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Islam—A Universal Religion of Peace And Progress

It Has Made A Life Of Service And Sacrifice Within The World The Crown Of Human Existence

By Maulavi Abdul Karim, B. A.
Retired Inspector of Schools, Bengal

BELIEF in the existence of a Supreme Being with supernatural powers and performance of duties of love and obedience to Him is what is generally understood by Religion. Of all the handiworks of God man is the master-piece. He is an amalgam of divinity and brutality. By developing the divine element in his nature man can elevate himself to the loftiest plane of morality and spirituality; and by allowing unrestricted scope to the development of the germs of evil in him he may lead himself to the lowest depth of degradation. Thus, while by developing his unlimited moral and spiritual potentialities man may excel the angels and approach the borders of Divinity, by giving free rein to his carnal passions he may drag himself down to a much lower level than that of brutes.

Prophet

In order to teach man how to develop his unlimited capacity for spiritual progress and to control his vicious propensities, Allah, the Supreme Being, was pleased to send down, from time to time, inspired teachers, known as Prophets. Thus, there appeared among all nations in different ages and different climes, Messengers of God for their instruction and uplift.

On account of inaccessibility of different places and lack of inter-communication, the earlier Messengers had been intended for particular nations and particular countries, and their teachings were exclusively adapted to local needs and conditions. Moreover what these Messengers—Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Jesus—had taught got corrupted in course of time, unwarranted interpolations finding place in the Scriptures revealed through them. That some of these Scriptures had to be "modernised" from time to time in order to make their teachings suited to the changed circumstances, unmistakably shows that they were not intended for all time.

Change of world circumstances leading to improvement of communication enabled people of distant countries to meet and exchange thoughts and ideas. This made the appearance of a universal Prophet, with a message for the whole of mankind, essentially necessary. A religion of peace and progress became a supreme necessity in a world afflicted by fanatical differences and discord. A common faith alone could remove this obsession and usher in an era of cultural progress of science and civilisation. The advent of such a messenger for the propagation of a universal religion had been foreshadowed by some of the previous Messengers of God. "The piety of Moses and of Christ," says Davenport, "rejoiced in the assurance of a future Prophet more

illustrious than themselves and the Evangelists' promise of a paraclete or Holy Ghost, the Comforter, was pre-figured in the name and accomplished in the person of the greatest and last of God's Prophets."

Prophet of Islam

To Asia, the cradle of prophets and patriarchs, of saints and sages, belongs the credit of producing this great Messenger, whose noble message of the unity of God and the equality of man served, more than anything else did before or after, to bring about the uplift of the human race and to establish peace and good-will on earth. This great Messenger was Hazrat Muhammad, also called Ahmad, the Prophet of Islam. He was born at Mecca in Arabia in the year 570 A. D. His advent synchronised with a time when intellectual sterility and spiritual stagnation prevailed all over the world, gross immorality and rank superstition swayed mankind, and disgraceful wrangling over creeds and horrible persecution for religious belief played havoc with the social harmony and political homogeneity of the human race. In this respect Arabia was in a worse condition than any other country. The Arabs were sunk so low in idolatry, immorality, superstition and barbarism that no language can give an adequate description of their social disorganisation and spiritual degradation. They had no belief in the life to come and had hardly any idea of virtue and vice. Drunkenness, debauchery, gambling, rapacity, blood-thirstiness and all other heinous vices were rampant among them. The sword was unsheathed on the slightest provocation and blood was shed on the flimsiest pretext. In fact there was hardly any vice to which the Arabs were not passionately addicted. Thus the Arabs, of all peoples, needed most the services of an inspired personality for their regeneration.

(Continued on page 7)

Muslims--The Teachers of Barbarous Europe

Islam's Civilising Power

Cannon Isaac Taylor, who formed a very decided opinion of the civilising power of Islam, writes as follows :—

"It is not the first propagation of Islam that has to be explained, but it is the permanency with which it retains its hold upon its converts. An African tribe, once converted to Islam, never reverts to paganism and never embraces Christianity. When Mohammadanism is embraced by a Negro tribe, paganism, devil-worship, fetishism, cannibalism, human sacrifice, infanticide, witch-craft at once disappear. The natives begin to dress, filth is replaced by cleanliness, drunkenness becomes very rare, gambling is forbidden, the immodest dance and the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes cease. Hospitality becomes a religious duty, female chastity is regarded as a virtue, industry replaces idleness, law, order and sobriety prevail, a feeling of humanity, benevolence and brotherhood is inculcated. Polygamy and slavery are regulated, their evils restrained. Islam, above all, is the most powerful total abstinence association in the world; whereas the extension of European trade means the extension of drunkenness and vice and the degradation of the people. Islam introduces a civilisation of no low order, including a knowledge of reading and writing, decent clothing, personal cleanliness, veracity and self-respect. Its restraining and civilising effects are marvellous. How little have we to show for the vast sums of money and all the previous lives lavished upon Africa? Christian converts are reckoned by thousands, Muslim converts by millions. These are the stern facts we have to face. They are extremely unpleasant facts; it is folly to ignore them."

"We cannot consider in this place," says Chambers' Encyclopædia, "what Islam has done for the cause of all humanity, or more exactly, what is its share in the development of science and art in Europe. Broadly speaking, the Mohammedans may be said to have been the enlightened teachers of barbarous Europe, from the ninth to the thirteenth century. . . . Arabic philosophy, medicine, natural history, geography, history, grammar, rhetoric and the 'golden art of poetry,' schooled by the old Hellenic masters, brought forth an abundant harvest of works, many of which will live and teach as long as there will be generations to be taught."

Greatness of Fasting To Attain Mystic Knowledge

By The Sufi Movement of Ceylon, Kandy

The Prophet who appeared in the world exercised many a devotional practice to receive Divine Grace. Out of these they considered fasting the main exercise. All religious leaders, saints, mystics or sufis have spoken of fasting in urging tone.

Fasting is the main factor and power to avoid falling a victim to the elementary nature of the material body. One's ancient mystic knowledge dawns through this great exercise, which is incumbent on every male and female. The 448 veins and arteries attached to the organs of the material body, twist to the call of the stomach. This has caused forgetfulness of the ancient mystical understanding. The deeper thought of Fasting is to control the desire and to revive this Mystical Knowledge.

The third Law of Islam urges fasting. By fasting only, the nature of elements (Anasir) could be controlled and subdued to Divine Truth. If a tropical tree is watered incessantly its roots become benumbed and would not yield its fruits during the due season. So it is with our bodies. If we feed ourselves day and night without a limit the nerves get benumbed. Then dull, lazy nature (Hammara, Lawwama) overpowers the system. This is a barrier to the attainment of mystic knowledge. Therefore, do not forget that it is incumbent on every one to obey the third law. The benefit of fasting is to attain ancient mystic knowledge. "By reducing your meals give vigour to your Soul." "Who ever tries to fast, his mind will be active and thoughts lofty." Sufi Schibuli Rahumathullahi says—"Out of the days I fasted to attain Truth, not a day did I fail to acquire Divine Knowledge (Ilham) and something new." It is clear that the intoxication of the knowledge of elements of this material body is a barrier to attain (Nure Ilahi) Divine Grace. The greatness of knowing the True Sense is within you; should you not be sensible of it?

