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# The Star of Islam

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## Musings Of A Pensioner-VII

### Quotations From Masterpieces— A Hall-mark Of True Culture

#### Difference Between The Truly Educated And The Half-Baked Scarecrow

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

"THE STAR OF ISLAM" of September 16th contains two thought-provoking articles, which set me thinking and because I do not entirely agree with some of the conclusions arrived at by their authors, I think it will amuse my readers if I state my reasons for venturing to disagree to some extent with these gentlemen.

The first is a short article on *Liberty of Thought* and the other is an appeal on the *Pathetic Conditions of the Ceylon Muslims*. In daring to disagree I am only following the advice of the author of the first article that it is a mark of mental servility to accept the opinions of others without testing, weighing and criticising them for ourselves before we allow such views to enter the august portals of our acquiescent reason. I quite agree with this writer that it is the hall-mark of ignorance to allow others to think for us and to accept ready-made everything that others write as gospel truth. Surely this is the real difference between the truly educated, the truly cultured and the half-baked scarecrow that passes for him! It is only the village simpleton who will believe the wildest thing simply because it is in print. Even in the Holy Quran Allah asks man to ponder over each line in the Quran and thereby implies that the truths stated therein when so tested will be found to be acceptable to the reason of man.

Thus far the author and I are at one. But he goes on to ask why anyone should quote Shakespeare or Bacon. He seems to suggest that this practice is only indulged in by those who are mentally inactive or who have not the courage to express their own opinions. Surely he has done an injustice to another class of writers—in my own opinion the only class who can quote from the world's masterpieces with effect—who write to set that very reason in the readers—which the writer deprecates is not active as it should be—into an attempt to think and be active. These quotations, to be apt, must be from the works of the world's recognised artists in words, who, owing to a sudden gift from God, are not only able to get a fleeting glimpse of God but also to evoke through the medium of dry-as-dust words, that same eternal vision which God accorded to them in a moment of exaltation.

#### Why Quotations Are Necessary

Let me quote from Bergson's *Laughter* a short extract from a longer extract which I have already given in this series of articles:—

"Beneath the thousand rudimentary actions which are the outward and visible signs of an emotion, behind the

commonplace, conventional expression that both reveals and conceals an individual mental state, it is the emotion, the original mood, to which they attain in its undefiled essence. And then, to induce us to make the same effort ourselves, they contrive to make us see something of what they have seen: By rhythmical arrangement of words, which thus become organised and animated with a life of their own, they tell us—or rather suggest—things that speech was not calculated to express. Others delve yet deeper still. Beneath these joys and sorrows which can, at a pinch, be translated into language, they grasp something that has nothing in common with language, certain rhythms of life and breath that are closer to man than his inmost feelings, being the living law—varying with each individual—of his enthusiasm and despair, his hopes and regrets. By setting free and emphasising this music, they force it upon our attention; they compel us, willy-nilly, to fall in with it, like passers—by who join in a dance. And thus they impel us to set in motion, in the depths of our being, some secret chord which was only waiting to thrill. So art, whether it be painting or sculpture, poetry or music, has

(Continued on page 8)

## The Holy Prophet's Last Injunctions

By M. A. Al-Haj Salmin,  
 B. Litt., (Lond.)

The Quran said: "When there comes the help of Allah and the Victory (of Mecca), and you see men entering the religion of Allah in companies, then celebrate the praise of your Lord, and ask His forgiveness, surely He is oft returning (to mercy)." And accordingly the Prophet started for the last pilgrimage to Mecca with more than a hundred thousand pilgrims. He wanted to give his disciples a first hand knowledge of the various ceremonies and practices connected with the pilgrimage to Mecca. It was then that he gave his final sermon to the faithful that gathered around him. He said: "All the practices of paganism are now trampled under my feet, the Arab and the non-Arab are equal, Adam was the father of all, and Adam was built of earth. The Moslems are brothers, equal in status. Give the same food and dress to your slaves as you yourself use. None shall remember and carry on the blood feuds of yore. All that sum which was charged as interest on loans is condemned and unlawful. Fear God in your treatment towards women: for the right of women is just as great upon you as your right upon women. I leave the Book, the Quran for you; hold fast to it or you shall go astray. Give the due to whom due is to be given in heritage. Adultery should be punished by stoning the person. A son who disavows his father is accursed. Pay your debts, a loaned article to be returned, the guarantor is to be held responsible for what he guarantees". The people promised to bear witness to all he said, and he concluded: "O! Allah, be a witness to what they have said."

The Prophet said again: "Learn all you require regarding the pilgrimage from me, for this is probably my last pilgrimage. Do not adopt your pre-Islamic habits, and begin to strike at each other's necks after I go; for you will have to face Allah one day Who shall require you to answer for your sins. The man who commits a sin, he alone is responsible for it, not the son for his father, and a father for the deeds of his son. Regarding the Government, let me emphasize, let me say, that even if the blackest of all slaves is your officer or ruler, and he conducts your affairs according to the Book of God, then obey him. Five times daily you should pray, keep fast during the month of fasting and obey the Commandments so that you may be the accepted ones."

The pilgrimage over the Prophet returned to Medina. He had begun to feel physical weakness. With all these, he was leading the faithful to prayer. Gradually, serious illness overtook him and Abu Bakr had to take his place at the mosque.

## Arab Leader's Appeal To Muslim World

'PALESTINE DAY' ON  
 MIRAJ SHARIF

Dr. Abdul Hameed Saeed, President of the Young Men's Muslim Association, Cairo, and President of the Palestine Defence Committee of Egypt, writes:—

Assalam o-Alaikum: The Palestine Defence Committee, keeping in view the Quranic verse "Glory be to Him who made His Servant to go on a night from the sacred Mosque to the remote Mosque of which we have blessed the precincts, so that we may show to him some of our signs: Surely He is the hearing, the seeing" (Part XV, Chap. XVII, Verse 1), has decided that 27 Rajab (September 12), on which the Holy Prophet of Islam (on whom be peace and blessings) was called to the Miraj referred to in the verse, should be observed as Palestine Day throughout the Muslim world.

The Quranic verse quoted above has special significance to Palestine as the Holy word says that God has blessed the precincts of the Masjid-el Aqsa.

It is, therefore, proper that Muslims throughout the world should gather on this day and pray for the success of the Arabs of Palestine who have been fighting for the honour of el-Aqsa now for more than three years and have been stoutly resisting the onslaughts of imperialism and Jewish lust for power.

Muslims everywhere should pray for the martyrs who have laid their lives for the honour and glory of Islam and the success of the heroes who are continuing the fight. They should also raise funds for the orphans, widows and victims of treachery and tyranny and should raise their voice of protest to the whole civilised world at the happenings in the Holy Land.

#### Morocco's Help

Dafar reports that recently "Palestine Day" was observed in the Spanish Morocco, when collections were made for a Palestine fund. All communities, Arabs, Jews and Spaniards joined in the meetings and collection of funds.

"Hold to the Quran," he said again and again, "consider it your way to righteousness, goodwill and peace. — "That pagans were not to be allowed to live in Arabia, that envoys should be honoured and respected, and that the graves of the Prophets should not be worshipped." were his other last wishes and advices.

He saw with his own eyes the thorough success of his work. He had faithfully fulfilled the mission entrusted to him by God. Now he awaited His Call, and the call came. The great spirit had its flight to the "blessed companionship on high." "From Him we came and to Him we return."



