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(A CULTURAL WEEKLY)
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Musings Of A Pensioner-IX

Difference Between The Islamic And Christian Conception Of God

Explanation Of How Evil Exists In This Universe

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

IT is extraordinary that Allah should, as so ably pointed out by Mr. Sarwar, refer to man's commencement on this earth as a state of death, unless the culmination of Allah's purpose was to end in the perfect man, and this purpose was implicit in Allah's first command "Be" and man actually began his career from the first expression of Allah's wish.

There are several other verses in the Quran supporting Mr. Sarwar's views and I need only refer to the opening verses of the Surathul Insan (76).

1. Has there been Over man a long period Of time, when he was Nothing—(not even) mentioned?
2. Verily We created Man from a drop Of mingled sperm In order to try him; So we gave him (the gifts) Of Hearing and Sight.
3. We showed him the Way Whether he be grateful Or ungrateful (rests On his will)."

In these magnificent verses we have the following points clearly indicated concisely and briefly:—

- (a) That man's career really began with the beginning of creation, that is to say with the state of death.
- (b) that God's purpose in creating man was to try him.
- (c) Man was given the gifts of faculties
- (d) that God directs man with His Revelation and Inspiration,
- (e) man's choice of action or free-will,
- (f) That man can express his gratitude to God for His gifts if only he does not misuse these faculties and that their misuse is an act of ingratitude.

I would like to direct the attention of my readers to an article in the Hibbert Journal of October 1938 entitled "In the beginning" by Harold P. Cooke M.A., wherein Mr. Cooke adopts unconsciously the Quranic philosophy.

Let me briefly explain this article as best as I can. Christianity, in its essential points, agrees with the Islamic view that God is a Transcendent Living Personality, taking an interest in man, and loving, and capable of being loved by man; it differs from Islam in that it invests Jesus Christ with divinity, and regards him actually as a son of God, whereas in Islam

Jesus Christ, although held in high esteem, is only so held because he was one of the greatest Prophets of God who was sent to preach the unity of God.

Mr. Cooke points out that adopting the phrase "In the beginning" occurring in the Genesis we must, in considering the creation of the universe, start with the existence of God as a primal and purposive "I"; and by 'purposive' here I denote his conceiving a purpose or end, an ideal not as yet realised, and his willing a means to that end."

William James in his Pragmatism puts this question "What kind of a reason can there ultimately be why anything should come at all?"

Existence Of The Universe Owing To God's Will

James answers this question as follows:—

"Talk of logic and necessity and the categories and the absolute and the contents of the whole philosophical machine-shop as you will, the only real reason I can think of why anything should ever come is that someone wishes it to be here."

In other words the universe has come into existence owing to God's will. God conceived and willed at the very beginning that the universe should "be" and it "became". No question of time arises in connection with God and the why and the wherefore of the creation of this universe cannot be guessed by man. As Cooke says:

"This 'I' is, moreover, concrete and is capable thus of creating. No category appears to be capable of any creative activity. Abstractions have in them no life, and 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

(Continued on page 8)

Why I Embraced Islam

Statement Of A Great Austrian

Mr. Leopold Weiss, the great Austrian Journalist, who is now known as Mr. Muhammad Asad, states in the foreword to his book "Islam At The Crossroads" as follows:—"I was asked, time and again: *Why* did you embrace Islam? What was it that attracted you particularly?"—and I must confess: I don't know of any satisfactory answer. It was not any particular teaching that attracted me, but the whole wonderful, inexplicably coherent structure of the moral teaching and practical life programme. I could not say, even now, which aspect of it appeals to me more than any other. Islam appears to me like a perfect work of architecture. All its parts are harmoniously conceived to complement and support each other; nothing is superfluous and nothing lacking, with the result of an absolute balance and solid composure. Probably this feeling, that every thing in the teachings and postulates of Islam is "in its proper place", has created the strongest impression on me; there might have been, along with it, other impressions also which to-day it is difficult for me to analyze. After all, it was a matter of love; and love is composed of many things: of our desires and our loneliness, of our high aims and our shortcomings, of our strength and our weakness. So it was in my case. Islam came over me, like a robber enters a house by night: but, unlike a robber, it entered to remain for good.

"Since then I have tried to learn of Islam as much as I could. I studied the Quran and the Traditions of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him); I studied the language of Islam and its history, and a good deal of what has been written about it and against it. I have spent over five years in the Hejaz and Nejd, and most of it in Medina, so that I might experience something of the original surroundings in which this religion was preached by the Arabian Prophet. As the Hejaz is the meeting centre of Muslims from many countries, I was able to compare most of the different religious and social views prevalent in the Islamic World in our days. Those studies and comparisons created in me the firm conviction that Islam, as a spiritual and a social phenomenon, is still, in spite of all the drawbacks caused by the deficiencies of the Muslims, by far the greatest driving force mankind has ever experienced; and all my interests became, since then, centred around the problem of its regeneration."

Moulana Abdul Aleem Siddiqui Returns

Home From Africa

The Ceylon Muslims had a pleasant surprise last Thursday when the African Liner "In-changa" coming from Mombassa brought to Ceylon His Holiness Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddiqui, a Sheikh, Theologian, and Missionary of international fame. Although no news had been received of his coming here, yet within a couple of hours hundreds of Muslims flocked to see him at the residence of Seth Abubackker Joosub, the well-known Memon rice-merchant in Prince Street, Pettah. His Holiness was deeply touched by this demonstration of affection and reverence shown to him.

His Holiness is no stranger to Ceylon. He has visited the Island several times, the last occasion being about a year ago when he spent about three months here. The local Muslims will recall the numerous lectures he delivered in various parts of the Island and held spell-bound thousands of people by his wonderful eloquence. His visits to the Island have always brought about an Islamic revival among the local Muslims and there are very many of them who can tell him, in the words of John Keats:—

"Had I not known or seen your kindness, what might I have been?"

On the night of his arrival here last Thursday, His Holiness delivered an inspiring lecture to a crowded audience in the Hanafi Memon Mosque in the Pettah on the duties binding on a Muslim during the forthcoming month of Ramazan. Thereafter, he attended the usual weekly Halquah conducted by his disciples at Kew Lane, Slave Island, and then late at night returned to the steamer which sailed to Madras at 6 o'clock on Friday morning. From Madras he will take train to his home in Meerut City in Northern India. At the pressing appeal of his disciples, he promised—God willing—to visit these shores again shortly—probably sometime next year.

Women's Section

THE PRICELESS JEWEL OF ISLAM

Its Concordance With The Light Of Reason

By Miss BINTHAN NOORDEEN

(of the Tutorial Staff of Ladies' College, Colombo.)

I have been carefully reading Maulavi Abdul Karim's splendid contributions in "Islam's Contribution to Science and Civilisation" which have appeared in "The Star of Islam". And I feel that it is ignorance of Islam and Islamic History which has brought about the present Muslim decadence. Although environment has a considerable part to play in moulding one's destiny and although modern conditions may sometimes oblige some people to spend much of their time in un-Islamic surroundings, yet I believe that a sound knowledge of our religion and a proper appreciation of its unparalleled value and beauty are the strongest armour against their straying away from Islam. So it is the bounden duty of Muslim parents to see that their children are given a firm grounding in Islam before, or even while, they are sent to English schools.

It is really very heartening to observe that "The Star of Islam" which has been aptly described as "a soul-stirring publication" is opening the eyes of the Muslims to the defects now prevalent among them and is indicating to them the best course of action towards a complete reformation. Therefore Muslim women should avail themselves of this opportunity afforded by this paper not only to imbibe true Islamic knowledge but to impart it to those who may know less than they. Knowledge is not the special monopoly of a privileged few and is not to be got only from those who put on an air of sanctity. Appearances are often deceptive and a girl or woman who to all external appearances may seem to be devoid of Islamic knowledge may be a better Muslim at heart and more Islamic in her conduct and demeanour and more informed of Islam than her sister who tries to make a parade of her piety.

