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# The Star of Islam

(A CULTURAL WEEKLY)  
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## Islam's Contribution To Science and Civilisation

### Islam Furthered The Cause Of Science More Than Any Other Religion

By Moulvi Abdul Karim, B.A., M.L.C.

It is now being realised that modern science owes its origin to Islam and modern progress is the outcome of the freedom of thought and spirit of enquiry prescribed for the Muslims by the Holy Quran, and not a product of Christianity which for a long time relentlessly proscribed all free thinking and liberal reasoning and even scientific researches on original lines, and horribly prosecuted all those who indulged in these. The impression that it was Christianity that advanced science and civilisation is, therefore, as erroneous as the idea that Islam hampered their progress. In fact there can be no comparison between Islam and Christianity as civilising forces. While the Muslims rose to the pinnacle of learning in a few centuries after the promulgation of Islam, the Christians remained steeped in ignorance for more than a thousand years.

After a careful study of the history of Islam Canon Isaac Taylor came to the definite conclusion that "Islam has done more for civilisation than Christianity." If Europe's indebtedness to Islam for the extraordinary progress it has latterly made in science and civilisation were adequately known, it would have astounded the modern civilised world. "During the darkest period of European history," writes Bosworth Smith "the Arabs for five hundred years held up the torch of learning to humanity." Arthur Leonard has truly said "Islam, in fact, has done a work. She has left a mark on the pages of human history, which is so indelible that it can never be effaced... that only when the world grows wiser will be acknowledged in full."

That the early Muslims very largely contributed to the cultural development of the world cannot but be admitted by all unprejudiced and fair-minded critics of Islamic history. It is nothing but religious prejudice and an overweening sense of racial superiority which have stood in the way of acknowledgment and appreciation by the West of the glorious achievements of the East. Draper is perfectly justified in deploring "the systematic manner in which the literature of Europe has continued to put out of sight our scientific obligations to Mohamedans. Surely they cannot be much longer hidden. Injustice founded on religious rancour and national conceit cannot be perpetuated."

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...fact that cannot be  
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demned as heresy. The reason for this is not far to seek. The bulk of mankind could not at that time think in the abstract, and they looked upon the elements of Nature, the subject-matter of science, as sacred objects, possessing supernatural powers. They made idols, symbolizing different elements, and worshipped them as gods and goddesses, either for protection from evil or for attainment of certain objects. Thus were the sun, the moon, the stars, air, water, animals, and even trees and stones, deified and adored. It was nothing unnatural in such circumstances that any deviation from the prevailing belief in their sanctity should have been branded as a sacrilege, and any attempt at a critical examination of their potentiality, for good or evil, stigmatised as profanity. Thus all that was useful in the heavens and the earth remained altogether unexplored, and for thousands of years man did not realise the sublime utility of the forces of Nature. It was reserved for the untutored Son of the Desert to open man's eyes to the wonderland of Nature by bringing down her elements from the high pedestal of divinity, on which they had been placed, to the position of servants of mankind.

#### The Subservience of Natural Elements to Man

"And He has made subservient to you the night and the day and the sun and moon and the stars are made subservient by His commandment; most surely there are signs in this for a people who ponder..." *Al Quran.*

Thus were the gods of the pre-Islamic people reduced by one stroke to man's servants. For the first time in the his-

(Continued on page 7)

### PRAYER FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE BRITISH AND THEIR ALLIES In the Present War

On the 8th inst. after Jummah Service in the Galle Fort Mosque, a prayer was offered for the victory of the British Empire and her Allies in the present War. A. L. M. Al-Haj Thalha Lebbe, Ka'heeb of the Mosque, conducted the service.

### SERIOUS COMPLAINT AGAINST JAWATTE MOSQUE MUEZZIN

#### Worshipper Disallowed To Pray

On the 7th of September in the course of my work of selling cloths, at the time of 'Zuhar' prayer I entered into the Mosque in the Jawatte Burial Grounds. Before I could offer my prayers, the Muezzin of the Mosque wanted to buy a handkerchief from me. When I told him the price was 18 cents, the Muezzin demanded the same for 12 cents. When I refused to give it at that price he told me that I would not be allowed to offer my prayers in the Mosque. He rebuked me and though I tried my best to offer my prayers I was compelled to go out without offering my prayers. When such actions are prohibited in Islam and no Mosque belongs to a particular man or home, and it is the Wakf property of all the Mussalmans, I am compelled to inform the fact to the other brother Muslims through this paper. Therefore I request the Muslims of Ceylon, especially the Trustees of the Mosque to enquire into this matter and take the necessary steps.

(Sd.) P. HAMEED.

234, Skinner's Road,  
 Maradana.

### TURKEY

#### "Special" Stamps Issued

Turkey becomes the fourteenth foreign country to respond favourably to the suggestion by Representative Sol Bloom that nations with a constitutional form of government issue postage stamps in honour of America's celebration of the formation of the United States Constitution a century and a half ago. Turkey's "specials" were released on July 15 and they bring portraits of President Roosevelt, George Washington, Turkey's late President Ataturk and Ismet Inonu, Turkey's present President. They are six values: 2½, 3, 6, 7½ and 12½ kurus. An American dollar is equivalent to about 125 kurus at the current rate of exchange, so it will be seen that these are all low values.

## The Divine Call

### The Holy Prophet's Experience

By M. A. AL-HAJ SALMIN  
 B. Litt (Lond.)

The Holy Prophet was forty years of age, when the Angel of God brought him the message, "O! tadu that has wrapped thyself up. Be up and warn." Thus commenced a new stage of the Prophet's life, that of announcing and delivering the Word of God to all.

For a short time before the age of forty, Muhammad commenced receiving many visions, most of them while in the cave of Hira. During this time he became more reserved and spent many solitary hours in deep meditation. He retired more frequently to the cave of Hira, where at times he would spend many days and nights in prayer and contemplation. One night during the month of Ramzan, an Angel appeared to him and gave him something to read. Muhammad said: "I do not know how to read." Then the Angel embraced him and again asked him to read; three times the request was repeated, and each time Muhammad cried: "I do not know how to read." The Angel then read out the verses, and assured Muhammad, that although he was unable to read, if he attempted it in the name of God, he would succeed. At this time he was also made aware that he was the chosen one to be the Reformer of Mankind. It was a very great responsibility, but Muhammad did not fear or lose heart. When God commanded Moses to reform one nation, he was not able to do so himself, and in despair cried to God: "Give me a helper." But the Holy Prophet Muhammad did not despair nor did he ask for a helper, he relied only on the help of God to assist him in his great task. After the first appearance of the Angel in the cave of Hira, when it was made known to Muhammad that he was to be the World-Reformer, the Angel did not visit him for a short period; some say it was a period of 2 or 3 years, but the version of Ibn-i-'Abbas, who states it was only a short period, is more to be relied on according to historical evidence.

#### Strange Phenomenon

No ordinary human being can ever experience the strange phenomenon of Divine inspiration. During this experience the whole body is possessed by Divine Power. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad first experienced Divine Inspiration, he perspired profusely, his whole body became heavy, his limbs turned icy cold, and he was in a tremor from head to foot. Shivering and shaking he went home, and his wife Khadija wrapped him up. When he told her of his strange experience, she implored him not to fear and assured him that God would never desert him, and that his mission would prove a success. Muhammad received Divine Inspiration many times, and each time it was accompanied with the same feelings, that of profuse perspiration, and heaviness of the whole body.

Women's Section

# WHAT OUR GIRLS NEED TODAY

## Educating our Girls on Islamic Cultural Lines

By Miss Layla Hussain

"In early ages," wrote the Maharani of Baroda the Mussalman woman of Arabia was permitted equal instruction with men. The social position she occupied when the power of Islam reached its meridian proved that she possessed rights similar to those enjoyed by men. The Prophet's own womenfolk were very far from leading lives of idle exclusion. A life of empty idleness was no part of the Prophet's scheme of feminine existence. Muslim women held positions as sovereigns, teachers, theologians and superintendents of religious communities and were famous for learning, eloquence, and capacity to impart instructions."

