Islam* and Appendix XII of Mr. Yusuf Ali's translation.

Ancient Lies

As regards these ancient lies against Islam, one would have thought they had been successfully nailed to the counter, but they now appear to be perennial, and as fresh and full of life and vigour as Satan, the spirit of Evil. As regards translations of the Quran by Christian Ministers and propagandists even the mild Mr. Yusuf Ali ends his comments as follows:—"The amount of mischief done by these versions of non-Muslims and anti-Muslim writers has led Muslim writers to venture into the field of English translation."

The late Mr. Warmaduke Pickthall—an English convert to Islam and a well-known author—is forced to say as follows:—

"The aim of this work is to present to English readers what Muslims the world over hold to be the meaning of the words of the Koran, and the nature of that Book, in not unworthy language and concisely, with a view to the requirements of English Muslims. It may be reasonably claimed that no Holy Scripture can be fairly presented by one who disbelieves its inspiration and its message; and this is the first English translation of the Koran by an Englishman who is a Muslim. Some

of the translations include commentation offensive to Muslims, and almost all employ a style of language which Muslims at once recognise as unworthy. The Koran cannot be translated. This is the belief of old-fashioned Sheykhs and the view of the present writer. The book is here rendered almost literally and every effort has been made to choose befitting language. But the result is not the Glorious Koran, that inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy. It is only an attempt to present the meaning of the Koran—and peradventure something of the charm—in English. It can never take the place of the Koran in Arabic, nor is it meant to do so."

Verses 7, 8 and 9 of chapter III are as follows:—

- 7 "He it is who has sent down To Thee the Book: In it are verses Basic or fundamental (Of established meaning); They are the foundation Of the Book: others Are allegorical. But those In whose hearts is perversity Follow the part that is allegorical, Seeking discord, and searching For its hidden meanings, But no one knows Its hidden meanings except God. And those who are firmly grounded In knowledge say: "We believe In the Book; the whole of it Is from our Lord;" and none Will grasp the Message Except men of understanding.
8. "Our Lord!" they say, "Let not our hearts deviate Now after Thou hast guided us, But grant us mercy From Thine own Presence; For Thou art the Grantor Of bounties without measure.
9. "Our Lord! Thou art He That will gather mankind Together against a Day about which There is no doubt; for God Never fails in His promise."

Verse 82 of Chapter 17 is as follows:—"We send down (stage by stage) In the Quran that which Is a healing and a mercy To those who believe; To the unjust it causes Nothing but loss after loss."

Reflection of The European Mind

These are two significant passages among many others in the Quran to show that the Holy Book—being a production of the sublimest spiritual value—acts both as the dazzling light of a candle to the self-immolating moth and also as a mirror reflecting back the rankness of the mind of those who regard it with jaundiced eyes. It is always the sensual aspect that this mirror reflects of the European mind, habituated as it is to the promiscuous mixing of the sexes. One has only to read Holmboe's (a Danish convert to Islam) *Desert Encounter* describing the action of the Italians in Libya or even to listen in to modern dance music with its accompaniment of suggestive salacious songs and hints not to feel any surprise at this weakness of the European mind.

Let me carry the war a little bit into the enemy's country. It is remarkable that many of the translations of the Quran by non-Muslim translators were originally undertaken by priests and paid missionaries. The first translation was in Latin for the Monastery of Clugny and this Latin

version was translated into Italian, German and Dutch, followed by a French and a Russian translation.

Sale's translation was based on that of Maracci, Confessor to Pope Innocent XI which is dedicated to the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I and the introduction calls it "a refutation of the Quran."

The first English translation is a translation of the first French translation referred to above. Then we have Revd. J. M. Rodwell's translation. And yet Sale's translation is regarded as the standard translation much to Mr. Yusuf Ali's astonishment. Mr. Muhammed Ali in his *Religion of Islam* refers to the distorted picture of Islam presented in Revd. F. A. Klein's libel. But now these versions by priests and paid missionaries have ceased, and have been replaced by attacks by popular writers like Shaw, Wells and Gunther—Why? It is because modern biblical criticism has destroyed for ever the so-called historical foundations of one of the greatest religions of the world.