It has been truly remarked that people do not realise the value and beauty of a thing which they possess, and that only those who do not possess it realise its intrinsic worth. Likewise many Muslims do not realise the grandeur and majesty and truth of Islam. It is often left to some non-Muslims who have recently entered the fold of Islam to point out these to the Muslims themselves. I refer to such instances as the great Englishman, the late Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall; the great Austrian, Mr. Leopold Weiss; the great American, Colonel Donald S. Rockwell; and a host of other distinguished people, too numerous to mention here.

My object in mentioning this is just to show that the recent arrivals to the fold of Islam have really opened the eyes of all Muslims to the priceless jewel which they possess in Islam. What I really wish to point out here—excuse me for having digressed from the subject—is that nothing can be simpler or more in accord with the advance of the human intellect than the teachings of the Arabian Prophet. The few rules for religious ceremonial which he prescribed were chiefly with the object of maintaining discipline and uniformity so necessary in certain stages of society. The Right Honourable Sir Syed Ameer Ali, M.A., says: "The wonderful adaptability of Islamic precepts to all ages and nations; their entire concordance with the light of reason; the absence of all mysterious doctrines to cast a shade of sentimental ignorance round the primal truths implanted in the human breast,—all prove that Islam represents the latest development of the religious faculties of our being."

In my next contribution I shall develop the subject further.

Learn To Decide Promptly

Wavering Habits Fatal To Character Building

By Mrs. Hussana Kareem

It is very necessary for us, women, to make prompt decisions. In the running of our homes, dilatory or wavering habits are very harmful. Many women seem to have a mortal dread of deciding things. They do not dare to take the responsibility, because they do not know what it may lead to. These waverers ruin their minds by nursing the fatal habit of indecision. It is also fatal to character building.

Many people want others to decide for them. It is easy to trail, to lean, or to hang on to one who leads, but it takes courage, grit, and stamina to be original, prompt, and decisive, to stand squarely on one's own feet and to trust entirely to one's own judgment. Our judgments must be beyond the influence or the advice or criticism of others, and of superficial disturbances.

The woman who decided quickly can afford to make mistakes; for no matter how many she makes she will get on faster than the one who is timid and vacillating, and so afraid of taking a wrong course that she dares not start out to do anything. Those who wait for certainties, who stand on the brink of the stream waiting for somebody to push them in, never reach the other shore.

Children's Corner

Failure Of Christianity In Europe

DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS,

Last Saturday I warned you against the Christian and Buddhist influences which are found in Ceylon schools. Christian missionaries especially are very clever in their methods. They take advantage of the innocence and ignorance of the children in their charge and by very subtle ways such as attractive stories, suggestive pictures and books and melodious hymns, and by their extreme courtesies and great kindness try to win the young minds to Christianity. You must arm yourselves against these by a careful study of Islam. Then your faith will remain unshaken in spite of the efforts of these cunning missionaries. Only if you are ignorant of your religion, then they will find it easy to influence you.

I also told you last week not to be influenced by church music and temple music which are but ugly pebbles compared with the shining jewel of Islam which teaches you the music of the soul. And I pointed out to you the absurdity of the Christian beliefs and that they were at their best only pagan legacies. Therefore, dear children, be an ornament and an honour to your parents, brothers and sisters, and the community by carefully studying Islam and becoming true and good Muslims and remaining firm and unshaken in your faith.

Let me point out to you that the Great War which began in 1914 showed the futility and mockery of Christian doctrines, Christian principles, and Christian ethics. The present European war again shows the failure of Christianity in Europe. This is the reason why hundreds of Christians in Great Britain and other Western countries are embracing Islam. This is the reason why that great man, George Bernard Shaw, called our Holy Prophet Muhammad the *Saviour of humanity* and said that "Europe is beginning to be enamoured of the creed of Muhammad". You have, therefore, to be very grateful to God for the wonderful religion of Islam which He has given you.

I wonder whether you have read Colonel Rockwell's article entitled "The Call of The Crescent", which appeared in "The Star of Islam" of the 23rd September. In that article he tells why he gave up Christianity and became a Muslim. In one passage he says "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". I wish you will read his article again for it clearly proves the absurdity of the Christian belief and the truth and beauty of Islam.

Next week I shall announce the names of the winners in Competition No. 1 and thereafter resume from where I have stopped the story of our beloved Prophet's life.—Your friend,

THE EDITOR

A Correction

In my article "Story of Aligarh" published in "The Star of Islam" of 30th September, I had by mistake stated that there are more than 400 students in Aligarh. Please substitute the figure 3,000 in place of 400. I apologise for my error.

(Sgd.) M. MOHAMED.

Simple Lessons In Islam

His Holiness Maulana Mohamed Abdul Aleem Siddiqui

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

1. Q. Does Prophet MUHAMMAD pray to ALLAH for the forgiveness of the sins of his followers?

A. Yes; Prophet MUHAMMAD always prays to ALLAH for the forgiveness of the sins of his followers, when through the Grace of ALLAH he is informed of their actions on earth; for, though departed from this world, the Prophet yet liveth.

2. Q. Will your Prophet help you on the Day of Judgment?

A. Yes; on the Day of Judgment ALLAH will permit Prophet MUHAMMAD to stand before His Gracious Throne and plead for the forgiveness of the sins of his followers. The Almighty ALLAH will grant his prayer and the sins of all his followers will be forgiven. The pleading by the Holy Prophet on behalf of his followers is called *Shafa'at*.

3. Q. Are all the Prophets of ALLAH entitled to plead on behalf of their respective followers?

A. Yes; all the Prophets of ALLAH are entitled to plead on behalf of their respective followers but after the *Shafa'at* of Prophet MUHAMMAD.

4. Q. What is the Sixth Article of Faith in Islam?

A. The Sixth Article of Faith in Islam is the belief that the power of doing good or bad acts proceeds from ALLAH and ALLAH alone.

5. Q. Does ALLAH like you doing bad acts?

A. No; ALLAH does not like our doing bad acts. He has given us Reason to choose between Good and Evil and whatever act we commit is prompted by our own free will.

6. Q. How does ALLAH help you to do good acts?

A. ALLAH helps us to do Good acts by sending messengers to guide us all along the RIGHT PATH and to teach us His ways through His Commandments and Codes of religion.

(To be Continued)

Life-Insurance Not Opposed To Islamic Teachings

Misconceptions Removed

By M. T. AMOO

MANY Muslims, through ignorance of the way in which Life-Insurance works, believe that it is opposed to the spirit of Islam to insure one's life. They say that it would shew lack of trust in God. In reply to this objection I would point out the following saying of our Holy Prophet: "Trust in God, but tether your camel."

It is in no way irreligious to insure. Life Insurance Company is an institution which legally undertakes in return for small monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, or yearly payments to pay a substantial fixed amount in the event of death of the payer after a fixed number of years. In other words it is a safeguard for poor widows and orphans. The Holy Prophet has said: "He who helpeth his fellow creatures in the hour of need and he who helpeth the oppressed, him will Allah help in the day of travail".

Life Insurance is based on the axiom that "union is strength". It shews that a burden which would crush the individual may be borne with ease by a multitude of individuals. In it millions of people subscribe to a common fund. From this fund help is rendered to the families of deceased members when they are most in need

of financial help. This means that a man who in ordinary circumstances cannot provide for his family in the event of his death, will be able to do so by very small regular instalments. This alone would prove a great boon in itself.