In view of these facts, let me ask my modern Muslim sisters whether they are not ashamed of their lives of idleness? What they now do—of course there are rare exceptions—is to delight in wearing costly jewellery, expensive dresses, and to produce children, to train whom they are incompetent. Their husbands cannot find intellectual and spiritual companionship in them and the home is, therefore, far from happy. It is a suicidal policy for us and the community to allow things to remain as they are. We must lose no time in remedying all the defects that exist in our social system and in remoulding our lives in keeping with the Islamic teachings and Islamic traditions.

What we urgently need now is the proper education of our girls. Teaching them to read and recite the Holy Quran in a parrot-like fashion is of no use. Recital of mowloods without knowing their meaning also takes us nowhere. How instructive, elevating, and inspiring it would be if they read or recite these with a knowledge of their meaning. But I must confess that these girls are far better than the other type who with a little knowledge of English imagine that the most dignified thing is to ape the West by way of bobbing their hair, wearing short skirts and armless sleeves, and painting their lips and finger nails. But let me not be misunderstood. Let me make myself quite clear. The girls who can only read and recite the Holy Quran and the mowloods without knowing their meaning may not be able to progress. But the girls who ape the West blindly are hastening towards moral and spiritual destruction. The harm they do to themselves and to the community is tremendous. They undermine the very foundations of Muslim Society.

When I say that what we need urgently is a proper system of education, I refer to the education of our girls on Islamic cultural lines. In their curriculum of studies must be included the Islamic Shariah, Islamic Ethics and Islamic History. It is the ignorance of these that makes our young men and young women to be swept off their feet by the destructive glamour of Western Civilisation. If they are given a thorough knowledge of these, I am sure they will be able to see things in the right perspective and to shun the fashionable vices to which many of our young folk are abject slaves today. Merely sending a girl to an English School to acquire a knowledge of English and to be able to thump on the piano is not education. To a Muslim girl, a proper education, is that which moulds her character and personality on the lines chalked out in the Holy Quran and the Authentic Traditions. I sincerely hope that these facts will be taken into serious consideration when a College for Muslim girls is founded in Ceylon. I wonder when it will be established. I hope it is not going to be an utopian dream.

## MASTERING MOODS AND FANCIES

### THE POWER OF THOUGHT

By Mrs. Hassana Kareem

There are some women who always imagine that they are ill. Like sailors who tell their "yarns" so often that they really come to believe them, these women by persistently dwelling on some fancied ailment ultimately believe that they are seriously sick. Such women can never make good mothers and wives. In the morning they have a slight headache, they assume they are in for a serious illness. Instead of breathing in pure, fresh air, they confine themselves in their rooms and dose themselves with patent medicines. And everything goes wrong in the home.

Young girls also get into the habit of lying down and lounging around the house whenever they feel a bit out of sorts. Such girls are eternally sick or imagine that they are so when they reach maturity. This is nothing more than physical and mental laziness. Their mothers are largely to be blamed for this. It has been truly said that "a lounge or sofa is a positive curse in many a house, because it is such a temptation to lie down and succumb to trifling suggestions of illness or the least indisposition". A habit of giving in whenever you "don't feel like it" is fatal to all achievement and ruinous to self-discipline, self-poise, and nobility and dignity of bearing.

We must not allow ourselves to be governed by our moods and fancies for then we open the door to a host of enemies to our health, success, and happiness. We must never harbour sick, disaged, or lazy thoughts. By constantly thinking of illness we attract it to ourselves. We should make up our minds that we are not going to allow any sickness to come to us. The best safeguard against illness is the determination not to be influenced by moods or whims of any kind. If we think diseased thoughts, we attract disease. If we think healthy thoughts, we attract health.

Let me make it clear that this matter of feeling well or ill is largely a question of our thoughts. We should therefore resolve to keep ourselves up to a high standard mentally, morally, and physically. Let me quote the advice of a psychologist who says: "Don't allow yourself to become a slave to the miserable little absorbers of your health and happiness. Every time a diseased thought, a thought inimical to your health or achievement comes to you, expel it at once. Don't stop to discuss, or weigh, or consider it. Drive it off and replace it by a strong, healthy, beautiful thought. If you persist in this course you will fill your mind with hosts of health thoughts, beautiful thoughts, and achievement thoughts, which will make you physically and mentally vigorous, successful, and happy".

Children's Corner

## Forthcoming Competition

DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS,

Today instead of my usual letter to you in which I tell you every week of the story of our beloved Prophet's Life, I am publishing below a contribution I have received from one of you. I hope this will encourage others among you to send me articles of your own. If they are of the right standard, I shall be glad to publish them. I shall also be happy to give you helpful suggestions to improve the quality of your contributions.

I wish to advise you to read again all that has appeared in the Children's Corner in the previous issues of "The Star of Islam". I tell you this because next Saturday I shall be making an important announcement with regard to a competition I propose to have among you all.

Your friend,  
THE EDITOR.

## Poets and Religion

By S. D. M. MOHIDEEN

Most of the great poets have been religious, and that in the best sense of the word. By the study of nature they acquired a faith in the author of nature. They learnt religion, not in churches and books, but in the panorama of nature. God was revealed to them in natural phenomena.

Browning in his exquisitely written "Abtvoegler" expresses his very noblest conception of God and his faith in him and in his "Grammariam's Funeral" he again draws attention to the fact of how necessary is faith and trust in God, for man's welfare and happiness. So have all great writers expressed this—God has been their goal in all the ideals of which they have written. Tennyson, Swinburne, Longfellow, Cowper, all have had that underlying yearning in their writings towards the Eternal, more than most people do poets realize how poor and sordid are the attractions of the material and physical world—for they know that it is the world of spirit that matters, and they look for God's heavenly Kingdom instead of a temporal one. Poets do express their belief in God not only in undying words, but also in their own life, and the best expression is by deeds.

### The Holy Quran

If you are happy, calm, and believing, people will naturally conclude your faith has made you so. If you are narrow minded, bigoted, and intolerant, it shows that the creed you follow has not much practical value.

In giving Islam to mankind the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) gave to the world a living ideal that could never die, and which all and every man could carry out, and would have no difficulty in expressing in his daily life. No one who has made a study of it can doubt that Islam is the true and only religion, for it provides for rich and poor alike, and for every condition and circumstance of mankind. It is the religion of nature.

The lover of poetry will also find in the Holy Quran the most wonderful and priceless poem that has ever been written. Islam possesses also an artistic and spiritual side, besides being a Religion for everyday life. But it would be derogatory to Muhammad to call him a poet. He did not compose verses. He did not dream. He did not write philosophy. He was a prophet—the best, the most prophetic of all prophets. He elevated religious, social, political, and intellectual aspects of not only Arabia, but the whole world

## 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 Fourth Article of Faith in Islam?
  - A. The Fourth Article of Faith in Islam is belief in all the Prophets of ALLAH.
2. Q. What do you mean by belief in all the Prophets of ALLAH?
  - A. By belief in all the Prophets of ALLAH I mean that at different stages of history ALLAH sent Prophets as messengers for the guidance of mankind. We believe particularly in the Prophethood of those whose names are specifically mentioned in the Holy Quran. We cannot personally any one as a Prophet if his name is not so mentioned in the Holy Quran nor can we deny the Prophethood of anyone whose name is so mentioned in the Holy Quran.
3. Q. Who is a Prophet and what is his duty?
  - A. A Prophet is a servant and messenger of ALLAH. He is a model for mankind and taught mankind the Commands of ALLAH, himself acting in accordance with his own teachings.
4. Q. What are the characteristics of a Prophet?
  - A. A Prophet is a righteous, honest and sharpwitted person ever obedient to the Will of ALLAH in delivering His message to mankind.
5. Q. Were Prophets sent by ALLAH to all nations?
  - A. Yes; Prophets were sent by ALLAH to all nations at all stages of history to warn them against their sins and to lead them along the right path.
6. Q. What did the Prophet principally teach mankind?
  - A. The Prophets principally taught mankind to worship and fear ALLAH and to be obedient to all His Commands?
7. Q. Did any of the Prophets claim Divinity?
  - A. No; none of the Prophets claimed Divinity, besides being, and messenger of Allah, themselves were beings.