Women's Section

# SOME FAMOUS MUSLIM WOMEN OF MODERN TIMES

## Important Roles In Public Life

By Miss Lubna Khaleel

MANY people believe that it was only in recent times and particularly during Mustapha Kemal Pasha's regime that Turkish women made great progress. But it is not so. Even in former times there have been in Turkey women who were famous for their talents and accomplishments. For instance Perishek Khanum was a poetess of exceptional genius and she acted as Private Secretary to Sultan Mustafa as did Lubna to the Caliph al-Hakam.

But it must be admitted that in recent times the Turkish Government has given women every encouragement. Besides opening the Stambul University to women, the Government is sending girl-students to various foreign countries to complete their studies. In 1932 three Turkish girls were sent to England to study medicine.

Among famous Turkish women of modern times, mention must be made of Latifa Khanum. She did much for the emancipation of her sex. Then we have Haleda Hanum who was entrusted with the charge of the Ministry of Education of Turkey. She proved herself to be a great educationist, a splendid task-master, and a strict disciplinarian. It is said that she registered a record-breaking progress in the education of Turkey during her term of office.

Another great educationist and emancipator of her sex is Nezhie Mouheddin Hanum. Assuming a masculine pen-name she wrote articles to newspapers urging the French and English Universities be opened to the girls of her country. While yet in her teens she was appointed Inspector of the Ecole des Femmes. This gave her the opportunity to improve the educational prospect of her sex.

Bedrie Hanum was another distinguished lady. She was the Head of the Bureau of Hygiene. Another fine example is Hanum Ismette Serri of Smyrna. She went to New York on a scholarship awarded through the co-operation of American friends in Turkey. At that time she was only twenty years old and a graduate of the American Collegiate Institution in Smyrna. She speaks English, French, German, Greek and Turkish fluently. Now in Turkey the professions are all open to women, and all over Turkey there are women doctors, dentists, lawyers, journalists, and teachers.

In Egypt also the State encourages female education and there are many women scholars of note. The tremendous progress made by women in Egypt can be gauged by the number of women's magazines that have sprung up. There are no less than six such magazines, each edited by a woman. The number of girls' schools and such institutions has considerably increased. These facts show that in the Muslim world, women have begun to realise the part they have to play in the making of the New World of Islam.

## Cultivate An Eye For Beauty

### The Proper Mental Atmosphere

By MRS. HASSANA KAREEM

I remember reading somewhere that the soldiers in hospitals in the Crimean war used to say that they could feel when Florence Nightingale was coming long before they could see her. This meant that they could feel her refined personality, her sweet influence radiating everywhere.

Everyone of us should be able to develop a refined personality. By a refined personality I do not mean a smooth complexion and beautiful features. There are many women who are beautiful in appearance, but who repel others. Their external beauty conceals the ugliness of their minds. But the mind is like a battery sending currents of electricity - if these currents are full of venom, they produce a very undesirable reaction on those who come in contact with them. But if they are full of beauty and love, they attract everything towards them.

Therefore if we are to have a winning personality, we must harbour in our minds good, wholesome, and loving thoughts. If our minds are beautiful, then we attract to ourselves everything that is good. To make our minds beautiful we must be able to see the beautiful in every object around. Two women looking at the same thing may view it from two different angles. One woman may see the beautiful side of it, the other the ugly side of it. It depends upon one's mind. In this connection I cannot help quoting the following lines:

"Two men looked forth through the prison bars.  
The one saw mud, the other stars".

What is said of the two men is equally true of women. Let us therefore, cultivate the habit of looking at the stars and not at the mud. It is then only that our minds will shine as brightly as the stars. If we keep on looking at the mud, our minds too will become as murky as mud.

We may come in touch with all kinds of people, but if we will only look at their good characteristics instead of their bad ones our thoughts will be instrumental in producing the best out of them. Should we concentrate on their evil nature, we only make them worse. This is the way how our thoughts work.

We women can do much in bettering the conditions of our people. But we must have the proper mental, mortal and spiritual equipments before we can do this. It is to help my readers to acquire these that I am repeatedly drawing their attention towards the necessity of developing the right thought atmosphere.

Children's Corner

# An Attractive Competition

DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS,

Last week I promised to set you a Competition in this issue of "The Star of Islam". The Competition consists of certain questions to which you will have to give suitable answers. Four prizes will be offered—two to girls and two to boys. The girl who gives the best answers to the questions will be awarded the first prize. The second prize will go to the girl whose answers are considered second best. Similarly with regard to the boys. The first prize will be given to the boy who sends the best answers, and the second prize to the boy who comes second. All participating in this Competition must be under 18 years of age.

I am happy to announce to you that Mr. M. I. M. Haniffa, B. A. (London), Advocate, has kindly consented to be the Judge in this Competition. He is keenly interested in children and I think you are all very fortunate in having him as the Judge.

The result of the Competition will be announced in "The Star of Islam" of the 14th October 1939. The prizes will be as follows.

Boys:—1st Prize. A copy of the book "The Prophet of Islam and His Teachings" by Maulvi Abdul Kareem B.A. and a Fountain Pen. 2nd Prize. A copy of the same book.

Girls:—1st Prize. A copy of the same book and a Needlework Set. 2nd Prize. A copy of the same book. Please write your names in full and your addresses when sending your entries to the Competition. I give below the questions to which you are expected to furnish answers. I am calling it Competition No. 1 because other competitions will follow. All entries to this Competition must reach me by the morning post on Saturday, the 7th October 1939.—Your friend,

THE EDITOR.

### COMPETITION NO. 1

1. Give in your own words an account of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's life until the time he received the first revelation from Allah.
2. What is Islam and what is Iman?
3. What are the principles of Islam?
4. Give the names of the important Angels and their duties.
5. What is meant by a Prophet of Allah? Name the most important Prophets to whom Commandments were revealed by Allah.

### CHILDREN OF ENVER PASHA

#### Ban on Entry Lifted

By a recent degree of the Turkish Cabinet the children of Enver Pasha, who by their mother, a Turkish princess, belong to the late Ottoman dynasty, have been authorised to return to Turkey after an absence of over fifteen years.

The eldest son has been studying medicine at Paris, the second chemistry, and the third, who is only seventeen, has just passed his Matriculation. He will join the army.

His Prophet-hood is therefore Universal.

(To Be Continued)

## Simple Lessons In Islam

BY

His Holiness Maulana Mohamed Abdul Aleem Siddiqui

and:

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

1. Q. Do you believe in the Prophethood of any other messenger after Prophet Muhammad?
  - A. No; I do not believe in the Propethood of any other messenger after Prophet Muhammad for the Holy *Quran* says that Prophet Muhammad is the last and seal of all Prophets.
2. Q. Do you know the names of all the Prophets who delivered to mankind the Divine Message of ALLAH?
  - A. No; I do not know the names of all the Prophets who delivered to mankind the Divine Message of ALLAH, but the name of some of the Great Prophets are mentioned in the Holy *Quran*.
3. Q. Name some of the Prophets you know, whose names are mentioned in the Holy *Quran*?
  - A. Among the Prophets whose names are mentioned in the Holy *Quran* are Adam, Idris, Nooh, Hood, Salih, Ibrahim, Luth, Ismaeel, Ishaq, Ya'koob, Yousuf, Ayyoob, Shua'ib, Haroun, Moosa, Al-Yesa', Thulkifl, Dawood, Sulaiman, Ilyas, Zakariyya, Yehya, 'Easa and Muhammad.
4. Q. Who are the most important of these Prophets?
  - A. The most important of these Prophets are Adam, Nooh, Ibrahim, Moosa, and 'Easa; but the Last and Greatest of all Prophets is Prophet Muhammad.
5. Q. Do you worship any of the Prophets?
  - A. No; I do not worship any of the Prophets but only revere them. The Prophets themselves worshipped ALLAH.
6. Q. Can any of the Prophets be called "God"?
  - A. No; none of the Prophets can be called "God" for they were all created by ALLAH, who is Self-existing and has no Partner in His Kingdom.
7. Q. To what land and to what nation did Prophet Muhammad proclaim the Divine Message of ALLAH?
  - A. Prophet Muhammad proclaimed the Divine Message of ALLAH to all lands and to all na-



## The Ceylon Malays— A Martial Race

Descendants of Princes and  
Warriors

By Z. D. MUSAFER,  
Proctor S. C. & Notary Public,  
Colombo.