Christian Origins

Let me give here a passage from the reviews of Mr. A. Loisy's damaging criticisms of Christian origins by Principal Jacks, M.A., D.D., L.L.D., Litt. D., Editor of the *Hibbert Journal*:—

"Of how this conception of Christ as the Lord of Glory, the Dispenser of Immortality and the Author of Salvation became a rallying point, a focus of attraction, for innumerable currents of contemporary philosophy or mysticism; how it assimilated Hebrew Scripture and found points of contact with pagan mysteries; how it gathered momentum under the stimulus of persecution; how gnosis became its servant while superstition fed on it like a parasite; how it evoked the creative imagination in successive generations and continually moved forward under its pressure; and how through all its vicissitudes and developments it kept an unbroken line of communication with the Messianic outcry of the crucified Galilean, 'the Reign of God is at hand' of all this the reader will find the account in M. Loisy's masterly pages. It is an astonishing story, perhaps the greatest wonder story in the world. Many on closing the book will recall a sentence already quoted.

"One pervading characteristic of the earliest Christian propaganda which, unhappily, its later developments have never entirely lost, M. Loisy has touched but lightly—its attitude of condemnation, of menace and even, at times, of violence towards the unbeliever—who, be it noted, is not the unbelieving atheist of modern controversy, but the "liar", who denies, in one way or another, that "Jesus is Christ" (1 John ii 22) and is in turn to be denied by the Christ before the Father in heaven (Matt. x. 33). This intolerance of the unbeliever, apparent enough even in the Epistle, which announces that "God is love", may be detected all through the New Testament, sometimes as an undercurrent and sometimes, as in the Apocalypse, assuming at one little short of ferocity. May we not account it the *Damnosa hereditas* of Christianity, the fruitful parent in every age of theological hatreds, internecine bigotries, heresy hunts and excommunications? What but this has given Christianity the unenviable reputation of being the most addicted to persecution of the great religions of the world? Combining an official theology which condemns the unbeliever to perdition with humanitarian ethics which declare that all men are brothers, is it to be wondered at that Christianity in these days is inwardly divided against itself and outwardly split into atomistic sects, an astonishment to the Hindu and the Buddhist, whom it vainly seeks to convert, and even at times, to its own

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Musings Of A Pensioner--V

(Continued from page 7)

adherents? Intelligible as such intolerance may be as a phenomenon of the age when Christianity was born and amid the fierce oppositions which beset its infancy, the survival of it into our times is an offence to just-minded men. By this spirit M. Loisy himself, toiling through a long life for the spiritual progress of humanity, has been excommunicated. But there are many others, toilers in the same cause, who wait for no official excommunication to drive them beyond the pale. Offended by anachronisms so inhuman, they excommunicate themselves."

Life of Jesus—Myth and Legend

Colonel Luard, D.S.O., in the Hibbert Journal of 1936-37 says as follows:—

"The bishops must surely know such a statement to be lacking in candour, to say the least of it. With a few notable exceptions, the bishops and clergy speak and preach as if they were unaware of the case they have to answer. It is open to them to challenge it, but they rarely do so. Is it surprising if we come to the conclusion that they are maintaining a conspiracy of silence.

"Anyone who has followed the course of Christian apologetic during the last forty years must be aware that many of the links which held traditional Christian doctrine together have now been abandoned. The miracles are no longer adduced as evidence; the virgin birth and empty tomb are found to have been the afterthoughts of a later generation; the atonement is discreetly dropped and the resurrection story in any form is seen to present formidable difficulties. Position after position has been given up until all divinity of any value as doctrine has been whittled away. Traditional theology now resembles a delicate and complicated instrument, worn with age and riddled with holes, which its upholders gravely assure one another, will work as well as ever it did if it is gently handled. In recent times it has resolved itself into pointing to the life and teaching of Jesus as set forth in the gospels, and asking if any higher conception of God could be imagined. If you want to know what God is like it is said, read the Gospels. But this ground is no longer tenable. After nearly a century of research historical science has reached the conclusion that the life and message of Jesus is enveloped in a tissue of myth and legend. We know as little of the historical Jesus as we know of John the Baptist, and what do we know of both is very similar. M. Loisy and Dr. Lightfoot leave us in no doubt about this. Others have had a similar apotheosis. "We have three lives," of Pythagoras," writes Dr. Inge, "by Laertius, Porphyry and Iamblichus. They are of little value as history: but they are accurate portraits of what the ideal pythagorean was expected to be."

