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The

Star of Islam

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

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VOL. I. No. 16.

COLOMBO: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1939.

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Islam—A Universal Religion of Peace And Progress

Christianity's Debt To Islam

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

(Continued from previous issue)

THE extraordinary progress made by the Christian countries during the last five hundred years is directly due to the teachings of Islam, which was promulgated six hundred years after Christianity. It was not till freedom of thought was advocated and the torch of learning was lighted by the Muslims in Spain that any progress in science and civilisation could be made in Europe, or any possibility could arise for the Renaissance and the Reformation to make their appearance in the Christian world. It was from Muslim Spain that a new life dawned upon the whole of Europe, giving birth to a new culture which greatly stimulated the intellectual activity of its people. All that Christian Europe learnt of Greek and Hindu Philosophy and Science up to the Renaissance period emanated from the Saracenic culture of Spain.

For full one thousand years the Muslims were the most zealous promoters and protectors of knowledge and culture when other peoples throughout the world were steeped in ignorance, bigotry and barbarism. As rightly acknowledged by Gustav Diercks in his 'Europe's Debt to Islam,' there can be no denying that Europe is deeply in debt to Islam for all its scientific discoveries. In fact, it was Islam that produced scientists who anticipated Bacon, Newton, Kepler and other great scientists of Europe. But for the introduction into Europe by the Muslims of paper, gunpowder, the mariner's compass and such other instruments of progress, who knows that the condition of Europe in respect of science and civilisation would not have been to-day what it was fourteen hundred years ago.

Islam Removed Inequality Among Human Beings

Of the many great social reforms initiated by Islam the removal of inequality among human beings was perhaps the most beneficial and far-reaching in consequence. Distinction between man and man on account of mere accident of birth in a particular family or a particular profession or a particular country was done away with. All artificial barriers which society had set up to fortify privileges of wealth or work or colour or country were broken down. A universal brotherhood of man, welding high and low, rich and poor, white and black into one common fraternity was thus established. All human beings were declared to be equal, and the highest rank was his who was nearest to God and most serviceable to mankind. As soon as the lowest of the low, say a sweeper, or the blackest of the black, say a Negro, embraced Islam he was entitled to say prayers in the

same place, to drink water from the same cup and to take food from the same dish as a Muslim of the highest rank. Such conception of human brotherhood that transcends racial and geographical boundaries is unrealised in other great religions of the world. It is Islam alone that rules out in theory no less than practice, the claims of race or nation, caste or colour that militate against the unity and mar the harmony of the human family. No one before Hazrat Muhammad had ever conceived any idea of such a practical universal brotherhood.

Islamic brotherhood is not merely a verbal concept; it is an undisputed fact. Once admitted into the fold of Islam, any human being, however low his position might have been before his conversion, becomes the proud possessor of all the rights and privileges that a Muslim of the highest rank is entitled to claim. A slave to-day may be a king to-morrow. There is no untouchability or depressed class among the followers of Islam. The unique sight one sees in a mosque at the time of congregational prayers is altogether unknown and unimaginable anywhere else on the globe. There sit side by side and stand shoulder to shoulder the prince and the peasant, the potentate and the pauper, the servant and the master, the black and the white, the Arab and the Abyssinian, irrespective of any distinction of blood or colour, wealth or learning, without any precedence whatever. When they prostrate themselves in prayer the head of the prince touches the feet of the peasant, if the latter happens to be in the preceding row. In a mosque there is no rented pew or reserved seat as in a church, and no Muslim, however low his position, is denied a seat in the

(Continued on page 8)

"The Star Of Islam's" Towering Success

GAMPOLA U. D. C. VICE-
CHAIRMAN'S TRIBUTE

**Never Saw The Like Of It
In Ceylon**

We have pleasure in publishing the following letter which was sent to us by Mr. M. S. N. Omar Batcha, J. P., U. P. M., Vice-Chairman, U. D. C., Gampola:—

The Editor,
"The Star of Islam",
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

I am happy indeed to add my voice to the chorus of congratulations that 'The Star of Islam' has been receiving from the inception of its publication.

I notice with satisfaction the growing recognition given to the only Islamic publication in

"THE STAR OF ISLAM"

WISHES ONE & ALL OF YOU

A VERY HAPPY

EID-UL-FITR

Ceylon, 'The Star of Islam' and the practical efforts made by you in this direction deserve our praise. If for nothing else, it is valuable as a record of Islamic activities.

It is very difficult to resist the temptation of saying that I have not come across anything of the type of "The Star of Islam" in Ceylon. I am sure the articles in "The Star of Islam" are permeated by profound erudition, the careful study of Islam and marshalling of facts, and lucidity and sweet reasonableness.