Take a familiar example. Suppose a man dies leaving his wife and children in poor circumstances. Then a few kind-hearted neighbours and friends help them. Will it be irreligious for the wife and children to accept such help? Life Insurance is nothing more than this. But some people argue that if a man pays a premium of, say Rs. 100/-, and dies, making it obligatory on the Insurance Company to pay his dependents Rs. 1000/-, the excess money is unlawful.

This objection is easily met. Life Insurance is an actuarial science and is

based on the law of average, which never goes wrong. Let me quote from a writer on Insurance. He says: "If the mortality table shows that 8 people (of x age) out of one thousand will die during the year, the money that has to be paid to these 8 claimants is recovered from the balance of 992 policy-holders, and the premium includes the amount. Hence it will be seen that the policy-holder at the outset subscribes for death claims. As the claimed amount is subscribed to by the policy-holders willingly and with complete knowledge, where is the question of unlawfulness? Will it be unlawful for 1000 persons to join together and put aside a certain amount every year for their welfare, i.e., if any one of them dies a stipulated portion of it will be paid to the family. Thus every member is helping himself as well as others. The other day a gentleman told me that when a man dies after paying Rs. 100/-, the difference of Rs. 900/- represents interest. It will be clear from the preceding that it is the mortality loading and not the interest. The principle of life insurance is, those who live long pay for those who die early. Commonsense will teach us that it is impossible to get 900 per cent interest."

Another objection raised against Life Insurance is that the Company gives and takes interest. But the fact is that in Life Insurance, the companies do not give interest but profit. The definition of interest is "guaranteed fixed percentage to be paid every year. But the bonuses of Insurance Companies are neither fixed nor guaranteed. Where does interest come in then?

Let me quote again. "As long as a policy-holder does not get interest his religious conscience must be at rest but if the objection is raised against the company's earning interest, it can be proved that every business nowadays has something or other to do with interest. Again the interest, which insurance companies get is mostly from the Government. Every recognised and civilized Government has to float loans to construct capital works for the welfare of its subjects. The people subscribe to it, the Government collects taxes, pays interest on the loan, creates sinking funds and gradually pays off the loans. Now if the Government do not float loans and the people do not subscribe there cannot be any capital works. To put it briefly the life insurance money is utilized to help the poor subjects. Is it irreligious? First of all a policy-holder does not get interest but profit. Interest is fixed but not profit. It differs year after year. Profit is never guaranteed. It may be Rs. 25 this year, Rs. 35 next year, Rs. 15 year after and nil one year. It is allowed to enter into a business in which there is profit or loss. Then why not insurance be allowed? It is proved that the policy-holder does not get interest. If putting money in the bank is allowed, the bank which deals only in interest, it is not understood why insurance companies alone be objected to, although you do not get interest from them. One may argue that the interest taken from the bank is spent on charities. Can you not do the same with the profits of Insurance Policies? Under these considerations I do not think that Life-Insurance is irreligious. On the other hand it is a duty we owe to our dependents.



WHAT THE WELL ASSURED MAN WILL WEAR.

- ★ **HE'LL WEAR A LOOK OF CONTENTMENT** —
No furrowed brow from frayed nerves worrying over what might become of his family, or about his own old age.
- ★ **HE'LL WEAR A SMILE** —
He can even laugh at the troubles of the old work-a-day world because of the all round protection his policies give him.
- ★ **HE'LL WEAR A CLOAK OF SECURITY** —
Because an assured man is a secured man.
- ★ **HE'LL WEAR A BADGE OF HONOUR** —
for having done his duty towards his dependent family.
- ★ **HE'LL WEAR WELL WITH HIS FRIENDS AND THE COMMUNITY** —
There will be no need to pass the hat for his family, or for himself.
- ★ **HE'LL WEAR WELL HIMSELF** —
In all probability, he'll enjoy better health and longer life because of the peace of mind life assurance brings.
- ★ **HE'LL WEAR A PERPETUAL ADVERTISEMENT FOR LIFE ASSURANCE** —
For as the old saying goes, "A pleased customer is the best advertisement."

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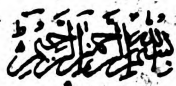
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Notice To Readers

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: OCTOBER, 7 1939



Fallacious Arguments To Justify Un-Islamic Tendencies

WE have repeatedly drawn the attention of the Ceylon Muslims to the disastrous results that arise from their following Western ideals, Western institutions, and Western practices. And we are glad we are able to place before the Muslim public today a concrete example of the harm that such apparently harmless imitation has brought to the community in the specious arguments of Sheih Khuda Bux of Dematagoda which we publish elsewhere in this issue. In striving to put up a defence for those Muslim parents who give Christian names to their children, he has betrayed a mentality which is mainly responsible for the present Muslim decadence. MR. M. T. AKBAR, K.C., in his letter in reply to Sheih Khuda Bux which also we publish elsewhere, has proved the futility, hollowness and fallacy of the latter's arguments.

It is indeed a tragedy that some English educated Muslims should try to justify on flimsy grounds those actions of theirs which—however trivial they may appear to be on the surface—tend to destroy those impulses and influences so very necessary for the development of their personality on purely Islamic lines. We pointed out in our last Leader that "it is practically impossible that a man should imitate a foreign civilization in its intellectual and aesthetic design without appreciating its spirit. And it is equally impossible that a man should appreciate the spirit of a civilization which is opposed to a religious orientation—and yet remain a good Muslim." Perhaps this was too much for people of Sheih Khuda Bux's way of thinking to digest. "The fancy, will and pleasure" of parents—to quote his own words—are to him and those of his ilk more important than the scrupulous care that should be used in sowing the right seeds of Islamic culture in young, tender and impressionable minds.

It is a common practice among some Western educated Muslims to denounce as "a class of diehards who are wedded to

primitive usages" those sincere Muslims who stand for strict fidelity in theory and in practice to the teachings of the Holy Prophet (on whom be Peace and Blessings). And in doing so they are forgetful of the fact that it was such "diehards"—not the modern half-baked so-called broad-minded Muslims—who carried the Banner of Islam and the torch of light and learning in an incredibly short time to all parts of the world. The decline of Islam began from the day such half-baked Muslims appeared within the fold of Islam.

It may not matter what name is given to a child. But it does matter, and matter very seriously, what associations and reactions that name will kindle in the young mind. According to an authentic tradition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (on whom be Peace and Blessings) has enjoined all Muslims to give their children the best of names for names have certain influences. To be unable to perceive the impression that a Christian name will make on the mind of a young Muslim child is to disclose not only a colossal ignorance of the psychology of the child-mind but also a lack of understanding of the impulses necessary to foster a love of Islam. MUHAMMAD ASAD in his book "Islam at The Crossroads"—a book which Sheih Khuda Bux and those of his way of thinking will do well to read—says: "It is in perfect appreciation of this experience that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said 'Whoever imitates a people, becomes one of them.' This well-known Hadith is not only a moral hint, but also an objective statement which lays down, in a detached way, the inevitability of a circumstantial occurrence."

The learned author also says:—"Religious belief and unbelief are very rarely a matter of argument alone. In some cases the one or the other is gained by way of intuition or let us say, insight. But mostly it is communicated to man by his cultural surroundings. Think of a child who is systematically trained, since his earliest days, to hear perfectly rendered musical tunes. His ear grows accustomed to discern tone, rhythm and harmony..... It is the same with religious training. As there certainly are some individuals to whom nature has completely denied an "ear" for music, so there are also individuals who are perfectly "deaf" to the voice of religion. But for the overwhelming number of normal human beings the alternative between religious belief and unbelief is decided by the atmosphere in which they have been brought up. Therefore the Prophet said:—'Every child is born in original purity; it is his parents who make him a Jew, a Christian, or an idol-worshipper.'