(To Be Continued)

## Women in Islam

Text of a Broadcast Talk recently given from the Colombo Broadcasting Station.

By M. A. Bakeer Markar

Few people seem to have understood woman's place in Islam. There is a good deal of misunderstanding about her status in society even among Muslims themselves. There is a general feeling that she has been denied many of the elementary privileges enjoyed by women of other communities. Some zealous but misinformed individuals have gone to the extent of proclaiming with the beat of the big drum that Islam enslaves woman, that she is nothing but a chattel in the hands of man. It is foolish to form opinions without adequate evidence. It is the very height of absurdity to maintain it in the face of evidence to the contrary.

Before the advent of the Holy Prophet Mohammed the women of Arabia had no place in society. They were exposed to the brutalities of the stronger sex and at best a father looked upon a female infant as nothing short of a disgrace. Hence infanticide was a common occurrence in their every day lives. But the Prophet gave her a soul, clothed her in the highest attributes, and raised her in the estimation of man; so much so that he calls woman the twin half of man perhaps a nobler appellation than the usual "better half" which almost smacks of an exquisite irony.

The following verse from the Holy Quran though rather long and somewhat involved in the process of translation might give an idea of what I mean:—"Surely the men who submit and the women who submit and the obeying men and the obeying women, the believing men and the believing women and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patriotic men and the patriotic women, and the alms giving men and the alms giving women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the chaste men and the chaste women, and the men who remember Allah much and the women who remember Allah much, for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and mighty reward."

Our critics with the minimum knowledge of English and the least power of understanding can gather for themselves that the Prophet of Islam recognised the equality of the two sexes in the face of Allah and ascribed potential virtues in equal measure.

In the eye of the Law women are given a special position their rights have been protected in their married state, to a degree unheard of in other statutes. Till the year 1926 English women did not enjoy legal rights that the Muslim women were heir to from the days of the Prophet. That a girl does not become a major the moment she marries an adult husband, but has to wait till she has attained the 21st year, is a useful bit of legislation in Islam in keeping with the customs and manners. For husbands are chosen and girls are married off two or three years after puberty, which is fairly early. These women have little experience of life. But before she attains her 21st year at home, she watches her husband critically and by that time she is capable of signing legal bonds, she has acquired sufficient worldly wisdom. But a girl according to English law becomes a major overnight though she has not attained her 21st year. Within the first few months of married life, however clever she may be, amidst the romantic atmosphere, she is unable to arrive at a proper estimation of her husband's character. She can be compelled to sign away her properties either by force or by trickery. But the time limit given in the Islamic law is a greater guarantee of safety than anything which obtains in any system of law where defenceless women are exposed to the brutalities of an unscrupulous husband.

Coming to the next topic of which our critics are so fond of harping up-

on, I shall endeavour to answer them in a few words. The vexed question of polygamy. Polygamy and monogamy have no virtues in themselves. Like polytheism and monotheism within the sphere of religion, they appear and disappear under different circumstances. If the female population is larger than the male in any country at any time polygamy becomes a social necessity. It was found necessary in Arabia. It is not necessary under present conditions. And the person professing Islamic faith has been bound down by so many restrictions in the choice of an additional partner, so that according to the spirit of Islam polygamy can materialise only under very exceptional circumstances. Hence monogamy is the rule and polygamy the exception whereby by a generous gesture the Prophet—the great liberal he was—removed the stupid stigma of illegitimacy which goes hand in hand with concubinage—which is the only substitute or alternative outside Islam. People raise their hands in holy horror without entering into the full details of the question.

There have been in the past many great women who lent lustre to Islamic culture and society. Sakina, the distinguished poetess and critic, Zubeida—the wife of Haroun-Al-Rashid—the great educationist, Shiek Shuda—the great orator and literary scholar, Umnu Salim and Rabbi, the great warriors, have been leading lights in Islam. But today our Muslim brethren fight shy to give their girls, the future mothers of the community, even an elementary vernacular education, while they are prepared to hoard up by the sweat of their brows, honestly or otherwise, a mountain of wealth for some prodigal to come along and waste it in the name of the Dowry system. We want more education for our women and the less we hear about fat dowries and fatter prodigals, the better for all of us concerned. The soul is sacrificed and starved that the body might batten. This is the sorry plight into which our women have fallen while history with its great lessons and noble models passes by the board.

There has been much talk of late by the Muslim leaders of founding a Girls' College. This is a long felt want but the subject has only served to improve the rather poor quality of eloquence of our leaders with the result there is much cry but little wool. In these changing times it is up to the Muslims to educate their women folk that they might not lag behind their sisters of other communities in their race. "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world" is a tag as old as the hills. But we have not realised that, if we can produce more efficient mothers there is very little doubt that their progeny would benefit greatly. In a talk of this nature which is primarily intended for the Muslims it will not be out of place for me to call upon our lethargic leaders and our money bags without imagination to give ear to the clarion call which is being sounded. "Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen" says the poet. And my prayer is, God helping that we take our places in this country as worthy partners of the future destiny of this, our Lanka.

### R U

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Manager, THE LIGHT, Lahore, (India)

## Liberty of Thought

By Z. MAGDON-ISMAIL

Human activities may be classified as physical and mental. The latter may, as the former, enjoy freedom or be servilely bound. We are not far away from the times of the historic fights for freedom of speech and personal liberty. Now the awakening of national consciousness has set the stage for the struggle for national self-determination. There is yet another aspect of liberty—that concerning purely the mental faculty in man.

Our life is more or less affected by tradition. We ask no question of its reasonableness and raise no argument against its vainness when a custom is vain. It is accepted for it is ancestrally handed down. Generally birth is the factor that determines the religion of an individual. If you give expression to critical queries about it you are liable to be branded as an accused and unholly unbeliever meriting no salvation. Knowledge acquired through the medium of a script is the acquirer's as

well. And the opinion expressed by another becomes also yours on conviction. Hence why quote Shakespeare or Bacon? Do we consider them monopolists of thought and dedicate our minds to inactivity? Or is it that we have no courage to express the opinion as ours and look for aducing reasons of our own? We are, therefore, to some extent at least unconsciously in a state of mental servility.

We jealously cherish the senses by which we exist. It is not doubted that we all reckon among them the faculty of thought and its supremacy and un-comparisone superiority over the rest. We would not suffer another to taste, hear, see or smell for us. Should we then deny ourselves the pleasure of the most sublime sense in man and allow another to think for us?

We have yet to await a general awakening of "mental consciousness" to institute the order of individual thinking. We have to bemoan its delay in the programme of struggles for the different aspects of liberty. It is the duty of the enlightened to defy the wrath of the conservative tyrant order to reclaim mental potentiality from inactivity.

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## The Star of Islam

A CULTURAL WEEKLY

COLOMBO: 16TH SEPTEMBER 1939



## Social Reconstruction Among Ceylon Muslims

ATTENTION has repeatedly been drawn to the deplorable conditions obtaining among the Muslims in Ceylon. It has been shown that socially, economically, educationally, and otherwise the local Muslims are far behind the other communities in the Island. Blame has in turn been laid at the doors of the wealthy and educated classes and of the existing Muslim organisations for this unfortunate state of affairs. But it is now high time that the community should pass on from the talking-stage to that of constructive action. A couple of weeks ago we referred to the scheme formulated by the Muslim Union. Today we publish the appeal by the Chairman of the Young Muslim Progressive Association, whose objects seem to be similar to those of the Muslim Union. We are of opinion that instead of working independently these two organisations should join their forces in their noble mission for bettering the conditions now prevailing in the community.