Yours faithfully,
M. S. N. OMAR BATCHA,
J. P., U. P. M.
Vice-Chairman, U. D. C.
Gampola.

"Saliha Lodge"
Hill Street,
Gampola, 5th Nov. 1939.

How A European Lady Became A Muslim

**Realisation of Islam's
Superiority Over Christianity**

A highly educated European lady had a yearning to see the spirits of two deceased friends of her school days. With this object, she had approached devout and Christian Clergymen so that her desire might be fulfilled. She acted according to their directions but the prescribed religious exercises bore no fruit. Next she approached the Theosophists and assiduously performed the courses prescribed by them, but with no better result. She was then told that for the attainment of her object mere performance of religious exercises was not sufficient; one's temperament has much to do in the matter and her own temperament was not suitable. Being thus disappointed, she went to Benares to see a great Hindu Yogi, but he too failed to satisfy her. At last she went to a Muslim Sheikh, namely, His Holiness Hazrat Murshed Ali, who taught her a spiritual exercise. A short time after she practised this, she began to see the spirits of her deceased friends but also the spirits of Prophets. She then realised by this practical experience that Lord Muhammed, the Prophet of Islam, was a holier and greater person than Jesus Christ, and therefore voluntarily became a Muslim.

PALESTINE

Britain And Arabs

Mr George Mansur, President of Palestine Arab Permanent Committee at London, has sent, according to a report published in the daily *Almisi*, Cairo a letter addressed to Lord Halifax urging that British Government should fulfil their obligations to the Arabs, and an honourable solution to the Palestine Problem should be brought about at once by granting the Arabs full independence.

The Arabs are ready to shake hands with the British Government, stated the report, but are the British ready to shake hands with the Arabs and to change their policy in Palestine?

Women's Section

Reflections Of The Leisure Hours--II

Truest Worship To God Is Service To Humanity

Islam Is Life And Light

By **MISS BINTHAN NOORDEEN**

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

IN a small collection of the sayings of the Prophet of Islam, which I have before me now, Lord Muhammad (on whom be Peace and Blessings) is reported to have said, "Paradise is what the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor ever flashed across the mind of man." This sets into motion a train of thoughts in my mind, and

"I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams."

But while we try to visualize the Paradise beyond the grave, we cannot forget the historical fact that Islam in the time of the Prophet and his first four successors established the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

It is not impossible to re-establish those glorious days in these modern times if in the hearts of the Muslims will burn the flame that lit the hearts of the companions of the Prophet. Unfortunately today religion consists of only mere external rites and rituals. The spirit of it is lost. There are some people—even among those who regularly pray and fast—in whom there is not even a speck of love, forgiveness, humility, benevolence, sympathy, and all such virtues. In our Holy Prophet we find the assemblage of all these virtues. History points out his simplicity, his humanity, his generosity, his frugality, his broad-mindedness, his forbearance, his firmness in adversity, his meekness in power, his humility in greatness, his anxious care for animals, his passionate love for children, his unbending sense of justice. But today many of these virtues are conspicuous by their absence. Can we without possessing these virtues, establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth? We shall do well to remember that

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All creatures great and small".

The same thought was expressed by the sufi-poet, Saadi, when he said that the truest worship to God consists not in counting the rosary, or prostrating one's self on the carpet or wearing the gaberdine, but in service to one's fellow-beings. By saying this I am not trying to minimise the importance of certain external observances. What I wish to point out is that—in the words of Sir Syed Ameer Ali, M. A., P. C.—"The Moslems of the present day have ignored the spirit in a hopeless love for the letter. Instead of living up to the ideal preached by the Master, instead of 'striving to excel in good works', 'of being righteous'; instead of loving God and for the sake of His love loving His creatures,—they have made themselves the slaves of opportunism and outward observance. Let us not therefore in

following the letter of the religion, forget the spirit of it.

Maulvi Abdul Karim, B. A., says: "Islam is not mere prayer or fasting or keeping up of so many other rites and rituals; it is playing the game of life as Hazrat Muhammed played it, attending to the duties to God and man, and leading a virtuous life.... To judge Islam by the behaviour of many of its present-day followers would be doing it a great injustice. True Islam which is life and light, is very different from what goes by its name today—a bundle of dead rituals and meaningless ceremonies. True Islam broadens the outlook and provides ample scope for honest differences of opinion. But the generality of the present-day Muslims, leaving aside the essentials of their faith, are engaged in acrimonious controversies over mere trifles—petty questions of details".