THE PALESTINE QUESTION

Reply of the Arab Higher Committee to the British Government's White Paper issued on May 17, 1939

Following the invitation extended by the British Government to negotiate on the Palestine problem, the Arab Higher Committee sent its Delegation to London to represent the Palestinian Arabs. They hoped this time to find on the part of the British Government a real desire to ensure justice, which is essential for the establishment of permanent security and peace in the Holy Land.

The Delegation, bound by the fundamental rights of the Arab people in Palestine, had set out in a full spirit of conciliation and an earnest desire to find a solution which might put an end to the unhappy situation in the country.

Negotiations, in which delegates representing the Arab States participated, proceeded in London in an atmosphere of complete freedom and frankness. The Arab Delegates were able to procure, from the British representatives, recognition of their basic rights, but were unable to arrive with them at a practical solution which would lead to an agreement. The British Government had submitted certain proposals to which they adhered tenaciously; and, as these proposals did not secure the fundamental rights of the Arab people, the delegates of the Arab States joined the Palestine Delegates in an unanimous refusal of these proposals.

After the return of the delegates, communication was resumed in Cairo between the Arab States' delegates and the British Government. The Arab States ultimately suggested certain amendments to the British proposals, but the British Government refused the suggested amendments and formulated their own policy for Palestine. They decided "to adhere generally to the proposals which were finally submitted to, and discussed with the Arab and Jewish delegations," and issued a White Paper, which was published in Palestine on the 17th May, 1939, in the form of an Official Communiqué No. 2/38, defining that policy.

Upon perusal of the White Paper, the Arab Higher Committee issued on May 18, a brief statement expressing, on behalf of the Arab people their refusal of this policy as it did not satisfy Arab demands and did not differ from, but in certain respects fell short of, the proposals suggested at the London Conference, which proposals had been refused by the Palestine Arab States' delegations. Soon after their perusal of the White Paper, the Arab States which had taken part in the Conference decided that they could not advise the Arabs of Palestine to co-operate on that basis.

The Arab Higher Committee now present their detailed reply to the said White Paper:

I. The Basis of the New Policy

In para 18 of the White Paper it is said that "In framing these proposals His Majesty's Government have sincerely endeavoured to act in strict accordance with their obligations under the Mandate."

The Arab Higher Committee expresses its regret at this statement because it is this Mandate, and what it embodies of obligations prejudicial to Arab rights and Arab national existence, that is the source of their grievances. They believe that this statement has made the Arabs lose hope in the new policy, as it continues to arouse their fears and fails to safeguard their rights.

II. The Constitution

In para 10 of the White Paper, the British Government state that "the

objective of His Majesty's Government is the establishment within ten years of an independent Palestine State in such treaty relations with the United Kingdom....."

The Arab Higher Committee expresses its appreciation for this declaration but regrets to find that the declaration, taken as a whole, does not in fact ensure independence, since it makes its realization subject to Jewish participation in the Independent State.

Sub-para (2) of para 10 of the White Paper continues by saying that "The independent State should be one in which Arabs and Jews share in Government in such a way as to ensure that the essential interests of each community are safeguarded."

Para 8 of the White Paper states, *inter alia*, that "It should be a State in which the two peoples in Palestine, Arabs and Jews, share authority in Government in such a way that the essential interests of each are secured."

Para 9 provides for the establishment of an independent State, and the complete relinquishment of Mandatory control in Palestine would require such relations between the Arabs and the Jews as would make good government possible, etc.

Independence

It is already apparent that the Jews will intentionally abstain from participation in any state that is not Jewish, in order to hinder independence.

Moreover, independence is to be preceded by a provisionally fixed transitional period of 10 years; and, in spite of its long term, this period is not final in that "if, at the end of ten years, it appears to His Majesty's Government that, contrary to their hope, circumstances require the postponement of the establishment of the independent State, they will consult with representatives of the people of Palestine, the Council of the League of Nations and the neighbouring Arab States before deciding on such postponement." They reserve for themselves final decision in the matter. The word "circumstances" is ambiguous, and it is always easy for the Government in power, and more so in the case of Palestine, to say that "circumstances" do not allow the realisation of independence. Moreover, as long as the transitional period is not finally fixed, the Jews would have an additional weapon to use in hindering independence indefinitely.

In spite of the fact that the Covenant of the League of Nations recognised the right of Palestine to independence, and the Mandate was supposed to be a "transitional period," the British Government continued opposing the realisation of that independence until today.

Independence is the most sacred right and dearest aim of all nations. The Arabs of Palestine, who have suffered for it more than any other people insist upon a definite assurance that it will in fact be attained.

(To be continued)

Letters To The Editor

Lack of Proper Cultural Surroundings For Muslim Children

Sir,

You have broached upon a subject of a controversial nature and which has raised a hornet's nest above your ears. A most narrow-minded and conservative article on the Art of Naming a Muslim child an Arabic name. Conservatism is often merely a polite name for being in the rut. What's in a name if a child is called Oliver Latif, Mary Sakina, Meenachy or Nona Ruby? Call a rose by any name you please, but still it will smell sweet. Where has it been laid down that a Muslim child must be named with an Arabic name? Naming of Muslim children with foreign and non-Arabic names, is done in accordance with the fancy, will and pleasure and with some good reason of their parents, and not for the love of Christianity. Allah forbid. It is intention, absolute intention, that counts in any act, whether legally, morally or religiously. There were illustrious Muslims of great achievement and learning, nay saints, with foreign and non-Arabic names who had gone to the land from whose bourne no traveller returns. What is required is the moral character.

"Ilal Khairi wayamuruna bil-marooif," so says the Quran Sherif. It makes no change in the individuality, if the child is named with a foreign or a non-Arabic name. Pure thought, pure deed and the correct understanding of the basic principles of Islam, both the esoteric and the exoteric teachings, which are factors for the foundation of building true character. A Muslim does not cease to be a Muslim by being named with a foreign or an English name. Certainly not!

"Firman Allah Taala—Al Malu Walbanunazinatul Hayatuddunia, Walbakiyatus-salihati Khairun Khair." Wealth and children are allurements of the life of this world. But the things that endure good deeds, are best.

The whole article is nothing short of glib platitudes and it requires the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of sages and the perfection of paragons to teach the Muslims on the Art of Naming their children. In the years past by, a so-called Muslim made himself a target of "Shots and bullets" by attempting to teach the Muslims to put on the Fez the Muslims can "climb up to Heaven." Can stupidity go any further? There is a class of "die-hards" among the Muslims who are wedded to primitive usages and they hold the same preposterous view. In the immortal words of the poet, "Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything."

There are educated, refined, broad-minded and staunch Muslims among us, who were educated in non-Muslim schools and colleges and they have set an irreproachable character of true Muslims and nothing could have detached them from the sublime religion of Islam, because they had the correct understanding of the Shariat, Tarikat, Hakikat and Marifat.

Yours truly,

SHAIK KHUDA BUX
321, Dematagoda.

II

Sir,—A copy of a letter addressed to you by Shaikh Khuda Bux has been sent to me, in which the writer tries to combat your views in your leader of the 30th September.

It seems to me the point at issue is a simple one. All acts are judged in Islam according to the intention. If

parents give Christian or Buddhist names to their children with the intention that thereby those children will get a "correct understanding of the basic principles of Islam, both the esoteric and exoteric teachings", nothing further can be said. But the point in your criticisms was that this practice reflects the inferiority complex, in other words it is a tacit admission that there are no names in Islam which can shine by themselves unless they are supported by an additional Christian, Buddhist or Hindu name.

There is in Islamic history many illustrious men and women bearing foreign names—e.g. Mohamed Assad, and the recent converts—but they were all converts to Islam. The fact that some Western educated Muslims have retained their faith only shows that Allah's grace is unbounded and that in spite of all obstacles some Muslims win through by the mercy of Allah. You have apparently trodden on the corns of some people, hence the specious pleading of this writer.