Some think that fasting is creating a day out of the night and filling the belly to its brim. Fatigued and ferocious in the day while sound sleep in the night—no prayer, no meditation. Is this fasting? Are these the habits of fasting? No, not at all. These are signs of elementary nature. When the food bag is full a gas rises from there and goes up to the brim. This makes man dull and lazy. His intelligence dies. His sense fails. His thoughts waver. But the proper fasting would give him material health and angelic (Malakkaniath) nature. This is enlightenment.

Once the disciples asked Muhammad (P. O. H.) "Lord, what is (Blees) Satan?" He said, "Wherever there is heavy blood there is room for Satan's mischief." Then they asked, "Lord, for you too is it so?" He said, "My (Rab) Creator made it a (aladu) servant

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Women's Section

The Plight Of The Educated Girl

Innocent Victim Of Spiteful Scandal

By MISS LAYLA HUSSAIN.

IT is a common human failing, especially among women, to believe as true the ill-reports we hear of others. Mrs. Iqbalunnissa Hussain was quite right when in her article last week she said that social gatherings provide for many women splendid opportunities for scandal. More often than not, these scandals are concoctions of spiteful or envious minds. I know of several instances where girls, who have been entirely eclipsed by others in their school-career, or did not get the prizes or jobs which the others secured, try to minimize the outstanding merits, sterling qualities, and educational brilliance of the latter by spreading false reports of their mode of living and so on. These fictitious reports are readily believed by the mothers, and even fathers who should know better, of these wicked girls who scandalize their betters.

Therefore, the fate of the educated girl today is most unfortunate in the Muslim community. She is very often the victim of the malice, envy, and spite of girls of inferior stuff. All kinds of atrocious things are falsely attributed to her. If, for instance, for the sake of earning her livelihood she takes up the post of a teacher (say, in a convent for there are no Muslim Girls' Schools in Ceylon), she is at once condemned in very uncharitable terms. She is even accused of not offering the five-times-daily prayers, of not fasting, and of worse things than these. But her detractors are the very girls, who having every facility at home yet do not pray, do not fast, and so on, and whose brothers or husbands or fathers are addicted to the forbidden drink and other vices condemned by Islam. And the mischief does not end here. Their hymn of hate against their betters and superiors is repeated by the male members of the family who despite their superior learning have readily swallowed as true the malicious outpourings of the spiteful minds of their daughters, nieces or sisters. God in the Holy Quran says, "O ye who believe, avoid frequent suspicions, verily some suspicions are a sin, and be not inquisitive; nor backbite each other."

Charity Begins At Home

Those of us who are addicted by force of habit to spread scandal and to believe scandal will do well to remember our own defects and the defects of the members of our own family circle. If girls in our own families do not pray, do not fast, and have sometimes behaved questionably, what right have we to sling mud at others who are perhaps far better than ourselves or our girls. True reformation must begin from within our own household or family circle. It is a mockery to denounce others for faults which members of our family richly possess.

Another common failing among many of us is the tendency to cast aspersions on the conduct of a person whose statements we want to correct or criticize. We may not know that individual personally, we may have no first-hand knowledge of him or her, yet we rush to insinuate all kinds of uncharitable things basing our statements on mere hearsay. Prejudice dies hard with many. Why cannot we correct another without making personal insinuations? Are the members of our family circle better than those whom we rush to correct or criticize, adding a pinch of spiteful insinuation in the bargain?

The Price of Pioneers

Let not this reprehensible habit that exists among many Muslims damp the enthusiasm of the few educated girls in our midst. They are pioneers in this field and they have to pay the price of pioneers. God alone knows the secrets of all hearts. So long as our educated girls remain true to themselves, they can well afford to treat all scandalous talk and venomous insinuations with cold indifference and silent contempt.

Reason, Not Miracle,—
The Test of Truth

Unique Character of the Quran

By MISS LUBNA KHALEEL

I was once highly amused to hear a lady asking me what miracles our Holy Prophet had performed. She also pointed out that Jesus Christ had performed many miracles. I say I was highly amused because to us Muslims miracles are very ordinary things. Apart from the miracles of our Holy Prophet, even in much later times our Muslim saints have from time to time performed such astonishing miracles as make the miracles spoken of in the Bible pale into insignificance. Even today there are Muslim saints to whom miracles are mere child's play. And in almost every important town even in a non-Muslim land like Ceylon there are shrines of saints whose performance of miracles is a well-known fact. In Colombo alone there are shrines of over a dozen well-known miracle-workers.

What we have to remember is that reason and not miracle is the test of truth. It is in this respect that the Holy Quran differs from other revelations which were preached and accepted on the strength of reported miracles. It deprecates the working of wonders in order to secure belief. Its beauty and its appeal to reason and to the nature around it were its chief weapons in the fight. Reason, logic and the appeal to, and the observance of, nature, have always been used by the Holy Quran for the furtherance of its precepts. The Holy Quran is the only book of its kind which cites the working of the universe for the elucidation of its truth. Nothing is taught in a dogmatic way. No one is forced to accept anything which seems unintelligible or contrary to reason.

Khwaja Kamal-ul-Din has said: "The Holy Quran in this respect, seems to me, unique. Perhaps the times of the other prophets were not suitable for allowing the truth to be taught on a rational basis, Jesus did not give the whole truth, as his disciples could not bear it. He always complained of the low standard of their intellect; therefore, he had to teach them through stories and parables. He had to do as we do nowadays, when we try and explain things to a child by illustrations and stories. To give such a class of people something just, logical and reasonable, on its merits, was like throwing pearls before swine."

Children's Corner

The Prize Winners In Competition
No. 1.

DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS,

I am happy to be able to announce today the names of the lucky winners in Competition No. 1. Let me offer them my heartiest congratulations, and let me also express my appreciation of the splendid efforts of the others. May they have better luck next time!

The Judge of the Competition, Mr. M. I. M. Haniffa, B. A. (Lond.), Advocate, has very sympathetically and carefully examined the numerous entries and awards the prizes to the following children:—

GIRLS

1st Prize: Miss Maas Dharamani Amath (16 years of age) of "Glenroy", Galle Road, Colpetty, who scores 56 marks out of a total of 100.

2nd Prize: Miss M. Kuraisia Sally, (15 years of age) of 283, Trincomalie Street, Kandy; and Miss S. H. Satheyana (15 years of age) of "Ouvah House", Badulla, both of whom tie for the second prize by scoring 53 marks each.

BOYS

1st Prize: Master Tuan Zainudeen Kitchil (15 years of age) of 143, old Kollonnawa, Dematagoda, who scores 55 marks.

2nd Prize: Master Abdul Majid Quilliam Hasan (14 years of age) of 882, Peradeniya Road, Kandy, who scores 54 marks.

The prizes will be sent to the winners in due course.

Commenting upon the entries, the Judge, Mr. Haniffa, says that some of the entries contained answers directly copied from books, others were full of spelling and grammatical mistakes and poorly expressed sentences, still others were spoilt by bad and untidy writing. A brother and sister sent exactly the same answers. I hope all of you will make a note of this, and avoid such things in future.

I was interested to note that one of the entries was from a non-Muslim boy, Master Stanley de Silva, who is interested in Islam. Unfortunately he has not been able to win one of the prizes this time. I hope he will be able to do so in one of the subsequent competitions.

Now watch for the next competition and make preparations for it by carefully reading the Children's Corner every Saturday.—Your friend,

THE EDITOR.