The Memorial presented by the Malays to His Excellency the Governor urging the establishment of a Malay Regiment shows that the flame of the warlike spirit of their heroic ancestors still burns brightly in the heart of every Malay.

The clang of arms is the sweetest music to a Malay. For centuries the Malays swaggering in sarongs and bajus of spotless white with the dreaded kris in their waists had sallied forth to conquer or die in their weirdly constructed prahus or boats. They were the most dreaded pirates in the Far Eastern Seas.

The earliest reference to Malays in Ceylon is in the Mahavamsa, which records the bold attempt of Prince Chandra Banu to conquer Ceylon during the golden age of Prakrama Bahu. Though they ravaged a large portion of Ceylon, they were finally driven out with great difficulty.

Prakrama Bahu was so struck with admiration of their courage, that he appointed Malays as the leading captains of his navy. The Admiral of his fleet was Malaya Ryar.

The Dutch who had captured Java banished in 1705 Susuna Mankurat Mos the King of Java and a large number of nobles and their followers to Ceylon.

In the Census Commissioner's report of 1911, Mr. E. B. Denham states "The Malays are believed to be originally brought to Ceylon from Java by the Dutch for Military Service and some were said to be Javanese Princess and their attendants, deported here for political reasons."

The Dutch had found to their cost the sterling qualities of the Malays as soldiers, and proceeded to form regiments, which were sent overseas, where they played a glorious part in perpetuating the sway of their rulers.

The first exclusive Malay Regiment to be sent by them to Ceylon landed in 1765 under the command of Captain Baba Lye.

### Courage of the Malays

During this period England was gradually undermining the power of the Dutch till war broke out between the two nations, which was ultimately to raise England to the position of the greatest Empire in the world.

The fiercest resistance offered to the English in their attempt to capture Colombo was by the Malays. Christopher Schweitzer in his account of Ceylon states thus: "Here is also a company of Amboineses continually kept in the Dutch Service. Their lieutenant was called Alonz and was of Royal blood."

At the time of the capitulation of Colombo according to Percival there were 15 companies of Malays who offered dire resistance.

The British who admired the courage of the Malays proceeded to enlist them in large numbers, and in many a fight with the Kandryans they bore the brunt of the attack. The Government went a step further and recruited Malays from Malaya. In 1805, Honble Fredrick North, the Governor writes: "Lord Clive has allowed me to send to the Eastward to crimp Malays and bring their families to Ceylon. I expect to bring 800."

In the subjugation of the Kandyan Provinces by the British, the Malay soldiers had played a very prominent

part for they formed the spear-head of the attack. Many were the deeds of valour performed by the Malays but they pale into insignificance beside the epic heroism of Captain Noordeen.

On 24th June, 1803, the British in Kandy under Major Davie was attacked. There was bitter fighting. Ultimately the Adigar Pilma Talauwa arranged a truce with Major Davie to allow the British to proceed with their arms without any molestation. The promise was broken and the enfeebled garrison were waylaid and massacred. Of the Europeans only the lives of Major Davie and his other officers were spared.

### Their Unflinching Loyalty

It is interesting to find in the diary of Greeving, a Surgeon, who was the sole survivor of the ill-fated garrison, that Major Davie was opposed to the truce but was prevailed upon to agree by four European officers. Both Greeving and Captain Noordeen represented to Major Davie that the Kandryans would not keep to their promise.

Captain Noordeen and his brother were taken prisoners. Greeving records the epic tale of heroism in these words. "Captain Noordeen and his brother were by order of the King carried to Angarankatuwa. They having arrived there would not condescend to fall on their faces. The Adigar would compel the two brothers thereto but Captain Noordeen and his brother and Lieutenant Crain Saperanis represented to the King that he, Noordeen and his brother, were also descended from Kings' blood and their grand-father had also been a great king. This reply the King did not take amiss but requested the two brothers to enter into his service to which Captain Noordeen replied that it would be a disgrace upon him and that he would be in no other service but live and die in that of the English." They remained unflinching in their loyalty, despite the offer of the King to give them rank and a Nindagama. They were beheaded on 18th August.

### Rifle Regiment

The Kandyan King had a very high regard for the military qualities of the Malays. His body-guard was entirely composed of Malays under Assan Capter Mohandiram known throughout the length and breadth of Ceylon as the Ja Mohandiram. He was in the confidence of the king and his advice was highly prized.

The Ceylon Rifle Regiment or the Malay Regiment as it was usually called rendered yeomen service during the rebellion of 1815. During the Mutiny the implicit confidence of the Government in the Malay Regiment was amply demonstrated when they removed the European Regiment, leaving it as the sole guardian of these shores. The Malay Regiment saw service in China during the Chinese War.

The Regiment was disbanded in 1873 and the majority of its members joined the Police Force, where they served with zeal and loyalty. The imperishable services rendered by the Malays in the maintenance of law and order for over a century have now been thrust to the background.

The spirit of a proud race, which had played a gallant part in the History of Ceylon is being broken on the wheels of a hard hearted beaureaucracy, who imagine that the sons of a soldier race, whose leaders by their deeds have proved their worth, are not eligible to staff appointments in the Police and other services.

### Historical Testimony

The qualities of a Malay Soldier have been enshrined in these words of an English Historian: "As soldiers the Malays cannot strictly be compared with any other Oriental Corps, uniting

in themselves with slight modifications all the qualifications of the high European soldiers with many striking peculiarities of their own.

Thus while they combine to a remarkable degree the bravery of the Frenchman with the stern will of the English, and the endurance of the German, they are no less remarkable for their aptitude for every description of military manoeuvre, and the facility with which they can pursue stealthily made tactics. For fidelity and attachment to the service which they enlist them are without a rival, and the vindictiveness by which they are said to be distinguished is fatal only to their enemies."

The meritorious services rendered by the Malay Town Guards during the last War show that the present generation of Malays are not a whit behind their ancestors in courage.

When the tocsin of war sounds this soldier race will rise to a man to testify their loyalty to the Throne. The dream of the Malays is that the Regiment which was disbanded in 1873 will be revived. The realisation of the dream is in the laps of the Gods of Whitehall.

## An Appeal

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## Notice to Readers

The usual weekly Sermon has been held over from this issue of "The Star of Islam" for want of space.

The Star of Islam

A CULTURAL WEEKLY

COLOMBO: SEPTEMBER 23, 1939

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Views of Mr. M. T. Akbar K.C. on Social Service Among Ceylon Muslims

THE views of MR. M. T. AKBAR, K.C., which we publish elsewhere in this issue of our paper should receive the attention of all Muslim social reformers. His personal experiences in the field of social service and his observations thereon will prove of considerable value to those Muslims who wish to effect the social reconstruction of the community. He very rightly points out that it is futile to think of social reconstruction while the Muslim masses remain unfaithful to the fundamental teachings of Islam. To draw inspiration from western institutions for the formulation of schemes for the purpose is to betray a colossal ignorance of Islam and Islamic History. In the first place it indicates a tacit admission that this wonderful religion is inferior to other religions. Secondly it means a criminal disloyalty to the religion preached by the greatest of Prophets—MUHAMMAD (GOD bless him).