This reprehensible conduct of giving Christian names to Muslim children can only lead to one result. If the well-to-do and the educated adopt this practice wholesale, the poorer and the more ignorant will follow them blindly and in the end all Islamic customs will be jettisoned on the ground that they are "primitive usages". Truly the outlook for us Muslims in Ceylon is gloomy.

With salams—Yours truly,

M. T. AKBAR.

A Query

Sir,—Will any of your readers, through the medium of your valuable "Star of Islam", enlighten me as to why we should not recite our daily prayers in our own language and why we should repeat same in Arabic alone.—Yours etc.,

"INQUISITIVE".

Ratnapura, 4th Oct.

Turkey's Policy In The Balkans

Turkey's Government is doing its utmost to bring Bulgaria into the Balkan Entente, by getting Rumania to make some concessions to her over the Dobruja. This territory is so rich that it used to produce 20 per cent. of Bulgaria's wheat, though forming only 8 per cent. of her area and it was annexed by Rumania in 1913.

President Inenu of Turkey discussed the matter with King Carol, on his recent visit to Istanbul, but the King did not make a solution any easier by a speech at Constanza declaring that "Rumania's frontiers as now marked out cannot be changed without the danger of a world-wide disaster."

Jama-Athus Salihiya Burdha Majlis

Lecture On Lailatul Qadr."

At the usual weekly meeting of the Jama-Athus Salihiya Burdha Majlis which will be held on Sunday, the 8th instant, at 8-30 a.m. at the Salih Thakiya, 132 New Moor Street, Colombo, Mr. S. L. Mahmood Hadjiar J., will deliver a lecture on "Lailatul Qadr."

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NEWS FROM MAURITIUS

Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddiqui Leaves The Island

By ESHACK ABDULLATIF

At a distance of about 2,000 miles South of Colombo, lies the Island of Mauritius, which was discovered by the Arabs in the 7th century, and named by them as DINA AROBI. It was only in the sixteenth century, that the island became known to the Europeans by the capture of Moorish vessels and is under British possession, since 1810.

According to the latest census, the Muslims number 50,592 out of a total population of 393,238. The first mosque was built in 1805, during the French occupation. The well-known Jumma Mosque of Mauritius was built in 1852. Many missionaries have visited Mauritius from time to time but the three visits of His Eminence Mowlana Muhammad Abdul Aleem Siddiqui have produced a great revival among the Muslims, in political, religious and social matters.

It was for the first time in the history of Mauritius this year that 15,000 out of a total male adult Muslim population of 20,000 attended the celebration of the Eid Miladun Nabi. It was again for the first time that the Governor of Mauritius graced such an occasion with his presence. Besides H. E. the Hon. Captain Sir Bede Clifford, K. C. M. G., C. B., M. V. O., those present were: The French Consul and his Chancellor, the Officer Commanding the Troops, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Port-Louis, Hon. the Advocate General, Hon. the Senior Member for Port-Louis, Hon. the Director of Labour, Hon. the Director of Medical and Health Dept., Members of the Legislative and Municipal Councils, and many European, African and Asiatic notables. The celebration is thus commented in an European Daily: "To lovers of Humanity, it was inspiring to behold that splendid manifestation of religious unity, which is a vivid expression of the brotherhood of Islam. I think that it was for the first time that so many people gathered together on such an auspicious occasion and it was no doubt the most important meeting that has ever been organized."

A Veritable Leader Of Men

Now as regards the inspiring lecture of His Eminence, the paper says:—"Mowlana kept the audience spell bound during one and a half hours with an able address on the philosophical teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. We all admired the oratorical flights of the speaker and whether he was speaking in Urdu or English, he had the command of the subject and the language. One could see that he was a veritable leader of men and the Muslim community must needs be proud of such a man."

H.E. the Governor in a short but sweet speech said though the Muslims were fortunate to hear the learned lecturer often but he was glad to have been invited that day to listen to such an eminent orator. He added that all present there, highly appreciated the interesting speech of Mowlana Sahib and on their behalf he thanked him.

Besides the above lecture, His Eminence delivered 23 lectures on Radio within 40 days—unprecedented in the annals of Mauritius. While he delivered scores of lectures in different parts of the island. During his short stay here, His Eminence had several interviews with H. E. the Governor, the Advocate General and Elected Members of the Legislative Council on Waki, Nika and Islamic succession questions. Among the splendid work done by him, is the foundation of some important bodies—(a) The Central

Muslim Unity Board (a representative body including the Presidents and *Mutawallis* of nearly all the societies and mosques respectively, of the island, (b) The Mauritius Muslim Youth Brigade. (c) The Haqquae Quadriah Isha-at-i-Islam (to defend Islam against false and unjust attacks.) (d) The Hizbullah Volunteer Corps (to call Muslims for Prayers). (e) The Mauritius Muslim Orphanage. Under its auspices, the Muslim Infirmary is to be built, of which the foundation stone was laid by Lady Clifford (the wife of the Governor) and blessings were given by His Eminence, who is the Founder-Patron, on Thursday the 24th August. At that function, H. E. the Governor paid a tribute to Mowlana Sahib for the revival made by him in the Muslim Community.

On Saturday the 26th August, Muslims from all parts of the island, assembled in the big hall of the Jumma Mosque Madressa, when addresses by several bodies were presented to His Eminence Mowlana Abdul Aleem Siddiqui, recording the invaluable services rendered by him to the Muslim Community. He inspected the Youth Brigade, which paraded before him.

His Eminence was then taken in a big procession which walked from the Jumma Mosque to the harbour, headed by HIZBULLAH carrying crescent flags and were singing very nice poems, in praise of Mowlana Sahib. The members of the Mauritius Muslim Youth Brigade, in uniforms, formed the Guard of Honour to His Eminence, not only throughout the procession but also went on board the ship and remained with their Founder-Patron until the time of the departure of the steamer.

And it was with tears in their eyes that the Muslims saw him off. May Allah keep him in good health and give him sufficient strength to visit Mauritius again, is the sincerest prayer of Muslims.

Getting The Best From Life

The thought of death induces me to leave a good life in order to attain real happiness. My wrong use of life will yield disastrous results. Desire to make more money quickly, or excessive indulgence in luxuries, can equip me to welcome death. Vice leads me to unhappiness and misery.

To stimulate an appetite to hoard more wealth even at the risk of facing dishonour is to enrich persons other than the seeker. Easily acquired riches render the receiver idle and lazy, apart from their being dissolved like salt. My ideal path in life is to act in such a way as to be able to meet death with open arms. Since death is compulsory, preparing myself for it will render me fearproof.

Every inhalation and exhalation of breath unsolders by links the long chain-life that connects birth with death.

The way that some people live indicates that they are ignorant of the pangs of death. The distance between life and death seems very long for him who finds it difficult to know the power that controls his destiny.

The usurer in the course of his pursuit completely forgets death till the latter arrests the former suddenly. The wise man who is aware of death enjoys life leaving no room to repent even if death suddenly comes. Hence the unfortunate expectation of death and the striving to meet it properly enable one to get the best of life.