Past experience tells us that most Muslim organisations in Ceylon have been run for the benefit of a particular individual or of a clique and not of the community. An Association is sometimes founded in order to provide a platform to an ambitious politician, who is presumptuous enough to imagine that in all his public utterances he is voicing the opinion of the whole community. It is also very revolting to one's sense of decency to find people, who have hitherto kept aloof from the community and tightened their purse—strings, suddenly becoming magnanimous and generous on the eve of an election or when they have some Government Honours in view. But it is refreshing to find organisations like the Muslim Union and the Young Muslim Progressive Association, unaffected by such petty and selfish considerations and uninfluenced by the machinations of such self-seeking men, striking out to ameliorate the conditions of the local Muslims. We hope that without waiting till others

come to offer their assistance, they will set to work determinedly to achieve their objects. It is of no use to expect rich and educated men to come to their aid. Let them come, if they will. But even if they do not, let not these humble workers get discouraged or slacken in their work. In this connection we wish to quote the words of MRS. IQBALUNISSA HUSSAIN, whose learned contributions have appeared in this paper. In a recent letter to us she wrote: "The path of any reformer is narrow and surrounded by insurmountable difficulties. He has to struggle hard to overcome the obstacles. The harder he fights the greater pleasure he derives as a noble motive is always followed by success."

In any scheme of Muslim Social Reconstruction, we must avoid a dangerous pitfall. For instance, the question whether it is possible to adopt the Islamic way of thinking and living to the exigencies of the western civilization, and *vice versa*, must be answered in the negative. A profound Muslim thinker says: "In Islam, the first and foremost goal is the inner, moral progress of man, and therefore the ethical considerations overrule the purely utilitarian. In the modern Western civilization the situation is just reversed. The consideration of material utility dominates all manifestations of human activity, and ethics are being relegated to an obscure background of life and condemned to a merely theoretical existence without the slightest power to influence the human community. Their very existence, under such circumstances, is an hypocrisy; and therefore the intellectually decent among the modern European thinkers are subjectively justified if, in their speculations on the social destinies of the Western civilization, they avoid any allusion to transcendental ethics. With the less decent—that is with those who are less clearly defined in their moral attitude—the conception of transcendental ethics survives as an irrational factor of thought, much in the same way as the mathematician is obliged to operate with certain "irrational" numbers which represent nothing tangible in themselves, but are occasionally required to bridge over the gaps of imagination due to the structural limitations of the human mind. Such an evasive attitude towards ethics is certainly incompatible with a religious orientation..... to imitate the Western civilization in its spirit, its mode of life and its social organization is impossible without dealing a fatal blow to the very existence of Islam as a theocratic polity and a practical religion." Let us, therefore, avoid this pitfall and reconstruct Muslim Society on a strictly Islamic basis.

## From The Mimbar

# DEATH COMETH TO ALL

## Prepare For The Day Of Judgment

Translation of Sermon Delivered at the Masjid-ul-Jamiaah, Slave Island, on the 8th September, 1939.

BY KATHEEB B. B. BAIAR

PRaise be to Allah who screens Himself from the sight of all with the most delicate and divergent screens. He is far above the praises given Him by worldly beings so that never did they praise Him in a fit and appropriate manner with their eloquent tongues.

I praise Him truly for all the benefits He hath conferred and seek His guidance and help to obey Him and I entrust myself entirely to Him.

I bear witness that there is no God worthy of being worshipped but Allah alone, and He hath no partner. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. He sent him with the Quran as proof. He was the best of those born in this world and he guided mankind to the best of worship. May Allah bestow His blessings and peace on him and on his followers.

O mankind! The ending of Rajab and the beginning of Sha'aban and the passing of the months and the flight of time are clear and unmistakable warnings that this world is impermanent. Therefore be careful that a parting from it does not come to you unaware. Be prepared for it by making yourselves always Godfearing. Be kind to yourselves by being always righteous and thereby save yourselves from the fearful consequences of being disobedient to Allah, that shall follow on the Day of Judgment.

Oh! what an easy prey for death he would be who follows his worldly passions and how easily he would be forgotten by this world which hath been his nursing mother? And how fortified his presence of mind would be who took obedience to Allah as an inseparable friend?

O servants of Allah! Perform your duties unto Allah in a fit manner. Revere and fear Him as one will do when he knows that He seest him. Be prepared for death while man will be enjoying his youth, intoxicated by his self, conceited by his wealth and forgetful of what he is created for, there shall he be shown the torches of illness in which the days shall be sour and the eagles of death shall hover over him and bury their talons and fangs in him. Then shall he feel the tortures, when his humours go against him and his journey begins and his resistance and defence fail him. With wandering eyes and a fleeing heart, with a revolting soul in a zone of impending calamities he realises his separation from his people and country. He realises that his soul is leaving his body.

### PARTING FROM THIS WORLD

He signs to those present as if advising them to look after his children, while his breaths are being gradually dragged towards death.—The Angel of Death reveals himself from obscurity and does his work as he is commanded. His friends and those dear to him are separated. The only provision he gets out of his wealth is his shroud. He shall be mortgaged in the tomb against his actions. He shall be alone in spite of his numerous neighbours who would appear to be far away while they are so near to him. He joins those who lived and disappeared before him. They do not tell him of

what happened to them. They would tell him if they had the power to do so. Alas! They have drunk the bitter cup of death. Even an atom out of their actions did not escape being questioned and rewarded or punished. They are quite convinced that there is absolutely no chance of returning to the world. They are as though they had not been dear to anybody and as though they had never been counted among the living. Allah who caused them to talk silenced them. He that created annihilated them. He shall renew them, even as He once caused them to be, and shall gather them, even as He hath dispersed them, on a day when Allah will create mankind anew and will cause the wrong-doers to be fuel for Hell, on the day when ye will be witnesses against mankind and the Messenger will be a witness against you. "On the day when every soul will find itself confronted with all that it hath done of good and all that it had done of evil (every soul) will long that there might be a mighty space of distance between it and that (evil)." Sura 3, verse 30.

"On the day when every soul will come pleading for itself, and every soul will be repaid what it did, and they will not be wronged" Sura 16, verse 111.

May Allah protect us all from the vanities of this world and thereby cause us to be away from Hell. May He cause us all to abide in the permanent House of Heaven. A'meen.

(Translated by Moulvi M. A. Laifir).

## Lofty Thoughts For Lonely Moments

O God! Bless one whose chief treasury is hope and whose weapons are tears.

Every arrow does not hit the mark; nor is every prayer granted.

Love of wealth fosters aspiration and spoils virtue.

Trust in God is the best founded aspiration.

A man's worth depends on the nobility of his aspirations.

Enmity is the occupation of fools.

He is really wise whose action attests to his words.

There is no disease more hopeless than want of wisdom.

Knowledge is life and wealth.

To respect the learned is to respect God.

—SEYEDENA ALI  
(on whom be peace)

# Musings Of A Pensioner-VI

## Pantheistic Theory Examined

### Not A Part of Islam But Borrowed From Hinduism

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

PANTHEISM is no part of the religion of Islam and the surprising feature to me is the strength of the strangle-hold of Pantheism on the religious doctrines of Islam owing to ideas adopted by later Sufism from Greek, Persian, Hindu and Buddhist thought. It has trickled down to our present age and this in spite of the efforts and criticisms of Ibn-i-Taimiyya (672 A.H.), Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, Shah Wali Ullah of Delhi and recently Mohamed Iqbal. There are even in Ceylon various Moulvies and leaders of religious thought who, unconsciously perhaps, subscribe to such doctrines and live in the day-dream of being merged with God one day either in this life or the hereafter, or in other words of becoming God one day. Let me explain, once and for all, why I differ from these views. It is no argument to cite verses from the writings of Sufis in the past, or apocryphal Hadiths because just as the present day Moulvies have been misled, so were these older Sufis and it is so easy to coin a Hadith to support one's thesis. I refuse to believe in the authenticity of any Hadith unless it has been passed by critics of the standard of Bukhari and other experts from a close study of the *Isnad* of the Hadith.

Pantheism is defined in Chamber's Dictionary as "the doctrine that there is no God apart from nature or the universe, everything being considered as part of God or a manifestation of Him." Just as there are a man's body and soul God is supposed to be hidden within the universe as the soul is within the human body. Therefore man being part of nature, God is within him. Man has therefore only to know this truth and strive to identify himself with this inner Reality by killing his desires and all worldly attachments and lo and behold! he will one day become God. This is Hindu pantheism and is the driving force of the great Mahatma Gandhi of international fame. I wish to assert with all the emphasis I can command that such beliefs are no part of Islam. My readers have only to read Iqbal's lectures or his poetry, or Al-Haj Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar's Philosophy of the Quran (Translator of the Holy Quran and writer of various Islamic books late of the Malayan Civil Service) or study the Quran to be convinced that such beliefs are and have been disastrous to the Islamic faith.