Simple Lessons In Islam

BY

His Holiness Maulana Mohamed

Abdul Aleem Siddiqui

and

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

1. Q. Where was our Prophet born?
A. Our Prophet was born in Mecca in Arabia.
2. Q. What was the parentage of our Prophet?
A. Our Prophet belonged to the most noble tribe of *Quraysh*. He was the son of ABDULLA, who was the son of ABDUL MUTH-ALIB. ABDUL MUTH-ALIB was the son of HASHIM, who was the son of ABDUL-MANAF. His mother's name was AA-MINA.
3. Q. When and where was the Divine Message of ALLAH first revealed to our Prophet?
A. The Divine Message of ALLAH was first revealed to our Prophet through Angel JIBREEL at the age of forty in the cave at the foot of Mount Hira in Mecca.
4. Q. How did the people of Mecca regard our Prophet before he proclaimed his Prophethood?
A. The people of Mecca regarded our Prophet before he proclaimed his Prophethood as the most trustworthy and honest person among them and called him *Al-ameen* i.e. 'the Honest'.
5. Q. Did the people of Mecca accept the Apostleship of our Prophet when he first delivered to them the Message of ALLAH?
A. No; the people of Mecca did not at first accept the Apostleship of our Prophet when he delivered to them the Message of ALLAH against idols and idolatries. They persecuted him until he was welcomed by the people of Medina.
6. Q. What is the flight of our Prophet from Mecca to Medina called?
A. The flight of our Prophet from Mecca to Medina is called *Al-hijra* from which is reckoned the Islamic era.
7. Q. How did the people of Medina receive our Prophet?
A. Most of the people of Medina received our Prophet kindly, believed in his teachings and embraced Islam.

(To be continued)

Letters To The Editor

Musings of A Pensioner

SIR,—Please allow me the courtesy of your columns to express some views with regard to the series of articles, entitled "Musings of a Pensioner" which you are publishing in your very popular and widely-read paper. Although I am a very humble and insignificant person compared with the learned writer of the series, I trust that in the cause of Justice and Fair-play you will publish this letter which is written in good faith.

The articles I am referring to are indeed very brilliant although some of them are beyond the understanding of the average reader. But the value and beauty of the understandable articles are terribly marred by the cheap jibes and thrusts the learned writer indulges in against those who are not in his good odour. I can give instances from almost every article of his to show to what extent personal sarcasm and insinuations are used by the learned writer, but it would make this letter too long. Let me, however, give an illustration from the article published last Saturday.

Mr. Akbar says in the article: "Some-time back I heard a young Muslim broadcasting a talk on Islam and proudly quoting a Hadith of Our Holy Prophet in which he asked a Belouin I think, to trust in God but to tie his camel. This young Muslim teacher is *silly* mistaken.....Our Holy Prophet gave the advice to the recipient because it was the utmost that that man could assimilate and absorb at the time.

If this lecturer had the good fortune to have lived in the time of Our Prophet, he would no doubt have received the same advice." The italics are mine and the italicized words tell their own tale. But no reader can fail to observe the veiled sarcasm contained in the last two sentences of the quotation I have given. But Mr. Akbar is not satisfied with the sly dig he has given, so he again hits at the man by calling him further down in the article "*this potential divine*." Surely this is not in good taste. He also damps the enthusiasm of those who sincerely, according to their own lights, try to render some social service to the community by veiled insinuations wherever possible and in the concluding para of the article he contemptuously calls them "our budding social reformers."

Mr. Akbar will do well to bear in mind that reformation can be brought about by gentle persuasion and not by damning people for their remissness in their religious practices. By vehemently denouncing people for not praying five times a day etc., he will not succeed in setting them aright. Such a tactless attitude will only make matters worse. Reformation can take place only when the preacher wins the hearts of his audience. But Mr. Akbar's indulgence in personal insinuations only tend to drive people away and to aggravate the situation. Personal prejudices should not be allowed to over-ride one's balanced judgment.—etc.,

Thanking you for the valuable space.

Yours faithfully
J. T. ISMAIL.

Facilities for Women to Offer Tharawih Prayer

Sir,—Announcement is made in the "Star of Islam" with regard to the arrangements for conducting Tharawih prayer for ladies under the same Imam at the Wekande Mosque. It is very surprising that 'Tharawih' which is optional is paid greater attention to than the daily compulsory prayers. If arrangements can be made for 'Tharawih' why not arrangements be made for the daily compulsory prayers for the ladies to be conducted in the mosque by the same Imam.

I hope this will attract the attention of those who are making these arrangements.

Yours faithfully,
M. S. BASEER

[Note by Editor:—It was only in recent years that women and men—under strict Purdah arrangements—have been allowed to offer at least the Tharawih prayers in the Mosque under the same Imam, thanks to the lead given by the Wekande Jummah Mosque. The conditions governing the arrangements for the optional Tharawih prayers in this matter are different from the conditions that would govern those for the compulsory five-times daily prayers. Hence the authorities of the Wekande Jummah Mosque have begun with the easier thing first, and when the experiment has been given a good trial they would, we believe, make similar arrangements for the compulsory prayers].

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The Star of Islam

A CULTURAL WEEKLY

COLOMBO: OCTOBER 21, 1939



The Lessons That Ramazan Teaches

THE holy month of Ramazan presents a very pleasing spectacle when many of those Muslims, who had been neglectful of the compulsory prayers during the other months of the year, not only fast but also regularly offer their prayers. This is a clear indication that Ramazan is a month of special grace, and this grace coming from Allah softens many an indifferent heart and induces them to worship Him Whom they had almost forgotten. It is our fervent hope and prayer that these persons whom the grace of Allah has reminded of their duties to Him and to themselves in this month will continue even after Ramazan to prostrate themselves five times a day in worshipping Him, and thereby seek His pleasure.

Ramazan teaches us that Islam has, through its rational teachings, induced its votaries not only to abandon what is unlawful to them, but even to give up what otherwise rightfully belongs to them, in the hope that it may tend to the welfare and happiness of others. For one who has become accustomed, under the inspiration of Islam, to take such a view of his relations to his mundane connections and belongings, it is never difficult to manifest a spirit of utter self-sacrifice in the cause of the Lord. For how utterly impossible it becomes for a man to acquire by foul means what he would cheerfully give up for the service of others, though his own by all laws of justice and equity. This is the way in which Islam meets and provides for the case. It is quite admissible for one to eat and drink according to his means, but when we see that this same eating and drinking are given up for some time by a man, through fear of nobody, but for the love of Allah, then certainly it would be too hard

for him to over-indulge in it, even under ordinary circumstances. Prayers and fasting, therefore, are the first rungs on the ladder by which a genuine votary climbs higher and higher. Pass your eye down all the 90 per cent. of the crimes which darken our society, and you will surely find a cure for all of them in the simple expression spoken by the HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (on whom be Peace and Blessings) who said: "If people should become responsible as to the right use of what lies between their lips and feet, I stand responsible for their entry into Paradise." Islam prescribes the cure for this by fasting, which does not aim at tormenting the body, but that we should cultivate the habit of disallowing to ourselves the pleasures that are not ours, by disallowing to ourselves, for the love of Allah, those that are rightfully ours.