Once a man declares himself to be a Muslim, he has to fulfil the duties obligatory on a Muslim. For instance, every Muslim has to pray five times a day and fast during the month of Ramadan. If he fails to do so he violates the commandments of ALLAH and His Prophet and cuts himself entirely from the impulses and the influences which made his ancestors the torch-bearers of learning and the greatest benefactors of mankind. Having disobeyed ALLAH and his Prophet and having removed ourselves from the impulses and influences referred to above, our attempts to establish Missionary Homes, Orphanages, etc. are like trying to build houses on quicksand. Therefore, we must first foster a strong religious spirit among Muslim people, and this cannot be done unless we can induce them to follow faithfully their religious or-

cepts one of which is the five-times daily prayer.

The great Austrian Muslim, MR. MUHAMMAD ASAD, says in his *Islam at the Crossroads* as follows: "Many proposals of reform have been brought forward during the last decades, and many spiritual doctors have tried to devise a patent medicine for the sick body of Islam. But, till now, all was in vain, because all those clever doctors—at least those who get a hearing today—have forgotten to prescribe along with their medicines and tonics and elixirs the natural diet on which the early development of the patient was based. This diet, the only one which the body of Islam, sound or sick, can positively accept and assimilate into its organism, is the Sunnah of our Prophet MUHAMMAD (peace and blessings be upon him). *The Sunnah is the key to the understanding of the Islamic rise more than thirteen centuries ago; and why should it not be a key to the understanding of our present degeneration? The observance of Sunnah is identical with Islamic existence and progress. The neglect of Sunnah is identical with decomposition and decay of Islam. The Sunnah was the iron framework of the House of Islam; and if you take away the framework of a building, can you wonder that it breaks down like a house of cards?* This simple truth, almost unanimously accepted by all learned men throughout the Islamic history, is—we know it well—most unpopular today for reasons connected with the ever-growing influence of the Western civilization. But it is a truth none the less, and, in fact, the only truth which can save us from the chaos and the shame of our present decay."

Our social reformers must, therefore, base their work on the Sunnah of our Holy Prophet, the greatest exemplar for mankind. It is on this foundation that their Homes-for-the-Aged, Orphanages, etc., must be built. Otherwise, as MR. AKBAR states, the Muslims of Ceylon will cease to exist as a Muslim Community. In the views expressed by MR. AKBAR we have the fruit of his experiences as a great scholar, an eminent lawyer, a brilliant Judge, a great social worker, and above all one of the most pious Muslims in the Island. He has proved himself to be the greatest Muslim the Island has produced. But history tells us even the greatest men of their respective ages have been misunderstood. MR. AKBAR too may be misunderstood, but this does not detract from his greatness. To those who do not fall in with his ideas, the following advice of EDMUND BURKE is very appropriate: "Venerate where you cannot comprehend." We are of opinion that his views on Muslim Social Reconstruction are deserving of the closest attention by all thoughtful Muslims.

## The Causes That Led To The Degeneration Of The Muslims

### Western System Of Education A Contributory Factor

[Continued From "The Star Of Islam" Of The 9th. September 1939]

By Mrs. Iqbalunnisa Hussain, B. A.,

Diploma In Education, (Leeds)  
(Of The Mysore Educational Service)

THE Western education system has been one of the causes, that led to the degeneration of the Muslims. Soon after the establishment of the British rule in India a controversy regarding education of the subjects arose. It was decided that they should be educated on the modern lines. The Indian mind being philosophical and mystic needed a free and scientific education which could balance the natural defects. New schools were started accordingly. Some of the old Maderesas were abolished. Teachers' salaries, in some cases, were stopped. Publication of Oriental books was prohibited.

The money realised thus was utilised in furthering the new system of education. The financial condition could not permit the education of the masses so only a gifted few were allowed to join the new schools. It was presumed that knowledge had a magic power of diffusion. If a class of people were educated they could easily filter learning among the rest of the people. It was an imagination which was far from realities.

There was a great opposition from the Muslims who took the Rulers for their rivals. Naturally they hated them, their culture and their civilisation. For a long time the Muslims remained neutral. They neither joined the new schools nor they made any provision for Oriental education. This attitude, towards the Western education, kept them illiterate for a long time. Could they continue the same policy? No! Others were advancing. They were educated and their financial condition was much better than those of the Muslims. They had no alternative. They made up their minds to educate their children on the Western lines. Some of them did it. What about the rest? They were neither allowed in such schools nor there was any provision made for technical education for such unfortunate beings. They were left to themselves to develop their bodies at the cost of their brains. They lived the life of an open air sort of man, cared for nothing and were contented with earning their livelihood. All the good virtues like bravery, courage, initiative, and originality gradually began to decay and was replaced by idleness, fatalism, cowardliness, superstition, formalism and externalism.

#### Faulty Methods

The methods used to gain benefit from the Western education were faulty. No consideration was given to the fact that the Indians widely differed in experiences, needs, ideas and environmental conditions. The aim of education is to supply the needs of an individual, home and society. A child being the prospective source of supplying such needs his talents, aptitude and interest are the fundamental factors to be developed. Individual types had to be formed out and sorted. Education to suit such types had to be given. There had to be a close relationship between the teacher and the taught. The teaching of a foreign language had to be by efficient men, who could simplify the language and the ideas to make them understandable by the young brains. The paucity of English teachers necessitated its teaching by inefficient people who laid more emphasis on memorising and cramming than on

thinking and expressing. Originality is possible only when the substance is thoroughly understood and ideas are digested. In the absence of the direct method of teaching the indirect method killed the power of reasoning, judgment and reconstruction. The official domination and the greater emphasis laid on discipline in the system defeated its own purpose. Discipline is necessary to prevent disorder but it should not be an end in itself. It should be subordinated and made flexible to suit the needs of the pupils.

#### Islamic Culture Ignored

The splendid Oriental culture of the Muslims was supposed to be fantastic and superstitious so it had very little worthy of furtherance. The modern culture was considered to be suitable



The Writer

to the people. No consideration was given to the fact that one's mind is not a clean state on which any culture could be written. The great faculty of mind is its retentive power. The mothers, grand mothers and others in the society who are the teachers of religion, tradition and culture do develop the faculties of mind, they being illiterate and ignorant distort facts and truths. And this cause a disparity between school education and home education. The European culture prepared men for national service in Europe but in India it made the Indians unsympathetic towards their own people. It tended to denationalise and despiritualise the Muslim youth. It made them hybrid in thought, sentiment and ideals. It taught them formalism and externalism and killed their own natural genius. It being foreign in nature could not produce the desired effects. It was a revolution and revolution is rarely successful.

(Continued on page 6)



# Social Service Among The Ceylon Muslims

Views of Mr. M. T. Akbar, K.C.

IN AN INTERVIEW

A REPRESENTATIVE of *The Star of Islam* interviewed Mr. M. T. Akbar, K.C., at his bungalow in Stafford Place, Colombo, to ascertain his views on the appeal made on the Pathetic Conditions of the Ceylon Muslims by Mr. H. M. Sheriff, Chairman of the Young Muslim Progressive Association.

The first question our representative put to Mr. Akbar was whether he had read Mr. Sheriff's article. He replied in the affirmative. He was next asked whether he thought he was included among those who were charged by Mr. Sheriff of not having served the community in the right manner. He said that "judges" had been referred to, and as he had been a judge he supposed he was also included.

"If so, Mr. Akbar, what have you to say to the charge?" asked our representative.

"I conscientiously plead not guilty," replied Mr. Akbar.