#### Eastern Pantheism

What Eastern pantheism is, should be thoroughly understood by my readers before I proceed to prove my thesis, by reference to the Quran. Let me quote from an article on Universal Divinity by Oscar Ljungstrom. (A Swedish Philosopher).

"Nature is not limited exclusively to gross mechanical, sensuous, and visible things. What we see and cognise with our imperfect senses, is only a very small part of Nature. Beyond that part, according to Eastern pantheism, is an infinitude of invisible things and entities. Yet they are as natural as those we are able to see and sense.

"According to ordinary religious conceptions in the West man's natural life, in which he feels at home, comes to a final end at death. At that much-dreaded event he stands before a deep gulf, a precipice, from which he shrinks with fear and dread; because here ends abruptly, according to the idea implanted in his mind, his natural existence, and he has to make the leap and plunge into the supernatural.

"This idea of discontinuity in natural existence, of a break, of a sudden gap,

is psychologically horrifying, because it is dark as night and revolting to the understanding.

"In Eastern pantheism death is as natural a process as sleep. No more elements are involved in the one than in the other. No supernatural element enters in at death; it is only a somewhat more complete sleep. When you go to sleep, you abandon for a time the physical body—that is, the finer element in you, your psychic organism, excludes the physical body temporarily from itself. But during the time of sleep the body retains its vegetative life, and you can return to it, can take it up again in the morning. When you die, you also exclude the physical body, and as you do it more completely, the substances of the body retain only their chemical life and are dissolved by it.

#### Idea of an Impersonal God

"But you have a return even then to a new day of life in growing a new body—thus *reincarnating*.

"There is nothing then outside Nature, and the so-called "supernatural" is non-existent. It is an impossible idea, because Existence is *continuous, coherent, unbroken whole* in which everything interacts and interblends. We should remember, therefore, that Nature, the Universe, is all-comprising and all-containing. We cannot leave it—it is our eternal home—and all that is in us is a part of it. The supernatural being non-existent, there is, of course, no such thing as a personal God outside Nature, although there certainly is a Divine element in Nature itself. It is impersonal—*super-personal*, not sub—

"The central idea in the presentation of Nature by Eastern pantheism is that the Universe also is a living, organised whole. There are no separate existences in it, for streams of life unite the children of the Universe—each with all, low or high, atoms or gods. Even more: in the core of its being every entity, every growing form, every transient object, is one with the whole, with the infinite, with the Divine. The outer, manifested existence of a thing at any particular moment is merely an event, a passing, feeble expression of an infinitesimal facet of the diamond core of its own being, the Divine. Objects are similar to waves rolling over the surface of

the ocean. As the waves roll on, they are filled anew at every moment by the great water, and are never separated or cut off from the ocean. All are one water majestic and calm in the depths. If we try to grasp, or rather feel this idea, what follows will be clearer."

#### Hindu and Buddhist Notion

We need not quarrel about the reference to death and how it functions in the above extract, but what is antagonistic to Islam is the Hindu and Buddhist notion that the divine element in nature is impersonal, and that in the core of the being of the Universe every transient object is one with the whole, with the infinite, with the Divine. It will thus be seen that the Divine element being impersonal, according to the teaching, it cannot love man, or punish him or reward him. As Melamed has pointed out in his Spinoza and Buddha "God is above joy and sorrow, anger and worry, for He is will-less and thought-less and hence dead. As such He is in no way correlated to man, nor can He be concerned with or opposed to man." Lord Buddha only developed this idea further, and ignoring, or at least being silent as to, the nature or qualities of God, placed before his followers the absoluteness of the moral obligation. In his Benares Address Buddha said as follows:—

"This, ye mendicants, is the holy truth of suffering. Birth is suffering, age is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, united with the unpleasant is suffering, separation from the pleasant is suffering and not attaining desire is suffering. These, ye monks, are the holy truth of the origin of suffering. It is the thirst, which leads from rebirth to rebirth including joy and desire, the thirst of lust, the thirst of becoming, the thirst of changeability. These, ye monks, are the holy truth of the elimination of the thirst by totally destroying desire, by letting it go, by separating from it, by freeing one's self from it, by not granting it shelter."

Buddha advised the nun Gautami as follows: "Whatever teaching thou art sure, it leads to passion and not to peace, to pride and not to humility, to the desiring of much and not to the desiring of little: to the love of society and not to the love of solitude, to idleness and not to earnest striving, to a mind hard to pacify and not to a mind easy to pacify, that Gautami is not the law."

#### Buddha's Philosophy

Buddha's Philosophy assumed a form of fatalism, man was tied to his *Karma*, that is his re-birth was due to the results of his actions in the previous birth and if a man wished to escape from life, he was to destroy all desires when he would be absorbed into Nirvana.

Buddha hinted at an Ultimate Reality to his monks as follows: "There is an unborn, an unoriginated, an unmade, an uncompounded. Were there not, mendicants there would be no escape from the world of the born, the originated, the made and the compounded."

The net result of this teaching is that—

- (1) the majority of the Buddhists are atheists, to the consternation of Radakrishnan and Mrs. Rhys David (see their articles in the Hibbert Journal).
- (2) life was regarded as an evil, but with power to man to escape from it and succeeding lives by killing all his desires,
- (3) Nirvana was not defined clearly, but was held out as the quality or state of not being re-born.

It will be seen at once how diametrically opposed these ideas are to the ideas of Islam that God is a Living, personal Being, capable of guiding, loving, pitying, rewarding, punishing &c man. Further there is nothing in this pantheism similar to the explanation given in the Quran for the

creation of the Universe and man, and the purpose of his creation.

As the ultimate Reality takes no interest in man, it does not therefore send down any Revelation for the guidance of man. This shows conclusively that the doctrine of *Karma* and all the rules governing Eastern pantheism are thought-contents based on logic and reason and have been evolved by sages by the expenditure of much grey matter of the brain, unlike Allah, "who is concrete and is capable of creating. No category appears to be creative. Abstractions have in them no life, and from having no source of time in them they set, so to speak nothing going. They cannot for that very reason explain what is called the time-process, on which founder all the philosophies called 'absolute' from Plato to Bradley." (See Harold P. Cooke in the Hibbert Journal of October 1937).

#### Where Pantheism Fails

There is no explanation in pantheism for the problem of evil and many other problems arising in life. Further if the discipline of the ethical or moral life is necessary to avoid the pain and suffering of re-birth, this very object is to my mind a desire far outweighing in force and character mere physical desires of the senses. How can this desire be avoided or killed, when it is the driving force of the ethical life?

In Islam on the other hand we are told that Allah created this Universe for a purpose, and the Holy Quran frequently refers to Allah as the best and wisest of planners. The story of the expulsion of Adam and Eve to this world as described in the Quran should be read in the light of the comments of Iqbal in his Six Lectures and then it will be seen that the whole mystery of creation according to Islam is in this parable. The world was created to enable man to rule therein as Allah's agent and to attain to this rank by the development of human society. Just as Plato and Aristotle had insisted that man can only grow in association with his fellows, the Quranic account of man's destiny in this world takes into its reckoning not only his social activities but even his political ones; hence the Quran is a complete code for the religious, moral, social and political conduct of man. How different all this is to pantheistic ideas?

#### Islamic Idea

As regards creation, it was Allah who created everything, the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth, man, beast, trees &c, out of nothing. The Islamic conception is quite the opposite of Aristotle's, who asserted that matter is as eternal as God and that God only acted as a designer on this existing matter. Nor did Allah create the universe from matter taken from Himself, nor is the universe part of Himself. He created it by His will, His act of volition. The Islamic idea is somewhat similar to Bergson's—but not quite—Professor Joad says "Bergson visualises the process of evolution as though there is somewhere a centre from which worlds and life and matter are thrown off like fireworks in a vast illumination".

Even this explanation of Bergson must be qualified, in Islam, because according to the Quran, "there is nothing like even to a likeness of Him." And all that we can say of Him, is that "He is the first and the Last, the hidden and the manifest".