It is well for us this month to recall the fact that the Holy Quran prescribes for us a course of disciplinary measures rightly called the Fire Pillars of Islam, namely, the Formula of Faith—there is no object of adoration but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger; prayers; fasting; poor rate; and pilgrimage to Mecca. Their observance lies in our partially parting with that which we rightly possess. The Holy Book says: "By no means shall you attain to righteousness until, you spend out of what you love", such as time, occupation, food, wealth, family, business, friends, clothes, personal comforts, and above all our various objects of adoration. The formula demands from us that we give up every object of adoration before Allah. In prayer we part with our occupations; in fasting with food and drink etc., in poor rate with a portion of our wealth. Then comes pilgrimage. We leave our family, friends, business and country; we part with our clothes and comfort, covering ourselves only with two sheets. Our worldly concerns are our shackles and impediments: they are the prime disturbers of our peace of mind. Time, money, luxuries and comforts, family, friends, property, country, nationality are the ties which chain us down to earthly life. A person who does not know how to be above these ties, is not qualified to soar into the higher realms of the mind. First, he must learn how to become detached from the chains of association and circumstance—how to part with what is acting as an impediment in the way; and next, he must aspire to the higher ways of the mind. Islam has solved the problem. These five institutions are meant to achieve the purpose. You cannot strike the path to your highest goal unless you know how to part with the things you love. The observance of the five pillars of Islam will enable you to do this.

From The Mimbar

Allah's Punishment To Transgressors

Hold Fast To The Book Of Allah

Translation Of Sermon Delivered At The Week-end
Jumma Mosque On Friday, the 6th October 1939.

By KATHEEB M. T. T. AMEER

PRAISE be to Allah who forbade Himself to do injustice and prohibited His servants from doing it and decreed wretchedness and destruction as punishments for the defaulters. How many a village hath he destroyed and how many a folk hath he scattered and how many a home hath he uprooted. Sayeth He, "How many a community that dealt unjustly have we shattered," "and they wronged themselves, therefore we made them bywords (in the land) and scattered them totally." "(See) yonder are their dwellings empty and in ruins because they wronged." Never did Allah the Almighty cease from chastising the wrong doers but the delay, in punishing them, given so as to allow them to regret and repent has made them think that they are left alone.

Their arrogance and presumption blinded them in-as-much that they went deep in doing wrong. Glorified be the Just and Wise God who sees that equity is done by the strong to the weak. And He hath appointed a time and an inevitable date for everything.

I praise Him, glorified be He, and I thank Him for He never ceases to give His blessings to the thankful. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah. He is alone and hath no partner. A witness by which I hope to attain His protection and pleasure on the Day of Meeting. And I bear witness that our Lord Muhammad is His servant and His messenger, sent to deliver His message of salvation to all peoples. O Allah! Bestow Thy blessings and peace on Thy servant and messenger, Muhammad, and on his relatives and friends and on those who followed his footsteps. O mankind! Take for yourselves the means for success and ultimate happiness. Beware of things that would bring destruction and regrets. Beware of doing injustice for on the Day of Judgment your iniquities will transform themselves into darkness in which you will be groping for a place. Beware of Allah's schemes for none deemeth himself secure from Allah's scheme save those who are total losers. And whoever holds fast to the Book of Allah, then that shall be an unbreakable cord and those who avoid and turn away from that Book, shall have the devil for a companion appointed to him by Allah. Whoever prefers the worldly passions shall have to face destruction. Whoever suffers himself to be diverted by his worldly affairs from being righteous and dutiful to Allah he will surely go astray.

O Servants of Allah! These and such warning to you are plenty and they appear and disappear day and night. Allah's door of mercy and forgiveness is ever open for those who

repent. Pious actions and how to perform them are clear and inciting to those who seek them. And signs to show that they are always accepted by Allah are evident. Therefore brethren perform, for the welfare of yourselves, good deeds that would give rest to your souls before the time comes when no compensation will be accepted and when lamentations will be of no avail.

"Turn unto Him repentant, and perform them are clear and inciting to those who seek them. And signs to show that they are always accepted by Allah are evident. Therefore brethren perform, for the welfare of yourselves, good deeds that would give rest to your souls before the time comes when no compensation will be accepted and when lamentations will be of no avail."

"Turn unto Him repentant, and perform them are clear and inciting to those who seek them. And signs to show that they are always accepted by Allah are evident. Therefore brethren perform, for the welfare of yourselves, good deeds that would give rest to your souls before the time comes when no compensation will be accepted and when lamentations will be of no avail."

"And on the day of Resurrection thou (Muhammad) seest those who lied concerning Allah with their faces blackened. Is there not a home for the scorers in hell?" "And Allah delivereth those who ward off (evil) because of their deserts. Evil reacheth them not, nor do they grieve." "Allah is Creator of all things, and He is guardian over all things"

Sura 39 verses 54 to 62.

May All bless us all through the glorious Quran and benefit us all by the wise revelations. Verily Allah the Almighty is the benevolent, generous, beneficent, kind and merciful King, Amen.

(Translated by Moulvi M. A. Lafir.)

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THE PALESTINE QUESTION

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

III Immigration

(Continued from previous issue.)

ON the subject of immigration the White Paper concludes that His Britannic Majesty's Government will only be justified in the further development of the Jewish National Home by immigration if the Arabs are prepared to agree to such immigration, and not otherwise.

IN providing for the stoppage of immigration after five years, the White Paper states that "no further Jewish immigration will be permitted unless the Arabs of Palestine are prepared to acquiesce in it."

The Arabs appreciate the due respect given to their stand on the subject of Jewish immigration and the decision to bring it to an end. Yet as they had continually expressed their strong opposition to immigration, they can see no justification for the delay in putting this decision into force or for leaving the door open for its possible resumption. Such a stipulation engenders much doubt and lack of confidence, as it is not difficult to imagine that, in future, Arab acquiescence might be invoked when in fact no such acquiescence exists; as long as the government of the country is not in the hands of its people, there is not sufficient guarantee against such imperialistic tactics being used.

Continuance of Immigration

In spite of the above enunciated principle the British Government has decided the continuance of immigration for a large number of Jews in spite of Arab opposition.

The statement endeavours to justify the violation of this general principle by giving three excuses:

First, that the immediate stoppage of immigration would damage the financial and economic system of Palestine and thus affect adversely the interest of Arabs and Jews alike. But in fact it is the continuance of immigration that damages the economy of a small country congested with immigrants and suffering from serious unemployment and a long period of trouble and rest. The Arabs wish it to be known that the stoppage of immigration does not adversely affect their interests, but on the contrary such stoppage would have most beneficial results.

Secondly, that to stop abruptly further immigration would be unjust to the Jewish National Home. The Jewish National Home itself is based on injustice, and we cannot therefore see how an unjust cause can invoke justice. Before applying justice to the Jewish National Home it would be necessary to do justice to the people of the country.

Thirdly, that Palestine should contribute to the solution of the world Jewish problem. If the British Government sympathises with Jewish refugees, why should our country suffer for it? Our country has so far been forced to contribute considerably; but our national safety and existence make it incumbent upon us to oppose emphatically any continuance in this respect.

The One-Third Proportion

After all this, we read in sub-para 1 of para 14 of the White Paper that the British Government wishes to raise the Jewish population to approximately one-third of the population of the country, and with this in view they fixed the figure of 75,000 for new immigrants who would be allowed admission.

We fail to see on what basis this proportion is established. The Government itself, in para 6 of the White Paper, admits that "the population of the National Home (the Jews) had

risen to some 450,000, or approaching a third of the entire population of the country." It is therefore evident that the Jews have already acquired the above proportion, and so we fail to see why 75,000 are to be admitted. Besides Arabs and Jews, there are in the country citizens of various foreign states; and if the Jews are to have a proportion of approximately one-third the question arises as to whether these foreign citizens will be included with Arabs in the remaining two-thirds or not; and if the foreign citizens are so included it would be necessary to inquire to what ratio the Arabs would fall in their own land.