When asked for his reasons, he declined to give them as it would sound as if he were blowing his own trumpet. But our representative argued that it was necessary for him to do so in the public interest. He, however, shewed no signs of yielding and said that never in his life had he spoken of what he had done for public information and he did not wish to do so now. Our representative was resolved not to be beaten and pointed out to Mr. Akbar that his experience would be of invaluable help and guidance to the younger generation and it would be wrong on his part not to make known what he has done or has striven to do for the Muslim community. After all, pressed our representative, everything depends on one's intention. If it was to afford guidance and to disabuse the minds of people, the *myyat* was good. This set Mr. Akbar thinking and very reluctantly he disclosed certain facts.

"I think somewhere about 1917 or 1918," said Mr. Akbar, "I came under the thorough influence of religion and was persuaded that in Islam mere belief will not do because the Holy Quran says: *Aminu Va Amilus Salihat*, 'whoever believes and does good'. Belief comes before action. A deed must be actuated by good intention and by the love of God. Therefore, irrespective of my position as a Government Officer, I obtained Sir Henry Gollan's permission to do social work among the Muslims. I got together all the leading educated men in the community and formed the Ceylon Muslim Educational Society. I realised that without money I could do nothing, and a very large sum was needed, for education had to be fostered, orphanages, hospitals, and such institutions had to be opened. I found I could not collect the *Zakat* money because the Muslims utilized that money for *Moulouds* etc. Moreover to my astonishment some Alims maintained that it was *kufriyat* to use for other purposes the money meant for *Moulouds*, etc.

"Next realised that if I was to collect money from the Muslim public, I had to command their confidence and this could only be done by incorporation. The Muslims at that time were very rich, especially the Indian Muslims. I found that under Ordinance 16 of 1891 called Ordinance for the Registration of Mutual Provident and other Societies, a Society like ours could be registered under the word *other*. But under sub-section 2 of section 3 of the Ordinance, special permission had to be secured from the Governor in

Executive Council. With the help of Sir Henry Gollan I got this authority. After our example the various Buddhist Societies have been registered.

"The rules of our Society were drafted by me (see the Government Gazette of that year) and the Muslim Educational Society, Ltd., was registered. As I wanted everybody to subscribe, I made the price of each share Re. 1/- and spread the payment over ten years. God only knows how hard I worked for the Society. Almost every cent was collected by me and receipts were given by me. I spent most of my time, night after night, going from door to door to collect money. Propaganda work had also to be done and I was busily occupied addressing gatherings at various places. I can conscientiously say that I did all this almost single-handed.

"As the Maradana Mosque was a central place, my idea was to get this for our work. The Society was made a limited one because the committee expected to make a profit. Most of the money came from Indian Muslims. Mr. E. G. Adamaly gave Rs. 5000/-, out of which he paid Rs. 500/- in advance. From the Indian Cloth Merchants alone Rs. 25,000 were collected. Even the poorest woman subscribed her share of Re. 1/-. The money was spread so that payments may be made as the work progressed. The first instalment came to about Rs. 250,000. There were nine other instalments, and Rs. 200,000 were collected in all. A property was bought in the Pettah with this money.

"At that time Zahira College was in charge of Mr. Wapiche Marikar, the grand-father of Mr. A. R. A. Razik. We tried to get it into our hands. But one of our principal members seceded and joined an opposition-group. I do not blame him for this, for Allah says, 'If I do not set one group against another, the world will end in *fasad*'. The result was that we could not have Zahira College, but it began to shine in the zenith like a star as the money of some of the rich Muslims poured into its coffers like water. By this blow our efforts to collect more money were finished. But hoping against hope that time would mend matters, I opened two schools and conducted them with no Government grants which were then not given to schools housed in rented buildings. I ran the schools at the cost of Rs. 800/- a month and shewed considerable progress. Religious education was imparted side by side with English education, and many people foolishly began to associate my name with the Schools.

"Then as I was appointed a Judge, the Committee thought the management should go into the hands of Mr. M. I. M. Haniffa, who has since managed it so well. I must also say

that eventually the Director of Education was persuaded to give grants for schools in rented buildings. I seceded from the Committee for 2 reasons: Firstly, because I was a Judge, and, secondly, because the Committee did not agree with me to amalgamate with Zahira College in order to open a first class Girls' School in spite of the fact that Mr. Jayah had taken the first step towards a reconciliation. I was strongly in favour because the Maradana Mosque was the life-blood of the Muslim Community and if these schools belonged to the community and not to a section, it would have been the consummation of the Islamic idea. For reasons which I could not fathom, the committee declined to agree to my suggestion. But I would point out that my ideas are to be consummated now although they met with opposition at that time. Had my scheme gone through, grant-in-aid schools could have been opened by collections promised to us and Muslim culture could have been raised to a high standard. And what was very important was that the Muslim community would have paid the *Zakat* money to my committee, which was a public body under Government control, as our accounts were audited by a Government Auditor. As matters now stand the Maradana Mosque property does not belong to the public but to a certain section. Moreover, its accounts are not audited by a public auditor. Finding all my activities obstructed, I worked in other directions to serve the community.

"By my efforts the Widows and Orphans Pension Fund was opened to the Muslims, and the Muslim Marriage and Divorce Ordinance, and the Wakf Ordinance came into being. I was grieved to observe that drunkenness was increasing among Muslims and in order to stem its progress I said some of the Muslims were drunkards. For speaking this truth The All-Ceylon Malay Association and the Muslim League wanted me to apologize. I was invited to be the Patron of The All-Ceylon Malay Association. But I laid it down as a condition that the members must first give me the undertaking to pray five times a day, and to fast during Ramadan. I then thought I must urge the Muslim masses to be faithful to the Islamic teachings, and delivered lectures in several places for this purpose. I even went into the slums of the city to educate the people and several organisations were formed but after a time they lost interest in the work. I even tried to create better feelings between the Muslims and the other communities by starting the Anti-Crime Movement. I agreed to be a member of the Municipality but resigned as I could get no support to help the poor.

"At length finding that all my efforts were but of little avail I started writing to *The Genuine Islam*, Singapore, and *The Deccan Times*, Madras, in the hope that as a University is necessary to give one to each grade of society so the intelligentsia should be taught that Islamic ideals should be at the bottom of any effort at improvement. This Buriyani through verbiage was meant for those who understand. I selected Singapore and South India because there was then no Muslim paper in Ceylon. If I once succeeded in convincing the Muslim educated man that the truth is what David Chale says in his *Triumphant Pilgrimage* that the Islamic code is self-contained and there is no necessity to borrow ideas from other religions, then half the task was achieved. In our religion the example of the Holy Prophet shows that no money, no influence, is necessary provided there is one man whose is the driving force from God. The difficulty in all social improvement is that nothing can be done without money and nobody is going to contribute money unless he is assured of results and he has a reliance on those who collect money. We have heard of embezzlement of

*Zakat* money by Pashas in Mesopotamia and other places. We cannot get this assurance on the result and reliance on the sincerity of the men unless the men who administer the trust have a firm foundation on a deep, religious basis. Are the rich and educated Muslims to be blamed if the poor Muslims by their un-Islamic conduct behave in a manner not worthy of men? The Buddhists are fostering religious belief and creating a basis on which they can work. Among the Muslims the same thing must be done. No money is needed to induce the Muslim people to fast and pray. Economic hardship exists not only among Muslims but also in the other communities and all over the world. And its removal is a duty of the State and not of sections of people. Compulsory education is also a matter for the State.