In verse 117 of Chapter II we find the following:

"To Him is due  
The primal origin  
Of the heavens and the earth:  
When He decreeth a matter  
He saith to it 'Be'  
And it is."

My readers are invited to read the following verses in the Quran: 6-101 & 102; 36-82; 3-58; 16-40; 40-68; and many others. Some of these verses refer to the creation of man (3-58) and others to "things"; it is significant

(Continued on page 6)

## The Holy Prophet as an Educational Reformer

### THE IMPETUS HE GAVE TO LEARNING

By Maulvi Abdul Karim, B.A., M.L.C.

Before the advent of Hazrat Muhammad, learning was confined to the few. The priests, anxious to monopolise all power, were opposed to the education of the people in general. Consequently most of the people were ignorant and illiterate. No Messenger of God, from Noah to Jesus, seems to have done anything for the dissemination of knowledge. The Prophet of Islam, though unread himself, was the first to move in this matter. Convinced that the ignorant cannot know God and are unable to realise adequately His goodness and greatness, he made the acquisition of knowledge incumbent upon all his followers, irrespective of sex and rank. "Talabul-Ilm Farizatun Ala Kulle Muslimin Wa Muslimatin": "Seeking of knowledge is imperative for all Muslims, males and females."

### The Prophet's Sayings

That the Prophet lost no opportunity of laying great stress on the importance of knowledge and of impressing upon his followers the religious necessity of its acquisition, will be conclusively proved by the following quotations from his sayings:—  
"A Muslim should study from the cradle to the grave."

"An hour's contemplation and study of God's creation is better than a year's adoration."

"He who leaves home in search of knowledge walks in the path of God."

"Seek knowledge though it be available in China."

"The ink of the scholar is holier than the blood of the martyr."

"To listen to the words of the learned and to instil into others the lessons of science is better than religious exercises."

"The contemplation of a learned person for one night is more meritorious in the eyes of the Lord than the saying of prayers for several nights."

"He who acquires knowledge in the way of the Lord, performs an act of piety; he who speaks of it, praises the Lord; who seeks it, adores God; who dispenses instruction in it, bestows alms; and who imparts it to its fitting objects, performs an act of devotion to God."

"Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish right from wrong; it lights the way to heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when friendless; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is an ornament among friends and an armour against enemies."

"Who pursueth the road of knowledge, Allah will direct him to the road to Paradise; verily the angels spread their arms to receive him who seeketh after knowledge; verily the superiority of a learned man over a mere worshipper is like that of the full moon over the stars."

"He dieth not who takes to learning."  
"Whoever reveres the learned reveres me."

### Boundaries of Religion Enlarged

Such was the personal teaching of the Prophet, which, for the Muslims, comes next to the Holy Quran. "O Thou who hast knowledge grant knowledge to me," was the constant prayer of the Prophet, who used to tell his followers, "knowledge is the birthright of the Faithful; they take it wherever they find it."

The Prophet did not approve of his followers being entirely absorbed in the meditation of God, to the exclusion of everything else. He always urged them to acquire knowledge and directed them to go in search of it all over the world, to all peoples. "Four things," he used to say, "support the world: the learning of the wise, the justice of the great, the prayers of the good, and the valour of the brave."

## SYRIA

### Ibn Saud on the Kingship

The "Falastin," Jaffa, reports from Baghdad that Syed Adil al Azmat has returned to Baghdad from Hedjaz after a week's stay. In an interview with the editor of *Al-Kifah* he explained the purpose of his visit to H. M. Sultan Ibn Saud, which was to induce the Saudi authorities to intervene with the French authorities in Syria for the release of Syed Adil's brother Nabih Buk Al Azmat, who is under arrest in Syria and whose health is causing grave anxiety.

The following conversation took place between Syed Adil and the editor of *Al-Kifah*:—

Q:—Did you discuss the question of Syria and Palestine with the Sultan?

A:—Certainly. His Majesty keeps in touch with politics of the whole world, and of course of Palestine and Syria particularly. The Sultan attaches great importance to the two countries.

Q:—Does the Sultan wish that he should be made King of Syria or that one of his sons should be given the honour?

### Baseless Rumours

A:—Absolutely not. Contrary to all such rumours His Majesty has absolutely no such intentions. He is decidedly of the opinion that the question is premature. First of all, he thinks, Syria should be made free from her present troubles. After that the Syrians should be left free to choose whatever form of Government they like.

### Amir Abdullah

Q:—What would be the Sultan's attitude if Amir Abdullah of Trans-Jordan were to be made the ruler of Syria?

A:—I have stated that the Sultan is interested only in the freedom of Syria, particularly from the present situation. After that he gives no importance to the question as to who should be her ruler. The question concerns solely the Syrians themselves.

### Syrians to Decide

The Sultan told Syed Adil that he who aspires to become the ruler of Syria just now and under the present conditions must be prepared to play into the hands of foreigners and to act as their puppet. In his opinion he who accepts the crown of Syria would be a traitor to the Arab world, because such a person's appointment would be nothing else but strengthening the hand of the Mandatory Power.

Q:—Can you throw any light on the visit of Khalid Bey al-Qarqani, the Sultan's representative, to Berlin? There are so many rumours current about the visit.

A:—As far as I can say the visit of Khalid Bey to Berlin was connected with trade negotiations between the two countries. It is positive that it may have something to do with the purchase of arms by the Saudi Government.

The boundaries of religion were immeasurably enlarged by what the Prophet of Islam taught in respect of knowledge and its acquisition; every branch of learning conducive to human progress came within the purview of Islam. No boundary was set up between sacred and profane knowledge. An insatiable thirst for knowledge was thus created in that dark age, and this gave a tremendous impetus to the development of scientific research in realms hitherto unexplored. As described in my "Islam's Contribution to Science and Civilisation," some undreamt of discoveries and inventions were made, immensely contributing to the progress of civilisation and the welfare of mankind. In fact the early Muslims very largely contributed to the cultural development of the world; there was hardly any important branch of learning of which they did not make themselves masters. "The Arabs," writes Bosworth Smith, "for five hundred years held up the torch of learning to humanity."

### Musings of A Pensioner-VI.

(Continued from page 5)  
that the Arabic word "Shayun" for "thing" means "what is willed", showing God had a purpose in creating. Other verses refer to creation of "affairs" i.e. situations (40-68).

Allah therefore is the origin and creator of everything in the universe and everything therefore exists in nature because of the will of God. In the words of the Quran "He is the First, the Last, the Hidden and the Manifest." This idea is one of the guiding ones in the Holy Book and it puts an end to all the difficulties which philosophers have experienced in their speculations regarding the time-process—the existence of evil—the different proofs based on reason for the existence of God—the problem of evolution in nature &c.

This, I shall make clear in my next article, as my reasons are based on an article in the Hibbert Journal by Harold P. Cooke, M.A. and require careful explanation.

### A QUERY

Would any one of the readers of "The Star of Islam" be pleased to let me know the strength of the followers of each religion in the world and under the British Empire.

M. M. ABDUR RAHMAN.

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## THE PATHETIC CONDITION OF THE CEYLON MUSLIMS

### An Appeal

By H. M. Sheriff, Chairman, Young Muslim Progressive Association (Al-Lujmuthul Shubbannul Muslimeen, Colombo.)

AT a recent meeting of the above Association a resolution was unanimously passed to expose the critical condition of the Muslims. I avail myself of this opportunity to appeal through this paper to all learned Muslim Ladies and Gentlemen to have compassion, and render assistance in the upliftment of the poor Muslims, who are in dire need of spiritual, financial, medical and educational aid.

Today, in all parts of the world as also in Ceylon there is a mass national feeling among all communities. We find a tremendous enthusiasm for learning and for technical efficiency. Where we found illiterate population we find men of learning springing up, who will soon have a powerful influence in the destiny of Ceylon. Sinhalese, Tamils and Burghers are striving for their rights—social, political and religious. But it is with great concern and sorrow we observe that Muslims are not at all taking any action to improve themselves socially, politically and morally.