A. MAJEED CADAR.

Islam's Contribution To Science And Civilisation

(Continued from page 7)

by them to the people of the West, it would not have been possible for them to make the immense progress they have now made. The Muslims were in the vanguard of the world's advancement as long as they were true to Islam and faithfully followed the lofty injunctions of the Holy Quran. Their downfall commenced as soon as they became remiss in their loyalty to the lofty ideals of Islam. With the Western people the reverse has happened. They were not able to make any progress worth the name as long as they were orthodox Christians; it was only after they had shaken off the iron grip of Christianity that they could make any appreciable advance in science and civilisation. In the one case the influence of a peaceful and progressive religion and in the other the effect of the disappearance of religious fervour and the presence of materialistic greed are clearly observable in the history of their respective notable achievements. The pre-Islamic religions confined their operation to the moral aspect of human nature, and almost altogether ignored its worldly aspect. But Islam, in addition to morality, laid much stress on the practical aspect of man's everyday life. Under the inspiration of Islam, the chief mission of which is the service of humanity, the Muslims attended to such useful subjects as were calculated to contribute to the material welfare of mankind. Realising that man's material progress depends upon his mastery over nature, they devoted themselves to the development of useful sciences such as chemistry, astronomy, medicine, agriculture, irrigation, navigation, etc. Had the idea of man's capabilities to harness the forces of Nature to the service of humanity dawned on the human mind before the Holy Prophet of Islam taught it, the immense possibilities of Nature would have been utilised for the welfare of mankind long before the promulgation of Islam.

Most of the outstanding achievements of the people over whom religion has little influence and who are guided more by the fear of man than by the fear of God have been in the domain of arms, ammunition, explosives, poisons—of death and destruction rather than of peace and construction. Had their religion had sufficient influence over them, the followers of Christ, who enjoins the turning of one cheek if the other is smitten, would have never been so very eager for the invention of all sorts of death-dealing instruments.

After the enjoyment of power, wealth and supremacy for about a thousand years, the Muslims became enervated and luxurious, and a sort of blight overtook them. Spiritual stagnation and intellectual sterility soon followed as a natural consequence. This has more or less been the case with all other religious communities. The Muslims themselves, and not Islam, are entirely to blame for this regrettable check on their progress. A glance at the condition of the world before and after the promulgation of Islam would convince one of what it is capable of accomplishing. The decadence of the Muslims must not, therefore, be confused with that of their religion. It would be a great injustice to Islam to judge it by the life led by its present

day followers. True Islam, which is life and light, is very different from what goes by its name to-day—a bundle of dead rites and meaningless rituals.

It is, however, gratifying to note that Muslims are at last realising that they have left the essentials of their noble religion and are now engaged in controversies over mere trifles. I believe true Islam will again assert itself. Signs of Islamic renaissance are already visible all over the Muslim world. Movements pregnant with great potentialities are afoot in Turkey, Persia, Arabia, Egypt, and Afghanistan. It is hoped that, before long, Muslims would shake off the languor and lethargy that have come upon them and they will be able to take their rightful place in the progressive movements of the world.

Islam, which means peace and submission to the will of God, is not a new religion promulgated by Hazrat Muhammad, but the oldest religion based on the unity of God, proclaimed by Abraham, Moses, Jesus and all other Messengers whom the Lord was pleased to send at different times and in different climes for the reclamation of degraded and debased humanity. Islam simply claims to have purged that religion of adulteration and impurities which had crept into it in course of time. It would, therefore, be a misnomer to call it Muhammadanism. A Muslim has to believe in all the Scriptures that were revealed from time to time, and he has to respect and revere all the Prophets who preceded his own. Universalism is thus the most distinctive feature of Islam, which is intended, not like other religions for a particular time or a particular country or a particular nation, but for all time, for all countries and for all peoples.

Some of the master minds of Europe and America, like the great poet Goethe, the Great Historian Gibbon, the great philosopher Carlyle, the great orator Ingersoll, the great socialist George Bernard Shaw, who is perhaps the greatest intellect of the present age, among others, were most profoundly impressed by the message of Islam, and all of them highly appraised the greatness of its Prophet. Although an atheist himself, and hardly any dogma of any religion has passed unscathed by his trenchant pen, Bernard Shaw thinks Islam is the only religion that can satisfy all intelligent people who want a religion to guide them spiritually, morally and socially. The strongest argument advanced by him to prove the universal acceptability of Islam is that it has the great power of absorbing every progress made by philosophy and science. He has, in his characteristic style, sought to prove that a hundred years hence, and even before it England in particular and the rest of the western world in general are bound to embrace Islam.

That Bernard Shaw is not beside the mark in his forecast regarding Islam's future may be judged by what Islam, which is now in its fourteenth century, has done. Its comparison with other religions in their fourteenth century may give an idea of what it is likely to be in its twentieth century. It is, in the opinion of unbiased judges, the only power that can effectively withstand the atheism, scepticism and materialism that are gradually getting a hold over the entire civilised world. This progress it has already made is beyond the wild dream of its propagators. It has won the whole of Africa and a very large portion of Asia. A movement is on foot to Islamize Europe and America. Of all the countries of the West, England seems to be the most responsive to the call of Islam. Over a thousand English men and women of all ranks and positions, have already embraced Islam. In such circumstances it may be expected that, before very long, Islam will spread from one end of the world to the other establishing peace and goodwill on earth and binding all the races and communities inhabiting the globe into one common fraternity.

Opening of A New Muslim School at Dehianga

MINISTER OF EDUCATION PRESIDES

The Dehianga Muslim School in the Kandy District was formally opened by Mr. E. T. Dyson G. A., C. P., on Sunday the 1st October 1939, at 3-30 p. m. after which a largely attended public meeting was held in the school hall presided over by the Hon. Mr. C. W. W. Kannagara, Minister of Education.

Mr. Kannagara, in the course of a long and inspiring speech, pointed out the importance of the Ceylon Muslims as a community and urged them to co-operate with the Majority community and work for the common welfare of the Island.

In the course of his speech, Mr. A. S. Lebbe, Chairman, V. C. Medapalatha, Yathinuware, expressed the indebtedness and gratitude of the Muslims of Dehianga to Mr. H. L. Omer Lebbe who donated the land for the school and who was instrumental in getting the work done by the Government. The other speakers were Messrs. E. T. Dyson G. A. C. P., George E. de Silva M. S. C. and A. Ratnayake M. S. C.

Mr. S. M. Z. Abdeen thanked all those who were present on behalf of the Muslims of Dehianga.

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Islam's Contribution To Science And Civilisation

Europe's Indebtedness To Islam

Intellectual Achievements of Early Muslims

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

(Continued from the previous issue of "The Star of Islam")

IT is now an undisputed fact that the early Muslims made incomparable contributions to the culture and civilisation of the world. Far from proscribing free thought and enquiry and placing any ban upon the cultivation of science, as early and medieval Christianity did, Islam gave it a tremendous impetus by making it a part of religion itself. A Muslim was enjoined to look upon the universe as an expression of God's attributes, and he had to explore it and utilise its objects for the service of mankind as an item of worship of their Creator. It was this religious stimulus to scientific research that particularly impelled the early Muslims so zealously to exert themselves for the advancement of science. A detailed account of their numerous scientific achievements would fill many volumes. The more the world advances in civilisation the more will their inestimable services to humanity be adequately realised and appreciated.

History bears witness to the fact that it was Islam that raised some of the most backward nations to the highest pinnacle of moral and material progress. Wherever the Muslims conquered a country, instead of slaughtering the vanquished, as was done by the elites of old, they gave them new life, inspired them with lofty ideals and raised them to a high level of civilisation. Thus, indeed, were many savage tribes transformed into civilised people. To whatever land the Arabs migrated they made it their home; they absorbed the culture of the conquered people and they did their best for the intellectual, moral and material improvement of the land of their adoption. The people to whom the later intellectual development of the Muslims was due were, for the most part, not Arabs but descendants of those who had adopted the faith of the conquerors. Wherever the banner of Islam was carried, remarkable centres of learning sprang up in no time and produced illustrious men in the fields of literature, arts, science and industry. Thus Damascus, Cordova, Granada, Baghdad and Cairo became, from time to time, reputed centres of Muslim culture and held aloft the torch of light and learning, art and science in Asia, Europe and Africa, at a time when the West was sunk in ignorance and superstition.