"I have drafted the Poor Relief Ordinance and if it is passed half our troubles will be over. For collection of money, confidence can only be created if a society is incorporated and all its members dutifully observe prayer and fasting. And for this purpose I am prepared to draft rules and do other necessary things if such measures are forthcoming. The first duty is to go round the slums to lecture to the people to urge them to pray. The result will follow. I was hoping that Allah as the *Shadeedul Iqab* will convince the Muslim people in course of time that prayer is the basis of all religion. This He seems to have done at the present time very effectively and I am very happy that there are sincere men who realise this. We Muslims should always keep in mind the words of Allahu Taallah, where he says that whosoever goes back from this religion of Islam He will bring forth another community who will love him and He will love them, implying He will destroy any community who goes back on their religion.

"Man can only influence others through the medium of words. That is the meaning of the Holy Quran, the word of God. It is up to the social reformers to use words, whether 'Buriyani' or otherwise, on the minds of those who will follow. If they do not succeed, the Muslims will cease to exist as a community. The death-blow will be dealt if we get an inferiority complex and imitate other religions which are not founded on the high ideals of Islam—a fact proved by the present European War. As regards rich people, their first duty is towards their relatives. Charity does not mean giving ten cents to a beggar. There are not so many rich people in Ceylon as in India and they have many poor relatives to support."

At this stage Mr. Akbar suddenly realised that he had spoken more than what he wanted to say, and ended the interview by complimenting our representative on the cleverness with which he forced Mr. Akbar to speak about himself—a thing which no other journalist has succeeded in doing.

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Manager, THE LIGHT, Lahore, (India)



## Letters to the Editor

### Muslim Girls' College

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

Dear Brother-in-Islam,

It is very regrettable to observe that the Muslim Women of Ceylon are in a hopelessly bad state. The main cause for the sorry plight in which they have fallen is that they are not given the necessary facilities for proper education. While the people of other communities have realized the necessity of female education, the Muslims have simply slept. They do not seem to realize the necessity for the co-operation of their women to help them.

Realization has not come to them as to what should be done regarding this great problem that is facing them today. Let me emphasize that there is no hope for the Muslims of Ceylon until their women are educated.....wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters.

On the 13th day of September, 1936, Muslims of light and learning from different parts of the Island assembled at the Zahira College Hall under the distinguished presidency of that great educationist and scholar, Allama Yoosuf Ali, I. C. S. (ret'd), to take steps to found a College for Muslim girls. A committee was appointed to collect funds and devise ways and means for the establishment of such an Institution. But three years have passed since the committee was formed and the Muslim public knows nothing about its activities. I wonder what has happened to this committee. What it has thought so far is enough. Now let us see its actions.

Will any one of the members of that committee let the Muslim public know through your valuable journal about its activities so that all misunderstandings may be removed?

Yours etc.

M. S. MUHAMMAD YOOSUF

No. 120/3, Wilson's St.,  
Hultsdorf,  
Colombo, 20th Sept., 1939.

### The Rude Act of the Jawatte Muezzin

Sir,

There is no doubt that the complaint which appeared in your issue of the 16th instant against the Muezzin of the Jawatte Mosque drew the attention of the Muslim brethren in Ceylon.

I am of opinion that the Muezzin of the particular mosque may be thinking that the mosque is inherited from his ancestor and hence regarding it as his own property through a misunderstanding.

May I request the trustees of the mosque to make him know that a mosque is a Wakf property and it belongs to no man.

Yours etc.

A. M. SHAFI.

"Moonlight"  
Alu gama,  
20-9-39.

### Jama-Athus Salihya Burdha Majlis

#### "The Fundamental Rules of Fasting".

At the weekly meeting of the Jama-Athus Salihya Burdha Majlis in the Salih Thakya, 132 New Moor St., Colombo, at 8-30 a.m., on Sunday, the 24th inst., Mr. S. L. Mahmood Hajjar J. P., will give a Talk on "The Fundamental Rules of Fasting." All Muslims are cordially invited.

## THE STORY OF ALIGARH

By M. MOHAMED

Formerly of Aligarh Muslim University  
and now of The Government Technical  
College, Colombo.

[Continued from the Previous Issue]

Either Sir Syed or the Community was not contented with the College of their own; it was part of the original scheme from the very beginning to establish a Muslim University. In 1877 in an address to Lord Lytton, the Trustees of the College had strongly emphasised the desire that the College may expand to a University whose sons will go forth through the length and breadth of the world to preach the gospel of free inquiry, large hearted toleration and of pure morality. This fulfilment of their wish was delayed for long years for various reasons, though the capital fund of thirty lacs of rupees, laid down by the Government in 1911 as a condition precedent to the grant of the Charter, had been collected through the memorable generous co-operation of H. H. the Agha Khan. In December 1920, the Aligarh Muslim University Act came into force and the M. A. O. College was raised to the status of a residential University open to all creeds and castes and empowered to provide the highest education in the arts and sciences and to grant degrees recognised by the Indian Government as well as the other Universities. It had the unique distinction of having for its first Chancellor, Her Highness the late Begum of Bhopal, who presided over its early years with distinction. She was succeeded as Chancellor, after her death, by H. H. the present Nawab of Bhopal and on his resignation in 1935, H. E. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad was elected as Chancellor. In 1920 H. H. the Agha Khan was elected Pro-Chancellor of the University, which post he held up to 1930. After a break of five years, he was re-elected in 1935. When H. H. the Agha Khan regretted his inability to continue in his post, H. H. the Nawab of Rampur was elected Pro-chancellor.

#### Particular Features

From the very beginning the University has been steadily and vigorously expanding its scope of work and activities. It has now 18 departments of studies, each provided with well filled equipments and highly qualified and competent staff. Many of the departments, on the arts and science side, have facilities for research apart from their ordinary teaching functions. During the last few years the new science laboratories, with their efficient and up-to-date equipment have given a great stimulus to scientific research on modern lines and the University has conferred the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy on several research students who have done valuable and original work in their subjects. Amongst the Departments providing professional training are the Department of Law, of Education (Training College) and of Unani Medicine (Tibiya College). Apart from these facilities, the University provides an excellent ground for under graduates who wish to receive not only sound academic education but also the benefits of a vitalizing environment rich in the traditions of a liberal culture. Being an all Indian institution, it attracts students from all parts of country and by providing for them an active and vigorous life, with its many clubs and societies, its games and

sports of various types, and free social intercourse, and free opinion, it develops a broad and liberal, not a parochial or provincial outlook. There is adequate arrangement for the religious instruction of Muslim students and besides the regular teachers of Theology, there are Deans of sunnis and shias, whose special duty is to supervise and guide their religious life. Special arrangements are made for suitable competitive examinations such as the Indian Civil Service, Indian Polic Service, and so on.

Journalism is now made an optional subject. In no other University in India has this been done,

[To be continued]

## The Causes That Led To The Degeneration Of The Muslims

(Continued from page 4)

### Character Building

A nation to be strong, respectful and self supporting should aim at the development of character of its people. Character development begins from one's childhood. It needs a constant teaching both direct and indirect. It

needs certain principles, (taken from one's own culture and tradition) and their practice in one's daily life. It necessitates a constant watch, by the parents, teachers, priests and relations, with a view to see the reaction and after-effects of their moral theoretical teaching. Character is not an imposed object on some one. It is an acquired ideal by the person himself. It is developed in one's own home, school and society and by contact with people. The schools teach 'Godless' education, the homes are centres of ignorance and darkness in the case of the majority of the Muslim children. The Mosques are not meant for them, as are the churches in foreign countries which hold special service for children. Character development needs examples by parents, teachers and others. Mere theoretical teaching of moral instruction does not make an appeal to a child's mind. Character development is the most important and the most difficult part of education. Unfortunately this is the most neglected part in our country. The Muslims are no exception to this rule. As they live in the same world and get the same education and training as their brothers.