All these considerations lead the Arabs to conclude that, intentionally or unintentionally, a good deal of uncertainty surrounds their real future position in their country. In no case do the Arabs agree that the Jews should have a fixed numerical proportion of one-third or any other proportion, as such a position would be a real danger on Arab national existence.

The Existing Machinery

The White Paper stipulates that the existing machinery for ascertaining the economic absorptive capacity would be retained. The intended machinery is the same one that committed in the past unpardonable mistakes which led to the greater influx of immigrants and resulted in serious economic crises and wide-spread unemployment as referred to by the reports of experts and official commission.

Illegal Immigrants

In the White Paper the British Government declares its intention to check illegal immigration, but they had often said this without taking any practical steps towards that end, an illegal immigration on a large scale continued unceasingly. The British Government further states that the numbers of illegal immigrants, who cannot be deported, would be deducted from the yearly quotas. Although some of the illegal immigrants may be discovered, yet it cannot be said that all illegal immigrants are apt to be detected, thus leaving many undiscovered in the country.

Those dealing with illegal immigration among the Jews will find out that they incur no loss in the matter. Those who are discovered will be deducted from the yearly quotas, while those undiscovered will be a net profit. Could it not be reasonably said that in all this arrangement there is an implied encouragement for the continuance of such illegal practice? Why should no severe and deterrent penalties be laid against such practices?

The attitude of the Arabs towards immigration is uniform and unchangeable. It is the only natural attitude for a people who wish to preserve their national existence.

The Arabs insist on the complete stoppage of immigration and do not agree to anything less.

Towards the Jews who forcibly entered the country after the War against the will of the people, the Arabs have shown considerable conciliatory spirit. But if the British Government insist on depriving the Arabs of their clear rights, and the Jews insist on their ambitions in our sacred homeland, the Arabs would claim full right to reconsider their attitude in the matter.

IV. Lands

The Reports of expert Commissions, to which the White Paper refers, prove that arable land held by the Arabs is far below their need; and in spite of the fact that those reports were made eight or nine years ago, no restriction has been imposed on the transfer of Arab lands to Jews, as para 16 admits. Since then the transfer of Arab lands to Jews has continued and the normal growth of the population has taken its natural course, thus resulting in the fact that the Arab population has now a greater need for land than it had at the time those expert Commissions made their respective findings.

Now after this considerable delay the new policy carries for us a very incomplete set of measures. Para 10 of the White Paper conveys to the mind that the country will be divided into areas, wherein transfer will be prohibited, restricted or allowed respectively. Para 17, however, at once proceeds to pacify the Jews in that this arrangement is temporary and that it will be open for the High Commissioner to review or modify it, thus making mitigation or removal of restrictions dependent on the development of cultivation methods and the increase of production.

It is worth noting that this arrangement is based on one of the provisions of the Mandate, that "the administration of Palestine, while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced, shall encourage close settlement by Jews on the land."

This theory can never be agreed to by the Arabs. There is the crying need of future generations for land; and moreover, the question is not one of an injury requiring a local remedy as circumstances permit. It is before and above all a question of the safety of our sacred heritage and the Arabs accordingly insist on a complete and final prohibition of any transfer of lands from Arabs to Jews.

Conclusion :

In summing up it may be concluded that the policy outlined in the White Paper does not satisfy Arab demands; and notwithstanding the statement by the British Government in para 3 of the White Paper that "His Majesty's Government are convinced that in the interests of the peace and well-being of the whole people of Palestine a clear definition of policy and objectives is essential," it is at once apparent that the British Government have surrounded their policy with ambiguity and indefiniteness in matters which inevitably call for clarity and definition.

The promised Independence is so bound by restrictions and conditions as to make it more of an illusion than a reality. Moreover the British Government intend to retain power in the country during the transitional period which may be protracted to more than 10 years. The share of the people in Government during the transitional period is not made to exceed the appointment of some officials to posts in the present Mandatory system, and the country is made to remain without a Constitutional National Government such as that enjoyed in the neighbouring countries.

The Jewish National Home, the cause of all evil in the country, is still recognised, and it is further desired to confirm it and give it a "special position."

The continuance of Jewish immigration is ensured for five years under the administration in whose days hundreds of thousands of immigrants and tens of thousands of illegal ones entered the country, and which administration has brought about the calamities and unhappy situation now existing in the country.

The possibility of land transfer has not been finally removed, and the matter is made to rest in the hands of the High Commissioner and left to "circumstances."

All this points to an obstinate persistence in error rather than to a serious attempt being made to deal with the real causes of the lamentable situation now prevailing in the country.

Taking into consideration all these facts, the Arab Higher Committee is bound to proclaim, on behalf of the Arabs of Palestine, their refusal of this policy and their inability to co-operate with the British Government in its execution.

Para 13 of the White Paper stipulates that "apart from other considerations such a policy (rule by force) seems to His Majesty's Government to be contrary to the whole spirit of article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, as well as to their specific obligations to the Arabs in the Palestine Mandate."

In spite of this, the British Government still endeavour to force on the Arabs against their will, rights and demands, a policy based on the Mandate. Moreover, they will have to resort still further to a rule by force as the fears of the Arabs will not be dissipated and their anxieties not be allayed unless their demands are fully and immediately satisfied. Consequently, the British Government will remain responsible before God, history and humanity, for the continuance of the bloodshed, suffering and destruction which have been solely brought about by the rule of force hitherto imposed by them on the Arabs.

The Last Word

In deciding the fate of a living nation, the last word does not rest with White or Black Papers; it is the will of the Nation itself that decides its future. The Arab people have expressed their will and said their word in a loud and decisive manner, and they are certain that with God's assistance they will reach the desired goal:

Palestine shall be independent within an Arab federation and shall remain forever Arab.

A Word of Thanks

The Arab Higher Committee sends its greetings to the Arabs of Palestine who, in defending themselves and their homeland, are undergoing such privations and suffering, and have earned universal respect by their patience and fortitude, proving thereby that they are worthy of remaining citizens of the Holy Land.

On behalf of Palestine, the Committee extends to the people and Government of the Arab and Moslem world their heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the kind assistance and support which they have shown towards the Arabs of Palestine in these difficult times.

Similar thanks and appreciation are due to all those liberal and humanitarian persons who have nobly supported Palestine in its ordeal. The Committee earnestly hopes that the continuance of this support will surely guarantee the attainment of the final goal, with God's help.

THE ARAB HIGHER COMMITTEE
30th May, 1939

11 Rabi El Akher, 1355.

Musings Of A Pensioner-XI

Lack Of Leaders Of The Indian Type

Sedulous Aping Of The European

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

AS confession is said to be good for the soul, the real reason why I gladly accepted the suggestion of the Editor-in-Chief that I should write this series of articles was a selfish one. It was not due to selfishness as vulgarly understood, namely the desire to show off or to parade one's learning, though I have no doubt that many of my Muslim co-religionists will inevitably think that vanity is the driving force of these articles. If they think so, I will not contradict them, for we Muslims are now in the transition stage from infancy to manhood, and we are exhibiting all the diseases that are peculiar to the infantile stage, such as teething, measles, hay-fever etc. For several centuries we Muslims were asleep and ignorance and prejudice reigned supreme, with the result that we lost ground heavily and our leaders, both religious and social, were marked by bigotry and arrogant conservatism. We have just broken through the shackles by the mercy of God and what do we find, jealousy, rivalry, envy and uncharitable feelings and a desire to shine by ourselves and not to allow others to outstrip us.