"Christianity as a religious movement that gathered up religious experience in great variety is a historical fact: but Christian theology, in so far as it is concerned with the life and message of Jesus, must now abandon the claim to be based on history. Meanwhile in the Church of England, during the period in which these developments in theology have emptied the liturgy of all meaning, the element of *cultus* in the liturgy has been underlined. What is going to be the outcome of this situation?"

Christian History—A Hopeless Attempt to Resolve a Contradiction

I also invite reference to the discussion in the Hibbert Journal of April and October, 1938, and January, 1939, on the Church Commission's

Report. Let me quote two passages from Mr. Graham's article on East and Loose in Theology (January 1939):—

"Athanasius himself candidly confessed that whenever he forced his understanding to meditate on the divinity of the Logos his toilsome and unavailing efforts recoiled on themselves, and that the more he thought the less he apprehended, and the more he wrote the less capable he was of expressing his thoughts." This uncertainty, however, did not hinder him and his party from dogmatically asserting their views and assuming for themselves a virtual infallibility by persecuting their opponents in this world and condemning them to eternal perdition in the next. Well might Archbishop Tillotson say of this creed that "he wished the Church were well rid of it." But it is, after all, only an elaboration of the Nicene Creed, and it would be pharisaical to discard the one without discarding the other.

"The history of Christianity has been described as the history of a hopeless attempt to resolve a contradiction, but it might be more truly described as the history of an obstinate refusal to accept any solution that eliminates the contradiction. The theology of the Incarnation exhibits the strange paradox that while the various heresies condemned by the Church have for the most part the merit of being intellectually tenable, the orthodox doctrine is, from a theological point of view (for nothing can be truly theological that is not logic), the greatest heresy of them all. Nevertheless, the Doctrinal Commission asserts, "this challenge to the intellect is an inherent element in the Gospel. Whether or not the intellectual difficulty can never be fully overcome, it is our duty to be always seeking a way to solve it, provided that this is not done by neglect or obscuration of either of the contrasted elements that give rise to it"—provided, that is to say, that both of the contradictory elements are fully retained. Surely it is high time that this futile and—let us be candid—demoralising task was abandoned!"

Propositions That Cancel Each Other

"If man is not God the formula is equivalent to "Jesus is God," "Jesus is not-God." The two propositions cancel each other and in the end nothing is predicated, and if nothing is predicated, nothing is believed. To put it in the Bradleian way, the doctrine removes the Lord from existence. "I feel sure I am doing professed adherents of this doctrine no injustice when I say that as a rule they have never analysed it. If you point out the contradiction to them they will perhaps protest that they still believe it, because "to God all things are possible" or because the Church or the Bible teaches it, or because Jesus himself claimed to be both God and man (which he certainly did not). Or they will opine that the doctrine is true in some sense, but is in need of re-statement or re-interpretation. This suggestion is clearly due to a confusion of ideas. Any re-statement must either mean the same thing or not. If it means the same thing the contradiction is not eliminated. If it does not mean the same thing it is not a re-statement, but another doctrine altogether. To affirm belief in a doctrine without knowing what it means is itself a contradiction. Mr. George Bernard Shaw is reported to have said that the trouble with the Bishop of Birmingham is that he does not know what he believes. If Mr. Shaw did say this, then the laugh is against Mr. Shaw. We cannot believe without knowing what we believe."

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Cassim Camball, No. 37, Glennie Street, Slave Island, at the Colombo
Adana Press, No. 39 & 41, Glennie Street, Slave Island.