[To be Continued]

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etc., etc.



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# The Call of the Crescent

## Why I Became A Muslim

By Colonel Donald S. Rockwell

Although born and baptized in a Christian family in a small mid-western town in the United States, even as a boy I felt strangely drawn to the Eastern countries. At fourteen I was received into the congregation as a member of the Presbyterian church, the particular Protestant sect of my parents. But on giving their narrow creed a more careful scrutiny with maturer years, I became convinced of the absurdity of their doctrine of infant damnation, according to which all babies who died without having been baptized were doomed to exclusion from salvation.

Later this barbarous belief was struck out from their articles of faith, after a bitter controversy in the supreme synod of the church. This arbitrary reversal of man's interpretation of divine guidance gave rise to the interesting speculation: what effect would this repeal of condemnation have upon the status of the unfortunate infants who had died without baptism before their entry into heaven was sanctioned by the august body of Presbyterian elders? Would they now be herded out of the limbo of nowhere and admitted into heaven *en masse*, or had they been within the blessed fold all the while, but unknown to the pious church authorities?

The Christian makeshift of the Trinity also struck me as a fallacious paradox and a blasphemy against the one true God. The Holy Ghost seemed a spiritual monstrosity. My eventual revolt against this silly piece of theological sophistry was foreshadowed by the staunch Unitarianism of my father's mother, who was a firm believer in the teachings of Jesus, but followed the Unitarian sect of Christianity in dwelling this 3-in-1 quackery, worshipping the one supreme God without the inclusion of any spiritual co-partners, or the formation of a divine corporation with three directors.

In the Universities of California and Washington I specialized in the study of Eastern languages, history, philosophy, literature and religions, with special emphasis on the Quranic precepts.

Then I set out to learn more about those countries where the mosques seemed to beckon to me with their domes and minarets against the Eastern skies. I visited Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Turkey, Syria and Palestine, finding that my interest in Islam was growing keener as I approached Arabia.

### Islam's Irresistible Appeal

Finally at Istanbul in 1925 the powerful appeal of Islam's simplicity, democracy and tolerance culminated, in my self-conversion. In the serenity of the beautiful Blue Mosque, that inspiring edifice of Achmed Abdulla, I definitely felt the irresistible call of the Crescent.

Since then I have visited almost every Moslem country, gaining further insight into the real meaning of the Prophet's teachings through helpful contact with my fellow followers of the Faith throughout the world. As I have experienced the strong bond of fellowship between brother Moslems of all countries, I have come to appreciate still more deeply the wonderful feeling of unity which characterizes the great fraternity of Islam, regardless of race, colour or worldly circumstance.

One of the most appealing features which influenced me to change my religion was the direct personal relation between each Muslim and God (Allah), without the earthly intercession of a priest, and the consequent freedom of Islam from domination by a parasitical priesthood. There are no go-betweens in the pure Islamic conception of the relationship between man and God. His prayers are spoken directly to Allah—not to one of his prophets nor to that prophet's mother,

as in the case of some Christian sects which address their supplications to Jesus, Mary and various so-called saints, thereby violating the basic principle of monotheism.

Let every conscientious Muslim guard against unwittingly falling into the same course of error. The insidious encroachment of extraneous influences upon the original purity of Islamic observance is illustrated by the custom, prevalent in some countries, of hanging written petitions over the tombs of local saints. In the more primitive sections of Africa the integrity of Islamic faith is sullied by superstitious tribes which, while outwardly conforming to Muslim observances, still cling to remnants of their pagan practices, indulging their inherent love of the mysterious with secret worship of fetishes, idolatrous images of forgotten heathen gods and childlike faith in the protective or curative powers of useless amulets. These leftovers of a barbarous age will of course gradually disappear with the spread of education.

### Freedom From Self-Consciousness

The spectacle of thousands of devout Muslims praying in unison is indeed an inspiring one, but no less potent as a spiritual tonic is the sight of a lone worshipper kneeling beside the road, in the vast silence of the desert, along the mountainous caravan trail, in a crowded railway station or even on the bench of a train carriage, prostrating himself to his God in humble surrender, utterly oblivious of those around him, ignoring in the dignity of his concentration their disbelief, scorn or actual antagonism.

It is this complete freedom from self-consciousness, this serious attitude of individual responsibility to Allah for his own personal part in the prescribed daily renewal of the pledge of divine and human relationship, which makes the religion of Islam such a vitalizing spiritual force, instead of the empty, shell-like ritual encountered in cathedrals, where music, incense, light, color, richly decorated altars, statues and niches, gorgeous vestments and all the gaudy paraphernalia of priestly pomp distract the worshippers from the real significance of prayer and the true inner meaning of communion. The stark simplicity of bare walls, guiltless of painted image or carved statue, and open expanse of floor, uncluttered by resplendent but confusing shrine or other obstruction, makes the mosque a haven for quiet prayer and serene meditation. There the earnest Muslim may make his devotions or rest and reflect, undisturbed by incense, altar lamps, offerings of flowers, fruits and food, the sight of fantastic idols or grotesque images of monkeys, serpents, elephants, dragons and demons, and the sounds of drums, horns, bells and chanting, all of which turn the temples into three-ring circuses for the entertainment of emotional and gullible people.

I have been deeply impressed by the strict democracy of the mosque, where on a hard floor, without the comfortable seats found in a church, prince and

beggar, statesman and humble labourer, rich merchant and poor coolie kneel side by side without distinction or signaling of rank, position and wealth. What a striking contrast with the churches where reserved seats paid for by the year often leave no room for the casual visitors or the humble seeker after spiritual consolation!

### Muslim Culture

In my present survey as Director-General of Asiatic Expedition for Moslem Research, under the joint auspices of the Explorers Club of New York and the American Friends of Islam, I have found that a definite Muslim culture still thrives, despite waning political power in certain countries.

This Islamic culture has in the past contributed much to the scientific knowledge, literature, jurisprudence, chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, architecture and music of the world.

Today there is a general renaissance sweeping the Muslim countries, whether in the form of a new spiritual awakening, an effort to cast off the slothful shackles of the centuries, the Pan-Islamic movement or the wave of intense nationalism which is revivifying each of these Moslem countries.

The object of my present expedition is to determine by close observation and protracted investigation on the part of myself and my associates, the extent to which Muslim culture has retained its individuality when transplanted from Arabia to other Asiatic countries, and how deeply and permanently it has affected the indigenous culture of those countries.

I have been actively assisted in my work by the generous co-operation of various Indian states which placed all their facilities at my disposal. And I have found inspiration and guidance in memorable conferences with such staunch Muslims as Sir Akbar Hydari, statesman, humanitarian, President of the Executive Council of H. E. H. the Nizam's Government and creator of modern Hyderabad; Nawab Mehdi Yar Jung Bahadur, scholarly Political and Educational Member of the same august body; Mirza M. Ismail, the cultured, charming and progressive Dewan of Mysore; Dr. Syed Abdul Latif, retired professor of Osmania University, a keen philosopher, learned scholar and author; Maulana Shaukat Ali, sterling leader of the Muslim cause; and other earnest workers too numerous to mention.