Europe's indebtedness to Islam for her scientific progress is much greater than she cares to admit. She remained barren of all progress as long as she was under the heel of the Church. Even the intellectual development that had taken place among the Greeks and Romans disappeared under the persecution of the Church. During the centuries of moral and intellectual stagnation in Europe, it was the Muslims who led the vanguard of intellectual progress in the world. There was a time when learning in Europe could be obtained only through the medium of the Arabic tongue. The very Renaissance, that awakened her from her long lethargy, was brought about by the impact of Islamic culture and learning. But for the conquest of Spain by the Muslims, who knows how long she would have remained in that savage condition. All her later achievements in the domain of science, art and learning owe their inspiration wholly and solely to the influences that

emanated from Muslim Spain and penetrated the rest of the continent. All knowledge, whether of Astronomy, Mathematics, Physics or Philosophy of which later on the Europeans made themselves masters, was originally derived from the Saracenic schools. Besides, there has been hardly any reform, religious, social or political, from the time of Martin Luther to that of Lenin, which does not bear the stamp of Islamic influence. Draper has very truly said, "In whatever direction we look we meet in various pursuits of peace and war, of letter and science, Saracenic vestiges."

Muslims' Phenomenal Progress

Dr. Campbell, a reputed British scientist, in his book "Arabian Medicine" writes, "When Europe was lying torpid in the depth of intellectual obscurity and gloom in the dark ages, culture and civilisation were spread in the Islamic States under the high patronage of the Caliphs of Baghdad and Cordova, and at a time when the Barons and Ladies of Medieval Europe could not even sign their names, almost every adolescent boy and girl in Islam could read and write freely and with ease."

In his famous "History of Human Society", Professor Frank Blackmore of the University of Kansas writes, "In every country that was conquered, the first duty of Islam was to build a mosque in which Allah would be worshipped and his Prophet honoured. Attached to this mosque was a school where people were taught to read and study the Koran. From this initial point they enlarged the study of science, literature and art, and, through the appreciation of these sublime things they collected the treasures of art and learning wherever they could be found. From imitation they passed on to the great field of creation, and great advances were made to the sum of human knowledge. Schools were founded, great universities established, and libraries were built which laid the permanent foundations of knowledge."

The Muslim made phenomenal progress in Science in a wonderfully short time. They visualised, thirteen centuries ago, many things which are being discovered to-day. They explored and exploited the potentialities of objects which were unknown and unthought of since the creation of the

world. In fact their was hardly any conceivable subject to which they did not give serious thought. They made most important discoveries in Chemistry, in Astronomy, in Mathematics, in Medicine. They specialised in History and Geography. They unearthed Alchemy and Algebra. They initiated and developed the study of Political Economy and Sociology which were unknown sciences till then. They made valuable researches in Zoology, Geology and Botany. Muslim students, accompanied by artists, travelled far and wide to study various vegetations, which were minutely described by pen and brush. Alherin, a renowned botanist, travelled to and fro in India for forty years collecting materials for his studies. Besides, Muslims investigated and wrote on various other subjects such as navigation, agriculture, irrigation, gardening, statistics, chronology and topography. Even aviation the latest achievement of Europe and an early wonder of the twentieth century, was not left untried. The first two martyrs among the conquerors of the air were Muslims. In the reign of Khalifa Al-Mamun, a scientist named Abul Quasim invented an aeroplane, but crashed when flying and was killed.

In the eighth century, the Abbasid Khalifas established the famous academy of Baghdad, where were translated the works of the renowned mathematicians Euclid, Archimedes and Apollonius, of the astronomer Ptolemy, and of the naturalists, Hippocrates and Diomedes. In this and other Muslim centres of learning Greek culture was kept alive at a time when, outside Byzantium, it had no abiding place in the non-Muslim world. Many were the libraries, observatories and laboratories that were established by Muslim kings. In the library attached to Baitul-ul-Hikmat, the abode of learning, a remarkable university founded by Khalifa Harunur-Rashid, there were many hundred thousand Sanskrit, Greek, Coptic, Chaldean, and Persian books besides those in Arabic. Khalifa Al-Hakim's library was so very extensive that its catalogue had to be prepared in forty large volumes.

Chemistry.—Modern Chemistry, as Humboldt rightly says, was "admittedly the invention of the Muslims" whose achievements in this sphere were of unique interest. They conclusively proved the worthlessness of ancient chemistry. They found out the chemical affinities of mercury, lead, copper, silver and gold and knew the chemical processes of oxidation and calcination. A number of words such as alembic, alkali, etc., were derived from Arabic. Jabir bin Hayyan, known as Geber in the western world, wrote some five hundred treatises on chemistry. He discovered, for the first time, nitric acid, sulphuric acid, aqua regia, silver nitrate and several compounds. The Muslims were the first to teach the world, distillation, filtration, crystallisation, etc. They knew how to change a liquid into vapour. It was in Muslim Spain that chemistry was first established in Europe, and would have reached its zenith here had the Muslims not suffered the disastrous defeat at Poitiers. Jildaki was the last great Muslim chemist. He died in 1361 A.D.

Astronomy.—The Muslims may be said to have written their names on heaven itself. They identified and classified a large number of stars in their observatories. They made wonderful discoveries concerning the movements of the Solar system and other astral bodies. They ascertained the size of the earth, the variation of the lunar latitudes and the precession of the equinoxes. Averroes (Ibn-i Rushd) discovered the sun-spot. Al-Hazan (Abul Hasan) discovered atmospheric reflection; Al-Maimun determined the obliquity of ecliptic; Ibn-i-Junus, Nasiruddin Tusi and Albani constructed astronomical tables of great value. Albani's tables were translated into Latin and formed the basis of astronomical study in Europe, whither that science was introduced by the translation of the works of Muham-

mad Farghani. Abu Junus and Al-Matana were two of the greatest Muslim astronomers. It was the Muslims who first built observatories in Europe and invented the telescope, the compass, the pendulum and many other useful astronomical instruments. The most famous of the many observatories in the Muslim Empire was that at Marghana near Taurus, built in 1259 A.D.

Mathematics.—Almost every branch of higher mathematics bears the impress of Muslim genius. Many were the improvements that were effected by the Muslims in this important subject. The Arabic numerals, the decimal system and the art of figures, which Europe got from the Muslims, gave great impetus to learning. By means of these the Muslims led the world in Astronomy, Mechanics and Mathematics Algebra, Statics, Conic Sections and other branches of applied Mathematics are amongst Muslim discoveries. In Geometry the Muslims were the first of all nations to translate Euclid and use it. It was not properly translated in any European language till the sixteenth century. The Muslims for the first time applied Algebra to Geometry. They discovered equations of the second degree, and developed the theory of quadratic equations and the binomial theorem. They invented spherical Trigonometry and by introducing the use of Sine and Cosine, they made great contributions to the science of surveying and astronomy. The Muslims were the first to use instruments of precision for the measurement of time by the use of the pendulum and the measurement of heavenly bodies by the use of the astrolabe.

Medicine.—The father of the present-day European medical science was Avicenna (Ibn-i-Sina), whose *Ma'adina* *Medica* is still in vogue. Aven Zoor (Ibn-i-Zora) was a great authority on pharmacy, which was an institution of Muslim invention. He and others carefully studied the effect on the body of drugs obtained from various parts of the world, and discovered many remedies. Muslim doctors were the first to use anaesthetics. Al-Bucasis of Cordova was an expert surgeon of world-wide reputation. There were renowned surgeons, opticians, dentists and specialists in female diseases. The science of optics owes much to Muslim research. Al-Hazan, who understood the weight of air, corrected the misconceptions of the Greeks as to the nature of vision and demonstrated, for the first time in hisory, that the rays of light come from the external object to the eye itself, impinging on external things. He showed that the retina is the seat of vision, and proved that impressions made upon it were conveyed along the nerves to the brain. He discovered that the refraction of light varied with the density of the atmosphere and *vice versa*.