It is needless to write at length regarding the state of penury of the vast number of Muslims. About 75 per cent of our Muslim brethren, sisters and children are in destitution; a good number are starving and some are even homeless. The position of virgins, widows and orphans are very unsafe, and I appeal to you that immediate steps be taken to alleviate to some extent the sufferings of these poor people. Muslims in all parts of Ceylon must co-operate with all the existing Muslim organizations in order to prevent disgrace to the Muslim community as a whole. I am sure that this is the teaching of our Holy Prophet. You are well aware that other religious bodies have made great headway to relieve the poor of their sufferings by opening institutions, orphanages, convents, homes-for-the-aged etc., whilst, if possible, financial aid is also given where and when necessary. Very recently a lady by the name of Mrs. H. M. Gunasekera spared no pains and opened a Home-for the Aged for Buddhists, whereas our educated and rich gentlemen merely sit in obscurity and write to the Dailies to display their knack of journalism. This appears to be something like preparing "Booriguni through Verbiage," but they do nothing or take no initiative to form an Association in order to render help to the poor suffering masses of humanity. Muslims, like the other nationalities of Ceylon, will make a lot of progress if they improve the conditions of their poor masses, and I would point out that there need be no consideration as regards finances if we all practise the law of God laid down in the Holy Koran i.e. Zakath. If Zakath is practised there is no necessity for any subscription papers. I guarantee that within 5 years a Missionary Home could be founded and there will be no Muslim beggars wandering about the streets dragging along with them children of school-going age, who without growing up into good and useful citizens of Ceylon become criminal minded. Should we allow such a crime to continue and still imagine that we are following the precepts of our Holy Prophet? If there was a Missionary Home opened up to give free education to the poor children and free lodging as well, no Muslim beggar will crowd round houses and shops on Mondays and Fridays, but as time advances they will turn out useful citizens through the help derived from their Muslim brethren. It is regrettable to note the suffering of our Rasool's Ummath. Today none of our so-called leaders and the existing Muslims organization come forward to the aid of our community, but they only try to make themselves popular by going

about with bands of followers to read and expound the life of Prophet Mohamed whom they pretend to follow and imitate. But do they practise what they preach? The resultant from this wrong way of getting about things is that the 8 people entitled for Zakath are suffering untold hardships: Ullamas, the lame, blind, deaf, dumb, Maulas, Fukans, and orphans. I have seen people of means give Zakath in the month of Ramlan which is comparable to pouring water on a duck's back.

#### What Are The Educated Men Doing?

It is a recognized fact that a vast number of people are in a position today to give various opinions and to read and expound the life and teachings of Prophet Mohamed but will this lead to any ultimate good when we are immovable to the suffering of our neighbour? Today, unlike the days of the past, the Muslim community has the honour of counting amongst its numbers many educated men with distinctive qualifications such as: M.A., B.A., C.C.S., Doctors, Lawyers, Judges, etc. and even the distinction of a Knight, but what have these men done for their community? Is there a Muslim Missionary Home?

Is there a Hospital for Muslims (especially for ladies)?

Is there a Home-for-the-Aged for Muslims?

Is there a broadminded Muslim religious lady teacher?

It is a disgrace to observe that the abovesaid educated gentlemen have so far done nothing to the welfare of their community, but they encourage beggars and the existing Muslim Organizations are also in a sleeping posture and do not function in any appreciable manner.

It is quite evident that any number of articles in the papers will not be heeded, and it is only a handful of Muslims who will read them. Therefore, take this opportunity to appeal to all the leading and rich Muslims as also to all the Muslim organizations to unite and lay by a concrete scheme so that something might be done to the upliftment of the vast concourse of poor Muslims.

Let a Missionary Home be founded and a Board of Directors appointed to check the running of this institution and let all pay their Zakath to this Home so that a regular and systematic House can be run for the wellbeing of the Muslim community. I appeal that a mass meeting be convened and decisions made towards this worthy cause. As stated above all the different communities comprising the population of this Island are now filled with a nation-

## EGYPT

### THE NEW CABINET

#### Saadists And Independents On The Saddle

Aly Maher Pasha has assumed the Premiership for the second time during the present reign, says a Cairo report. As Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha's Liberal supporters refused to take any part in the new administration, a Cabinet has been formed of five Saadists Ministers and nine Independents. The Saadists are followers of the Premier's brother, Ahmed Maher Pasha, and of Noukrashi Pasha.

The Ministries for Education, Communication, Commerce, Industry and Health have been entrusted to Saadists and the portfolios of War, Finance, Public Works, Agriculture, Justice and the Wakf have all been placed in the hands of Independents.

Aly Maher Pasha, in addition to the Premiership, takes over the portfolios of Foreign Affairs and the Home Office, whilst Sirri Pasha (the Queen's uncle) has been transferred from the War Office, which he guided with great success in the late Government, to the Ministry of Finance, Noukrashi Pasha has been transferred to the Ministry of Education from the Home Office. Lewa Harb Pasha, who has been selected to lead the Military Mission to Turkey, has been appointed Minister for War.

#### Four New Ministries

Four new Ministries have been created, for propaganda, national economy, social matters of State, and for judicial matters, under two twin Ministers, who will advise Government on all matters affecting the Legislatures. In other words Government while conforming to the letter of the constitution, is expected to use its authority to force the Legislatures to collaborate on all matters during the present difficult times.

Elections will be held for a new Parliament when the life of the present Parliament expires, unless the international situation demands an extension of the life of the present House of Representatives. If Aly Maher Pasha decides to take part in the future elections himself, the Saadist Party will once more become an undivided party.

The policy of the new Government will be to uplift the status of the 'fellah,' or cultivator, and the small landowner.

al upsurging spirit and are united to see that something might be really done to the betterment of their brethren. Meetings are regularly held in different parts of the Island organized by the leading men to which villagers and poor people are summoned, their grievances heard and steps taken to grant redress. Why do not the Muslims do the same thing? In years to come they will regret this dormant state and too late they will realize with sorrow that they are far behind the other communities.

In this connection let me remind my readers that the Salvation Army is a unique institution in the Island rendering help to everyone without any consideration as to caste, creed etc. and it is from this sort of places that we should derive our inspiration.

The Y. M. P. A. is just in its infancy comprised of the poor classes whose income average 10 to 20 rupees per month, and are prepared to be at your service at any time. I trust that you will go into this matter carefully and do your best to recover the Unclaimed Tax and help the aforesaid deserving poor and relieve them to some extent at least of further sufferings and thus prevent disgrace to the Muslim community in the name of Allah and His Rasool.

## Islam's Contribution To Science and Civilisation

(Continued from page 1)

tory of the world the Holy Quran declared in unmistakable language that the main purpose for which all objects, from the mightiest sun to the most insignificant atom, were created, is to minister to man's needs. Everything in the universe being intended for his use, man has been commanded to investigate their intrinsic properties,—in other words, to cultivate every branch of science. Thus did the Quran, by declaring man the lord of the universe and everything in it subservient to him, give a tremendous impetus to the development of scientific research. In fact the foundation of modern science was thus laid by acquainting man with the real nature of the forces and laws of Nature and by teaching him how to harness them for human service. The initiation of the conquest of Nature and the utilisation of its forces for the good of humanity is, indeed, one of the greatest blessings Islam has conferred upon mankind.

The Quran clearly indicated the way in which to reduce Nature to human service by contemplation and observation of four kinds, viz., *Tafayyuh*, *Tadabbur*, *Tafakkur* and *Tauqqul*. By the first a correct idea of things and their different features can be got, by the second the knowledge of how to utilise them properly can be acquired, the third teaches the ways by which things have come into existence and how their properties may be discovered, while the fourth gives the knowledge which enables man to make the right use of different things in everyday life. It was the meditations indicated by *Tafakkur* and *Tauqqul* that actuated different kinds of scientific research among the early Muslims. This is how the Quran placed in the hands of man the key with which the treasure-house of Nature could be opened, and Divine Revelation came to show him the way to his material progress. Everything in the universe having been intended for the use of man it was a virtuous act for him to make researches into the realms of Nature in order to discover the utility of its various components. Thus the first principle of progress, the utilisation of the forces of Nature for the needs of man, became an article of faith with the Muslims, and impelled them to engage in scientific research.