Most of us are incompetent to do anything by ourselves and we will not allow others more competent to take a leading part. If my readers think that the above criticisms are more apt in my own case than in those of others in Ceylon, I gladly accept the correction, for it must be understood that my remarks apply with great appositeness to Muslims outside Ceylon and never to anyone in Ceylon except my own humble self. Nor did I venture to write this series for the reasons given by a writer recently as regards those who quote Shakespeare and Bacon, namely, because I was lazy to think for myself or because I was afraid to express my own views.

Purpose of Experiment In Authorship

My experiment in authorship was really undertaken as an aid to my own thinking and to a clarification of my own ideas. As a judge I discovered very early in my judicial career that, after having carefully absorbed the arguments of opposing counsel, the decision could only be arrived at when I came to write the judgment. Often I did not know myself what the ultimate result of the case would be until I came to the closing sentences of the judgment. My readers will see how all this agrees with Socrates' ideas on education, namely that all knowledge is really innate in man's breast and that the function of education is to drag it out from the hidden recesses of the mind out into the open. As regards many Muslims who are busy aping the West to the neglect of their own religion, for example in the matter of dancing the Lambeth Walk etc., can they not see for themselves how the Indians and the Sinhalese and Tamil in Ceylon are sticking to their own customs, their own language and their own religion? Dr. Tagore has written extensively to show that no true culture is possible in an alien medium. If the Muslims of Ceylon have no national cultures of their own they have a far higher source of culture in the Islamic Culture. Some of the educated and half educated Muslims in Ceylon by playing the sedulous ape to the European, are really following the footsteps of the Sinhalese and Tamils of fifty or sixty years ago, and not of the Sinhalese and Tamils of the present day. Is it surprising then that we Muslims are losing ground daily, be-

cause most of us are following a Will-o'-the-wisp and we have at the same time to compete with virile nations whose foundations are set in concrete on their own native cultures and religions.

I wish here to prophesy that unless the Muslims in Ceylon carefully regulate their lives on the Islamic religious law there will be no Muslim Community in a few years more. I do not say that the individuals will be all dead; what I mean is that there will be no Muslim Community knit together by a common ideal, that is Islam. Individually they may be wealthy, prosperous, happy and have a good time until, as God says, the period of respite fixed by Him is over (*Andhaan Kaleel*) after which the day of reckoning will break suddenly like a cloud burst. The first steps that all Muslim social reformers should take must be to see that each member, man, woman, and child (above the legal age) observes the practice of the five daily compulsory prayers and the fast during the sacred month of Ramazan. Unless these steps are first taken, there is no hope for us Muslims and we are bound to come within the heel of the majority community in Ceylon, as we Muslims are already beginning to realise now.

A Legacy of Slavery

Are we Muslims to leave a legacy of slavery to our posterity or are we to take a proud share with the other communities in the governing of this country? It was for this reason that I advocated the establishment of a fully residential university in Kandy with separate hostels for Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Christians and a chair for Islamic Philosophy in the near future and 60 free scholarship to be awarded to poor students of all denominations every year (see the Buchanan-Riddell Commission Report of which I was a member). The Muslim hostel would be under a Muslim Warden and there would be provision for religious observance. I even visualised a mosque within the university premises. My dream would not be possible in Colombo. In the first place a University which will come into being within a sylvan setting, will only be possible if the state is willing to spend money uninterruptedly for the achievement of the national ideal. It is only when the mood of the nation is set in this way, that money will be provided abundantly for the four different hostels, the

establishment of the four different cultures and the sixty scholarships.

If the vote went in favour of Colombo that meant that every effort will be made to adopt a cheese-paring policy and the ideal of education will be subordinated to the commercial spirit. Why is there in Ceylon a lack of leaders of the Indian type, men of vision and humanity? It is because all of us in Ceylon have received an unnatural shoddy education which has suppressed all our natural and creative instincts and gifts and which has dangled before us the soul-killing path of imitation and the adoption of second-hand ideas. No nation can aspire to live which has no provision in its educational agenda for an expansion of the natural forces of its members.

My Muslim readers will now see why I advocated the establishment of the University upcountry and why my Muslim colleagues in Council misunderstood and opposed me and why the motion was carried in spite of their opposition. As I have said there is no vanity impelling me to write these articles. I have done with vanities for I am face to face with the inevitable, where matters will be resolved in the light of their own inherent justice and intrinsic value, and when no account will be taken of other than these and when as a matter of fact, as the Quran says, "the low desires" of man will carry with them their own punishment. The trouble with the present-day Muslims is that ordinarily only the very poor, the ignorant and humble are regular in their observance of the daily prayers and their fast, but it is a blind parrot-like observance. Owing to their ignorance of the Arabic tongue the prayers are uttered mechanically and the soul does not accompany the words. Allah says "Remember me and I will remember you" and Syedena Muhayyadeen El Arabi's comment on these words is that Allah, true to His

promise, will only remember the suppliant's tongue and not his soul, in the great majority of cases.

Necessity For Implicit Obedience to Allah's Commands

In the case of the educated Muslims most of them are very eloquent in public, but they studiously avoid the commands of God, in the matter of prayers, fasting and the other rules regulating conduct, especially those regarding food, on the ground that they are only disciplinary rules meant for the ignorant masses and not for their learned selves who are really "better Muslims at heart and more Islamic in conduct and demeanour and more informed in Islam than others who try to make a parade of their piety." If the higher knowledge of Islam means a direct flouting of God's commands to pray five times a day and fast during Ramazan and not to eat food prohibited by Him, there is very little hope for us Muslims in such knowledge. The same learned writer said recently as follows:—"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 italics are mine). The learned writer then quotes—Sir Syed Ameer Ali (whom I had pleasure of meeting in London but whose English wife I had not the pleasure of meeting) as an additional reason why these ceremonial rules are not necessary in all stages of Muslim society, but Ameer Ali says nothing of the sort.

In the first place the rules were not prescribed by "the Arabian Prophet" but by God Almighty and if the authoress will read the Quran and the Hadith carefully she will find that the rules, far from being few, govern the whole of a man's or woman's life and that the observance of these rules will test and stretch a man or woman to

(Continued on page 8)

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Islam--A Universal Religion of Peace And Progress

(Continued from page 1)

Inception of Islam

Early in life Hazrat Muhammad gave unmistakable indication of noble qualities of head and heart. Though engrossed in worldly affairs, his vicious environment always kept his thoughts centred on the social, political and spiritual regeneration of his countrymen. How to purge them of their evil ways and to bring them to the path of piety and righteousness and how to make a great nation by uniting the warring tribes and repelling the foreign invaders, was the dream of his life. At the age of twenty-five marriage with a wealthy lady placed him above want and he spent much of his time in prayer and meditation in a mountain cave (Hira) near Mecca. There inspiration came from the Lord, and the Light, for which he was longing, dawned upon him. He realised that God is great (Allahu Akbar), that there is nothing else so great, that He is the Reality, that He is the only object of worship, that our whole strength lies in resigned submission to him, that the best form of His worship finds expression in rendering services to His created beings.

The more he meditated about religions reform the more was he convinced that the only true religion was pure monotheism, the essence of which is the glorification of God and the love of His creatures. Besides, he came to the conclusion that it was not an esoteric religion with intricate rituals, contentious dogmas and unattainable ideals that could regenerate demoralised humanity, but a simple, rational, practical religion that could be easily followed in every-day life, that could be actually lived and not merely believed.