In Baghdad, there were no less than 860 doctors of different classes, each class of whom made one particular branch of medicine their special study. Doctors as well as chemists had to pass an examination in order to obtain a license to practise. There were hospitals throughout the wide Muslim empire. All classes of people, irrespective of their creed, caste, colour and country, were freely admitted to these hospitals.

Geography & History.—There are in Arabic many immortal works on Geography. The spherical shape of the globe was demonstrated by the Muslims at a time when the sciences of priest-ridden Europe emphatically asserted that it was flat. The great historical achievements of the Muslims are too well-known to require detailed mention. They produced several thousand books on history, ranging in magnitude from one or eight volumes.

To sum up, for about one thousand years the Muslims made hisory; they held aloft the torch of light and learning and spread knowledge and culture throughout the world. But for the vast intellectual heritage bequeathed

(Continued on page 6)

Musings Of A Pensioner--IX

(Continued from page 1)

Plato to Bradley. Nor yet are we faced with such problems—a point we have touched on already—as those of an infinite past or an infinite regress of causes or time without any beginning. Nor have we, again, to inquire why a deity that never was not was yet moved at some time to create. All such problems would seem on our view to be void of all meaning whatever. We are rooted in ultimate reality, supposing that thereby you mean the first cause or the source of the process.

"We may say, looking back on it now, that the process began or commenced. But the source of the process did not. If you speak of commencing creator, he neither commenced then in time nor commenced then creating time, since we saw that in time he was not. If with time, not in time he created. We borrow and adapt to our purpose St. Augustine's historic distinction: *non est factus mundus in tempore sed cum tempore*."

God was not in time, but time was in him and by the uttering of the word "Be" for a purpose he set the time process in motion:

"He was also the source of the process called process in time or time-process, as willing a means to an end. What he willed he, however, was not. But, if so, was he not 'above time' *supra tempus*—in that further sense, as distinct from the means that he willed and distinguished thereby from himself? We may even go further and say that he was, and will be eternal, paradoxical though it may sound.

More precisely, it seems that the means, being willed, constituted an object, to use philosophical language. If so, he himself was the subject as such, knew himself, was self-conscious, distinguished himself from his object. In that sense, again, I suppose, we may call him with reason transcendent, though immanent, perhaps, in the means as a dreamer, for instance, in his dreams or an artist in the work of his hands or in some kindred sense of the term. This would, doubtless, imply at the first a duality of subject and object or even a certain dualism, provided such terms must be used, when they might well, I think, be dispensed with. Again, if you care to to put it—James Ward might, I think, thus have put it—the two constituted experience, the first living, concrete experience, the primeval 'I' and his means."

Origin Of The Time-Process

He explains the origin of the time-process by the following example:

"To return to the primeval 'I' we suppose his conceiving an end tantamount to his willing a means. Hence we said both 'conceiving' and 'willing,' as distinct from 'conceiving then willing.' Is this not the case with ourselves here and now on occasion, at least, or as nearly as may be the case? Thus we want information; we telephone—that is an instance from James. If the telephone is to our hand, then conceiving the call—or information—coincides with the willing the means—telephoning, that is to obtain it. To take another commonplace instance, I happen to be in the bathroom. I purpose to have a cold bath ('I decide to,' we commonly say) and may turn on the cold tap therewith. But in neither of these simple cases is the purpose itself reached instantly. There follows a temporal process. And that, of necessity, is so, where a means to an end has been willed. For a means is *qui* means, not the end, and a means to an end means a process and time, *qui* succession and change.

"Now, we cannot suppose, I imagine, that the purposive 'I' that we posit came short of the power that we wield in our humble and commonplace way or did not, indeed, vastly transcend it. We, therefore, have in the beginning a

purposive 'I' and a means, whatsoever that means may have been."

We can further say that evolution takes the place of design, and thus the discredited argument from design in its old fashion does not apply.

The time-process explains also how evil exists in this universe:

"Perhaps we can explain on our theory the time-honoured problem of evil or trace it, at least to its source. For the Good we may regard as the purpose or, again, as the ultimate goal. But, if so, nothing else is the Good. As the process comes short of the Good, whether viewed as the purpose or goal, it would seem to be 'not good' or 'evil,' as also its aspects or phases. Such evil, that is, is a means. Yet a means may be relatively good—that is, good as a means to an end.

God Is A Hidden Treasure

"We may call the primeval 'I' good as conceiving the Good as an end. He was also distinct from the means—we recur to that point in a moment—and thus there was in him no evil. But evil has arisen from his working by way of a means to an end. He appears in that sense as its author, nor could he *ipso facto* prevent it.

"As he did not and could not at once realise his own purpose or end, so he must in that sense have been limited. Infinite, indeed, you may call him, provided you mean by the statement that no one could set limits to him, determine, thwart, limit his act. You are driven, however, to call him in a deeper significance finite or limited, namely, in act by his purposive nature or essence, his choosing a means to an end, with the limits implied in that fact. And these limits are not 'self-imposed' in the obvious sense of that term, as philosophers sometimes suggest, not to speak here of odd theologians. Similar reflections hold good of attributing omnipotence to him, as though, in the common French phrase, he was capable of anything or everything."

The why and the wherefore of it is inscrutable. If we were able to assign reasons we would be trying to read the mind of a Being, the mere thought of Whom makes the mind of man reel.

It can only be hinted at by some such tradition as the saying attributed to Our Holy Prophet that God told him He was a hidden treasure and wished that his powers should be known.

To the objection that man would be creating God in his own image Cooke replies as follows:—

"Our primeval 'I' with a purpose in that sense was clearly a person, no inscrutable 'being' or *ens*. He was active, moreover, *did* something, and explains, satisfies our inquiries. As an adequate cause of the process we call the time-process or history, we know him as just such an 'I' as could set that time-process in motion. We may call him, in consequence, God.

"Should the reader object that our view or conception is anthropomorphic we grant it at once—in a sense. Being purposive, consciously willing the means to a purpose or end, is, at least to the best of our knowledge, peculiar to man on this earth and to man in his latest developments call them or not best or fullest. And wherein lies *rational* acting, if not in such purposive willing? And why not impute this to God? It has nothing in common with the crude attribution of passions or parts.

"It has also great value, I think. Ontological abstractions or Absolutes, such as, I suppose, for example, the Jewish Aïn Soph of the Kabbalists, make no appeal to most men and must leave them unutterably cold, even though we suppose them realities. Never did deities appeal to the vast

generality of men, were they not in the likeness of man—represented in some sense as human. Our conception of God, I conclude, is no worse but, if anything, the better for being thus anthropomorphic."

The God Of Islam

I stated earlier that on the theory of purposive creation, we can very well replace design by evolution although as Cooke points out the one is involved in the other if we interpret design as meaning purpose. By adapting an argument of Oscar Ljungstrom in the article I have quoted previously the purpose underlying the evolution does explain what the modern evolutionary doctrine does not explain:—

"What is it, please, that evolves in a series of disconnected bodies, of which each lives and dies and is done with? It is as if you put upon your table,

first a clay pitcher, and threw it out of the window; thereafter a china jug, letting it go the same way; and finally a crystal vase. Is that the evolution of a clay pitcher into a crystal vase?"

Here we see the purpose evolving from the clay pitcher, into the china jug and finally into the crystal vase in accordance with God's purposive will.

The strength of our religion lies in the fact that we have an authentic Revelation direct from God preserved in its original purity.

My readers will now be in a position to realise that merger with God is a logical deduction following from the thought concept of an absolute ultimate Reality which is dead as a door-post, but that such an idea is entirely opposed to the faith of Islam that God is a living personal God, both Transcendent and Immanent.

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