But not only in the ranks of men in the public eye have I found encouragement and assistance in my undertaking. Here and there I have encountered a Muslim in the humbler walks of life who has the true vision of Islam's present unique opportunity to create for herself a superb place in the swiftly changing new order of things. I have appointed several of these, in addition to my regular permanent expeditionary staff, to act as liaison officers during my absence and carry on by facilitating the accumulation of such further data as I need until my return with the second Asiatic Expedition in 1940. My gratitude is due, among others of these, to the genial and scholarly Publicity Officer of Bhopal State, Mr. Muhammad Bashir Ud-Din, Mr. Syed M. Zubair, a brilliant young electrical engineer in Bombay, Mr. Abdul Quadir Khan, cosmopolitan executive of the Afghan National Bank in Kabul, and Mr. Syed Mohiuddin, an earnest, sincere young Muslim with an international breadth of vision, and a promising member of the staff of H. E. H. the Nizam's Government Wireless Department, whose capable Director, Mr. Mahboob Ali, so kindly co-operated with me by extending the facilities of his broadcasting station. These men and many more throughout India and the East have made my expedition much more productive and pleasurable by their assistance, advice and hospitality.

It is my earnest hope that I may interest Muslim rulers in Eastern countries in helping to make possible the building of a mosque in America so that Muslims of all countries who

dwell in the United States may have a place to gather and worship, just as those have who live in Paris and London. With this mosque and cultural centre for lectures and propaganda as a nucleus, the American Friends of Islam may succeed in reawakening interest in the hearts of Muslims residing in the United States who have grown careless or indifferent about their faith and have drifted away from active contact with or the actual practise of their religion, due to lack of congregational facilities.

Then only, when we shall have achieved a proper religious and cultural background of devoted Muslim worshippers, with a definite meeting place for them, may we hope to attract the attention and arouse the interest of American men and women who are dissatisfied with the hollow hypocrisies of present-day Christian congregations.

It is my earnest aspiration to stimulate sufficient enthusiasm among the followers of the Prophet in the United States to organize a great American *hajj* within a few years, chartering a small ship to bring five hundred or one thousand American Mussulmans to the holy city of Mecca. (Inshallah!)

When I shall have completed my research by a thorough survey of the Muslim field in the province of Yunnan in southern China, I shall sail back to America with a hopeful message for my Moslem conferees. And I know that on my return with the Second Asiatic Expedition in 1940, I may count upon the same whole-hearted co-operation and heartening aid which I have received throughout my sojourn in the East. *Assalamataleikum!*

## TURKEY

### War and Muslim World

#### COMMON POLICY TO BE CHALKED OUT

Reports state that the Saadabad Pact Powers will shortly chalk out a common policy in view of the present international situation.

*Djumhuriat* of Turkey, writing on the subject says that there is nothing that can contradict these news, as the Pact was formed in the best interests of peace.

Continuing the paper states that the latest reports indicate that in case Turkey decides to take part in the war in order to keep peace in the Mediterranean, the Pact Powers, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq, together with Egypt which may be regarded as a member for the purpose will come to the aid of Turkey with all their resources and powers.

The paper continuing states that this will be in keeping with the terms of the Pact by which the Near East Powers had bound themselves to aid any one of them which was involved in a defensive war.

*Djumhuriat* next considers the question whether the Muslim Near East States will be affected by the coming European War, and answers the question in the affirmative. The war will be of such magnitude, thinks the paper, that none of these Powers can remain outside its range if Turkey is involved. The States touching the Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the Red Sea and are in proximity to the Balkans all of which will be the theatres of war.

The paper concluded that the Saadabad Pact was not merely a scrap of paper, nor yet the expression of mere pious hopes. It was based on solid foundations and is a living institution.



## Musings Of A Pensioner--VII

(Continued from page 1)

no other object than to brush aside the utilitarian symbols, the conventional and socially accepted generalities, in short, everything that veils reality from us, in order to bring us face to face with reality itself."

That is why Ben Jonson wrote of Shakespeare as follows:—"He was not of an age, but for all time." Hence the author of the article referred to by me, fails to see that some writers quote to give point to their own thoughts, and to convince others by reference to similar thoughts arrived at and set forth in memorable language by great thinkers throughout the centuries who are after all the priceless beacons of humanity, whose light will always shine throughout the ages to eternity. I quite agree that quotations from Shakespeare, for instance, will be tautological and superfluous, by a writer who is on a par with or greater than, the genius of Shakespeare. I suppose there are such people in the world. It is for this very reason that even great judges of law, in their judgments do not hesitate to quote from the judgments of other judges, whom they consider to be eminent and authoritative.

### Difference Between An Egotistic Writer And A Cultured One

The second point I wish to stress is indicated by Allah, namely that He teaches man by the pen. The pen is emphasized because all knowledge was in future to be put in writing and to be preserved so as to serve as the common heritage of all mankind. And anyone wishing to enlarge the frontiers of knowledge must travel along the beaten track of all acquired knowledge. No man, except a Prophet of God and others who are inmates of a certain institution, can attain to the limits of any knowledge by hard thinking alone. In the case of a masterpiece recognised as such by the common vote of mankind, it will embody truths which are eternal truths. If a writer by his own efforts of thinking recognize these truths, in attempting to put them into writing in his own words, he runs the danger of being thought by his readers that he is trying to deceive them by clothing such stolen thoughts in his own third-rate words when he could have quoted the sovereign words with the true ring of gold. I suppose there are some who are so egotistic as to do this of set purpose. That is why it is a hall-mark of true culture for a writer to make free quotations from the great masterpieces of the world. It is more artistic to do so, more appealing, more elegant than the stuttering halting words of the writer himself—unless he is an unknown genius, whose light has not illuminated the darkness of the world yet.

That there are such geniuses, I freely admit, for has not Gray himself sung of gems of purest ray serene which lie buried in the dark unfathomed ocean; also of roses born to blush unseen. No, on this point, using my own reason in the way suggested by this writer I venture humbly to disagree.

### The Music of Words

There are some lines in English poetry which are gifts from God and no one need be ashamed to quote them (least of all a foreigner writing in English), because their perennial appeal is encased in them if only the right chord is touched. If such lines do not touch those chords again and again when the lines are read that only means that the emotional side, the treasury containing all the feelings of the man or woman, is defective or bankrupt. In such an event is the writer making these quotations to be blamed?

I never read the last dying speech of Hamlet without visualising the whole scene depicted by Shakespeare in my mind's eye, with all the tragedy and

pathos which Shakespeare must have meant to convey.

Is there anything so sublime in poetical thought, which touches the hidden depths of a man's being than the words of Beatrice Cenci just before the execution of herself and her mother:—

"Give yourself no unnecessary pain,  
My dear Lord Cardinal. Here,  
Mother, tie  
My girdle for me, and bind up this hair  
In any simple knot; ay, that does well.  
And yours I see is coming down.  
How often  
Have we done this for one another;  
We shall not do it any more. My Lord,  
We are quite ready. Well, 'tis very well..."

Nor that "hauntingly beautiful" poem when Shelley's heart was broken when he separated from his wife. Let me quote the last two lines:—

"Thy remembrance, and repentance,  
and deep musings are not free.  
From the music of two voices, and the light of one sweet smile"

If one cannot feel this eternal music, it is his misfortune, because in the words of Matthew Arnold, he is a Philistine. Unless there is an integration of all the faculties of man, reason, feelings & the reaches of the higher knowledge of intuition cannot be reached, in which alone true poetry has its being.

As regards the other article it is dealt with elsewhere.

## Pan Arab Conference

### Palestine and Syrian Question To Be Discussed

Falastin reports from Beirut that negotiations are proceeding between the governments of Iraq, Egypt, Palestine, Syria Lebanon and Trans-Jordan for the holding of a Pan-Arab Conference at which their common economic and trade interests would be discussed.

At-Istaqlal of Baghdad, writing on the subject says that in the proposed conference it is certain that matters other than financial will be discussed. The foremost, of course, will be the Palestine and Syrian situation.

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