Most of the religions promulgated before Islam had one supreme unmaterial God as their object of worship, but in course of time matter in some form or other came to be worshipped as God. Besides, each of these religions gradually got sub-divided into various sects, bitterly antagonistic to one another. Thus religion, which was originally intended to be a source of peace and order, became a pretext for dissension and disorder. Hazrat Muhammad came to the conclusion that such a reformed religion was required for their regeneration as would elevate and not demoralise humanity, would construct and not destroy society, would unite and not divide the people.

What is Islam

Islam is a universal religion proclaimed by the Messengers of God for the guidance of humanity. It is not the religion of any particular prophet so it cannot correctly be said to be the religion of Hazrat Muhammad in the sense in which Buddhism is popularly understood to be the religion of Buddha and Christianity the religion of Christ. The word "Muhammadanism" used by non-Muslims, is a misnomer; it has no place in Islamic vocabulary. In fact Islam is not a new religion. But for its broadened and universalised outlook it is the same old religion proclaimed by all Messengers of God—the religion of Noah, of Abraham, of Krishna, of Buddha, of Zoroaster, of Confucius, of Moses, of Jesus. But for the adulteration and deterioration in their teachings and the social changes that took place in course of time, there would have been no difference between religion and religion. Islam is not, therefore, a new religion, but the old religion purged of the impurities that had crept into it and modified to meet the requirements of time and developed condition of society.

The Muslims have thus to accept all true prophets of other nations as if they were their own. Under the categorical injunctions of the Quran a Muslim can make no distinction between one medium of light and another. Side by side with his own Prophet he has to regard all other Messengers of God as worthy of love and veneration. "They who say we believe in some of the apostles and reject others and seek to take a middle course in the matter, they are really unbelievers, and we have prepared for the unbelievers ignominious punishment. But they who believe in God and His apostles and make no distinction between any of them, unto these surely we give their reward: and God is gracious and merciful." Al-Quran.

The one absolute and eternal reality of God cannot be changed by giving Him different names in different languages and by worshipping Him by different methods in different temples. Although the differences of country, colour, race and language have divided mankind into thousands of groups, they all constitute only one family of the house of Adam and Eve, and one nationality of the human species. When their Creator is one they should recognise His absolute sovereignty and worship Him and Him alone.

Reformed Islam, which is the creed of resignation to Divine will, enjoins oneness of worship and singleness of the Almighty to Whom all should submit and surrender their entire selves. Peace is its dominant factor, its very essence. According to its Scripture, a Muslim is he who has made peace with God and His creatures. Peace with God implies complete submission to His will and peace with His creatures signifies doing good to one's fellow-beings. "If you love your Creator love your fellow-beings first; he is the most favoured of God from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures." Al-Quran.

Islam's Scripture

Islam does not consist in mere prayers and fasting and pilgrimage; the spirit and purpose underlying these formal observances have to be always borne in mind and acted upon. Besides, sinlessness is not the goal of a true Muslim, who longs for direct contact with his Creator and whose love for Him finds expression in service for His creatures without aspiring for reward here or hereafter. One reaching the limit of spiritual height is supposed to be absorbed in Divine origin.

The Scripture of Islam, the Quran, is a code of life and not a collection of dogmas. It is not a voluminous treatise on theism, but a social, penal, commercial, civil, military, judicial, international and yet a religious code, which regulates everything which a human being has to do for his welfare from the cradle to the grave. Though it gives solution to all important problems of human life and provides for every contingency of human affairs, it is wonderfully laconic, the whole of its teaching having been condensed in 9666 verses. It was the first in the field to proclaim the unity of God and the equality of man. Its teachings are purely rational, there is nothing dogmatic in it. It inculcates the noblest ideals of monotheism, universalism, democracy, fraternity, liberty and unity.

The Quran is the master-piece of the Arabic language and is exalted throughout the world for the simple grandeur of its diction, the chaste elegance of its style and the variety and magnificence of its imageries. Unlike the Scriptures

of other religions, the Quran has come down to us in its pristine purity, undefiled and unchallenged. Its inspiration is the only miracle to which the Prophet lays claim. Failing to produce from the whole range of their languages and literature, which had reached a high level, anything that could approach a single verse of the Quran, the Arab idolators had to desist from questioning its divine origin. After thirteen hundred years it still remains an unerring and unaltered guide to humanity.

Din and Mazhab

Religion, as a whole, consists of two parts, viz., *Din* and *Mazhab*, the abstract and the concrete. While *Din* represents the fundamental conception or creed of man about the universe and its Creator, *Mazhab* denotes the complex of rules, customs, conventions and institutions which govern human life in its manifold spheres. While *Din* in its nature has always been one and universal, absolute and permanent, *Mazhab* has largely been divergent, local, temporary and conditional in character. Thus every prophet while proclaiming the same *Din* had to adopt a different *Mazhab* in order to meet the particular demands of time, place, the stage of human development and the specific requirements of different peoples, separated from one another by geographical racial, national, cultural, linguistic and political barriers.

With the advent of Hazrat Muhammad the period of national Prophets and local *Mazhabs* came to an end. He removed all the misinterpretations and corruptions that had crept into different *Mazhabs* and evolved a perfect and universal *Mazhab*. Islam may, therefore, be said to be the fulfilment and completion of all previous religions. Thus in essentials there is hardly any difference between Islam and Christianity, shorn of all man-made dogmas. This does not mean that humanity has reached a finality and there is no scope for further evolution. It merely means

that *Mazhab* has now passed from the limited local and national stage to the universal and permanent stage.

For want of necessary information and education the people generally failed to realise the true import and implication of *Din* and *Mazhab*. Forms and formulae, rites and rituals of *Mazhab* were mistaken for real. This led to the formation of different religious sects, the followers of each one of which proclaimed that they were the chosen people of the Lord and they alone were entitled to salvation. Thus arose bitter religious controversies and quarrels which caused dissension and disruption among the human race. Islam put a stop to this by proclaiming that ever since the beginning of human habitation on the surface of the earth there has been only one *Din* revealed by God to His Prophets; it was only in *Mazhab* they differed. Salvation does not, therefore, lie in joining a particular religious group and labelling oneself by the name of a particular sect, but in realising and practising the spirit of real *Din* in thoughts, words and deeds.

Islam Revolutionised the Conception of Religion

Before the reformation of Islam by Hazrat Muhammad religion, as commonly understood, was a negation of the ideals, duties and utilities of the present earthly life of man, which was looked upon as an undiluted evil. The highest spiritual merit consisted in scrupulously eschewing it. Reformed Islam revolutionised the conception of religion by concerning itself as much with the earthly life as with the life to come. According to reformed Islam life here and life hereafter is one continuous stream. In fact the future of man depends on the present life by living which in all its fullness he builds his hereafter, thus working out his future salvation by proper conduct and action in this life.

(Continued on page 8)

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Musings Of A Pensioner-XI

(Continued from page 6)

the utmost: at least that is my experience (2—45 and 46; 84—6; 36—10 and 11; 73—8). Moreover I do not agree that the beauties of Islam have really been pointed out to Muslims by recent converts and that many Muslims do not realise the grandeur and majesty and truth of Islam. These remarks certainly apply to many Western-educated Muslims, including if you please myself, but they do not apply to the millions of other Muslims, who are not so educated, and who still remain true to Allah's commands. I am only pointing out these passages because it is a duty of a Muslim boldly to disagree when public expression is given to remarks which seem to contradict the Quran and the Hadith.