#### Nature's Exploration is God's Glorification

The Prophet of Islam went so far as to make explorations in the realms of Nature the real glorification of God, and to place the acquisition of knowledge on an equal footing with his worship. Man was required to glorify God not by mere expression of lip-gratitude, but by discovering and utilising the properties and potentialities of the things He has created for supplying the needs of His creatures. Realisation of the "attered bounties of God was to be the realisation of God Himself. A Muslim was to spiritualise, as it were, his whole material surroundings by seeing and feeling the evidence of God's power and love in every blade of grass and in every breath of air.

"Verily in the creation of heavens and earth, and the alteration of night and day, there are signs for men of understanding, who remember Allah standing, sitting and while lying on their sides, and ponder over the creation of heavens and earth" (and say) "our Lord Thou hast not created (all) this in vain. Glory be to Thee." Al-Quran, Chapter III.

#### Islam Made Reason The Test of Faith

Before the advent of Islam learning was confined to the chosen few. The masses had to blindly accept whatever was placed before them as their religion.

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## Islam's Contribution To Science and Civilisation

(Continued from page 7)

and they were not permitted to use their intellect or judgment. In fact, before the promulgation of Islam religion was synonymous with dogmas and doctrines, rites and rituals; the bigotry had placed an embargo on freedom of thought and enquiry. Whenever anyone conceived any new idea or propounded a new theory, he was condemned by his co-religionists as a heretic. Some of the most inhuman atrocities ever committed on men in search of truth were thus perpetrated in the name of religion. It was Islam that for the first time discountenanced all dogmatic teachings and made reason the test of faith. "The first thing created," says the Prophet of Islam, "was reason. God has not created anything better than reason." On another occasion the Prophet said: "Verily a man has performed prayers, fasts, charity and pilgrimages and all other good deeds, but he will not be rewarded save in proportion to the sense he employs." According to the Quran "There is no piety in turning your face towards the East or the West." *Iman* (faith) means knowledge of a truth or principle with such a conviction as to its truth as will incite one to live up to it. It does not signify belief that cannot be translated into action. All this unmistakably demonstrates that Islam does not regard rituals and ceremonies as essentials of religion. In fact mere dogmatic doctrines have no significance for a true Muslim, who has to observe his religion in every deed and action, in every thought and conception. He may indulge in free thought and free inquiry concerning everything that man's intelligence is capable of apprehending. To him science, the aim of which is truth, is the greatest ally of true religion. "Islam stands almost alone," says Guizot in his *History of European Civilisation*, "among the religions in discountenancing the reliance on tradition without argument. It demands that its votaries should undertake the investigation of the great work of their faith." Miracle has no place in Islam to which Nature itself is a revelation of God, and its laws His eternal miracles, demonstrating His Majesty, His Omnipotence and His Benevolence. In fact man knew nothing of God except through His work in Nature. Islam thus gave to scientific research a religious aspect unknown and unthought of before.

By thus putting an end to all conflicts between religion and science and by making the first principle of scientific progress—the subservience of Nature to man—an article of faith, Islam revolutionised the human mind, imparted immense energy and initiative to it and greatly impelled it to investigate the marvels of creation. Moreover, it immeasurably enlarged the scope of religion, which had till then been regarded only as a means of man's future salvation, but now, for the first time, came to be looked upon also as an effective factor in his material advancement. Every branch of learning conducive to human weal and progress thus came within the purview of Islam, which harmonised the exoteric and esoteric sides of man's life. Thus modern progress had its origin in the spirit of free thought and investigation engendered by Islam.

### Islam Made Education Compulsory for All

I have already stated what Islam did for two of the most important factors of modern culture and civilisation. Let us now see what it did for another important factor, viz., dissemination of knowledge. It is a historical fact that no messenger of God, from Noah to Jesus, had done anything worth mentioning for the dissemination of knowledge, which was selfishly monopolised by a few priests and theologians, anxious to retain all power in their own

hands. But the Prophet of Islam, though he himself knew not how to read and write, laid the greatest stress on the acquisition of knowledge and made it essentially incumbent upon all his followers, irrespective of sex, rank, colour and country. *Talabul-Ilm Farizatun Ala Kalli Muslimin Wa Muslimatin*: "Seeking of knowledge is imperative for all Muslims, male and female." "He who has been gifted with knowledge," says the Quran, "has been gifted with an abounding blessing." Convinced that an ignorant person can not adequately realise the greatness and goodness of God, the Prophet of Islam made acquisition of knowledge an essential of faith and did not approve of his followers being entirely absorbed in the meditation of God, "an hour's contemplation and study of His creation being better than a year's adoration." Muslims were particularly enjoined to be in constant search of knowledge "from the cradle to the grave," and they were told that "the ink of the scholar was holier than the blood of the martyr."

Thus in that dark age, when the world was enveloped in ignorance and illiteracy, Islam created an insatiable thirst for knowledge and caused a tremendous upheaval of science in realms hitherto altogether unexplored. Such an extraordinary outburst of intellectual activity was unparalleled in human history. Some undreamt of discoveries and inventions were made and these immensely contributed to the progress of civilisation and the welfare of mankind. There was hardly any science of which the Muslims did not make themselves masters. They created modern Chemistry, made most important discoveries in Astronomy, added much to the knowledge of Mathematics and Medicine and made very valuable researches in Botany, Geology, Zoology and other branches of Natural Philosophy. The foundation of what is termed Physical Science was thus laid, and the gates of investigation into the marvels of creation were flung wide open.

The Muslims, by unravelling the mysteries of Nature and widening the scope of knowledge, introduced such blessings of comfort and happiness as were unknown in the world. It was the intellectual liberty and the spirit of scientific research inaugurated by them that brought about the European Renaissance and introduced into the modern world the arts and sciences which ennobled the heart, elevated the mind and contributed to human happiness.

The height of scientific progress forecast by the Quran has not yet been fully attained. The world is full of materials that await man's exertion and ingenuity for their development and utilisation. There are millions of things in the realm of the seas and in the bowels of the earth and the ocean that have been created for man's use. All these have to be harnessed in order to meet the increased requirements of human society. The Quran repeatedly speaks of the subservience of the physical world and phenomena to man, whose duty it is to explore them for use.

Before the advent of Islam, the West, which now-a-days claims all credit for progress in science and civilisation, was steeped in ignorance and darkness. It was the intellectual liberty and scientific research inaugurated by the Muslims which brought about the Renaissance to which Europe owed its regeneration. Mediaeval Europe was a hot-bed of religious fanaticism and social conservatism; and the intellectual stagnation which prevailed there is altogether beyond conception in modern times.

### Persecution of Scientists in the West

In mediaeval Europe religion and science were thought to be quite irreconcilable to each other, and whoever

ventured to express any opinion contrary to the prevailing sacerdotal belief was not merely branded as a heretic, but was relentlessly persecuted, inhumanly tortured and even mercilessly put to death. For his belief in the theory of evolution, Vanini's tongue was torn out of his mouth and he was burnt alive. Hypatia, the renowned commentator on Plato, had to pay the penalty for her intellectual audacity with her life. Copernicus tried to demonstrate that the earth revolves and not the heavens. Thereupon even Martin Luther denounced him as "an upstart astrologer," and Calvin most severely condemned him. He had, therefore, to end his life in disgrace. Bruno, who dared to advance the Copernican theory, was seized, imprisoned and at last put to death by a "fire made slow to increase the torture." Galileo,

who supported the Copernican theory, was thrown into a dungeon, horribly tortured and forced to recant as follows:—"I, Galileo, being in my seventieth year, being a prisoner on my knees before your Eminences, having before my eyes the Holy Gospel, abjure, curse and detest the error and the heresy of the movements of the Earth." Not content with mere recantation, the Holy Inquisition sent him into exile for the rest of his life. Thus many a devoted votary of science fell a victim to Christian fanaticism prevalent in the Middle Ages, and some famous libraries, containing accumulated treasure of ages, were consigned to the flames. All this conclusively proves that the credit given to Christianity as a religion, for promoting the cause of science is nothing but a travesty of truth.

(To be continued)

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