In my humble opinion a poor and ignorant Muslim who meticulously observes the rules set by God is a better Muslim than a learned one who imports exceptions into God's express commands, for his or her own convenience. (2—8 to 20).

Islam—A Social Religion

It is the duty of a Muslim to pray five times a day and to fast during Ramadan and he is to do so publicly. It is a religious obligation which we Muslims must fulfil and if a Muslim man or woman does this carefully there is no particular merit in it, for all Muslims are bound to do the same and it is as natural to them as eating and drinking. Hence it is wrong to say that such a Muslim makes a parade of piety or puts on an air of sanctity. Such remarks can only come from those who think that these rules are optional. There are tens of thousands of non-Muslims who may be more moral, more religious, more charitable etc. than many Muslims, but still they are not Muslims and form no part of the Muslim brother-hood and sister-hood.

Islam is a social religion, as I have said, and the whole edifice depends on the tie that knits the members together under the Sovereignty of God: and this object can only be attained by the members living the Islamic life. I hope my readers will pardon me for stressing this point, but it is a common fault among many Muslims. I have often heard many Muslims saying "Why, I am a better Muslim than many other Muslims; I am more honest, I know more about God, I am more moral etc. than many so-called Muslims who pray and fast." They may be all that, through fear of the Criminal law and the laws of hygiene and for political purposes, but they are not true Muslims so long as they do not observe the five prayers and the fast to the best of their power. That is why the Caliph Omar passed a law that no person is a true Muslim unless he prays five times daily and why Ibn Saud visits with punishment any one in the Hejaz who does not do so.

Board of Kathis

Appeals Decided on October 14, 1939

Colombo (Maradana) 815.—Nona Maheel daughter of B. H. Dole vs. T. S. S. Alibah.—Appeal dismissed, the date of payment of maintenance being altered to the first of each month.

Colombo (Maradana) 816.—Nona Maheel daughter of B. H. Dole vs. T. S. S. Alibah.—Kathi's order affirmed subject to the variation that Mahr should be paid in monthly instalments of Rs. 10.

Batticaloa (Manmunai North and South and Eruvil-Poratuvu) 494.—Mohamed Haniffa Asiaummah vs. Pichitambay Ahamed Lebbai.—Appeal rejected.

Islam-A Universal Religion of Peace and Progress

(Continued on page 7)

Islam has no place for Mediation

Everyone, according to Islam, is solely responsible for his action. While on the one hand man is not held responsible for what he does not actually do himself, on the other there can be no expiation by another of what he does. Man, according to Islam is born sinless; he is not at all accountable for the sins of his ancestors. Thus Islam engenders in every one of its followers a sense of personal responsibility and does not recognise any mediator between man and God. A Muslim is directly accountable to his Lord for all that he thinks or says or does, and he has himself to work out his salvation by his own good deeds, without the intervention of any mediators. Islam recognises no priesthood; no intermediary can grant a Muslim a free passport to heaven. The claim of the priests, the Buddhist Phungi, the Hindu Brahman, the Jewish Rabi and the Christian Pope and Padri, to stand between man and God, is regarded by Islam as insolent arrogance. The best among the Muslims automatically becomes the leader in a religious congregation and such other functions.

Islam is a Religion for Worldly People

Man, who is a social animal, requires, for his guidance, a religion that con-

cerns actual worldly affairs and conduct of mankind more than anything else. Such a religion is Islam which enjoins man to live, as a rule, in the world and to serve its denizens. It is not intended for the anchorites who shun the world and lead an isolated retired life.

Islam has made family life the basis of social organisation, holding matrimony essential for social purity and peace and for the general welfare of mankind. Maintenance of family and rearing of children have been ordained as imperative duties of man; to be a dutiful son, a faithful husband and an affectionate father are to be counted as great religious virtues. Thus has Islam sanctified every detail of mundane life, and this is one of its most distinctive features.

Islam has put a ban on celibacy and renunciation of the world. While Christianity tried to combat the licentiousness of the age by setting forth the celestial merit of celibacy and the angelic virtue of virginity, Islam put in a strong protest against the exaltation of celibacy as a means of fighting immorality. It did not approve of artificial and unnatural virtues and replaced monkishness by manliness. According to Islam, man's glory is not in killing his natural passions, but in controlling them and utilising them for the good of humanity. Thus has Islam made a life of service and sacrifice within the world the crown of human existence.

(To be Continued)

Greatness of Fasting

(Continued from page 1)

to me—subdued it to me." This makes clear to us that heavy and strong blood creates animal nature and mischief. Prophet Muhammad (P. O. H.) often lived on vegetable diet. Sufis have also followed this.

We should then consider a while that we, without limit, have yielded to our desire nature for eleven months. That during this Holy month—while we fast—our food should be greatly reduced and controlled. That by such control we should rid our animal nature and acquire Angelic Nature. That by such subdued pure quiet nature we should revive our Ancient Mystic Knowledge.

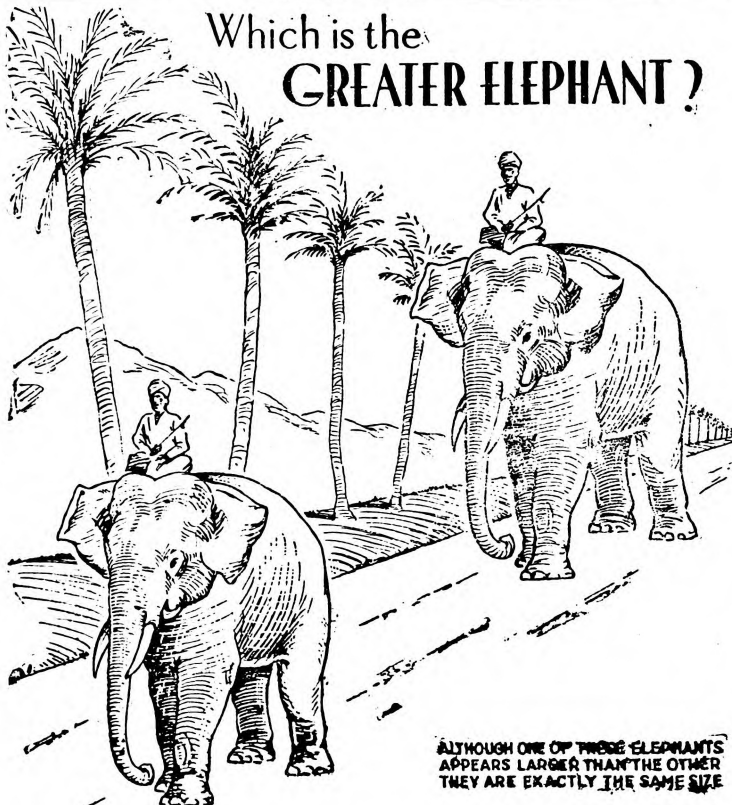
Let us now understand, that to all Prophets, Divine Revelation (Wahi) dawned through this fast, and exercise it. Let us also believe that every man and woman could become perfect (Mumin—Muminathu) during this fast by completion of Alms, Charity, Prayer and Meditation.

He that reduces his meals is strong and healthy; reverts the un-desirability of medicines and obligation to the doctor. He attains Divinity, which man ought to attain in full.

"By fasting you keep on knocking at the door of Heaven constantly."

"Do not eat until you are full for the rays of Mysticism will be removed from your mind."

Hadhieths.



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