It is a happy augury, however, that signs of renaissance are visible all over the Muslim world. It may be hoped that the revival of true Islam, the pristine character of which is still unimpaired, will not be long in coming.

BOARD OF KATHIS

Appeal Decided on November 4, 1939.

Colombo (Maradana) 821.—Gnai Rahamani, daughter of B. Z. Burhan, vs. Zainul Abdeen Noor. Appeal dismissed, the date of first payment of maintenance being altered to 8th November, 1939.

Children's Corner

Unparalleled Fidelity To Islam And Its Great Prophet

DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS.

I pointed out to you last Saturday that the intense faith and conviction on the part of the immediate followers of the Prophet of Islam was the noblest testimony to his sincerity and his utter self-absorption in his appointed task. I also drew a contrast between these loyal followers, who braved even death for the sake of the Prophet, with the disciples of Jesus Christ who were unsteady in their faith and infirm in their allegiance to him. *Sir William Muir a Christian writer, admits that the apostles of Christ fled at the first sound of danger.*

What an inspiring picture the History of Islam presents to us in this respect. An organised system of persecution was decided upon by the enemies of Islam. Each household tortured its own members or clients or slaves, who were supposed to have attached themselves, to the new Faith. They were thrown into prison, starved, and then beaten with sticks. The hill of Ramdha and the place called Batha became thus the scenes of cruel tortures. The men or women who were found to have become Muslims were exposed to the burning heat of the desert on the scorching sand, where, when reduced to the last extremity by thirst, they were offered the alternative of adoring the idols or death. But they held firmly to the Islamic Faith. To give one classic example, let me give you the story of Bilal, the first Muezzin of Islam. He was employed under Ommeyya, son of Khabab, who conducted him every day to Batha when the heat of the sun was at its greatest, and there exposed him bare-necked to the burning sun, and placed on his chest an enormous block of stone. "There shalt thou remain until thou art dead or until thou hast abjured Islam," Ommeyya used to say. But nothing could make him waver in his belief in Islam. As he lay half-stiffed under his heavy weight, dying with thirst, he would only answer, "*Ahadun, ahadun*"—"One God, one." This lasted for days until the poor sufferer was reduced to the verge of death, when he was ransomed by Abu Bakr.

Dear children, I can give hundreds of such instances from the early history of Islam, but the small space at my disposal does not allow me to do so. It was such unshakeable faith in Islam which made the early Muslims so powerful and so great. If you children also will have such undying faith in our religion, which is the greatest religion the world has ever known and will ever know, you will be able to bring into existence again the palmy days of Islam. The more you study Islam, the firmer will become your faith.—Your friend.

THE EDITOR.

LAY OF THE HEDJAZ

Is a rare work in the History of Islam. It is the Life of the Holy Prophet (the choicest blessings of Allah be upon him!) in English verse

BY

Prof Muhammad Jamshid Ali Rathor, M.A., M.O.L. A tri-coloured frontispiece illuminates its get-up. Bound Copy. Price Re. 1 Inland; 1s. 6d. Foreign

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Simple Lessons In Islam

His Holiness Maulana Mohamed Abdul Aleem Siddiqui and M. I. M. Haniffa, B. A. (Lond.) Advocate.

1. Q. What is obligatory *ghuzul*?
A. Obligatory *ghuzul* is 'bathing' or the general ablution of the body.
2. Q. When is obligatory *ghuzul* necessary?
A. Obligatory *ghuzul* is necessary on all occasions when a person is affected with grave impurity. These occasions are:—
(1) Death.
(2) Menstruation.
(3) Lochia and Confinement in general.
(4) Sexual penetration.
(5) Any effusion of Semen.
3. Q. What are the essential requisites for the valid constitution of an obligatory *ghuzul*?
A. For the valid constitution of an obligatory *ghuzul* there must be:
(1) An intention to remove a grave impurity or to enable oneself to accomplish an act requiring a previous bathing or to take the bath as a duty prescribed by law. The intention must be performed at the moment of entering the bath.
(2) A washing of all parts of the body, both the skin and the hair covering it.
4. Q. What is the best way of performing an obligatory *ghuzul*?
A. The best way of performing an obligatory *ghuzul* is as follows:—
(1) Begin by removing all filth from the body.
(2) Then perform ablution.
(3) Wash carefully in all the folds of the skin especially in places more liable to perspiration.
(4) Pour water on the head.
(5) Separate the hair of head (and beard) by passing the wet fingers through them.
(6) Give priority to the right side.
(7) Rub the whole body.
(8) Repeat the whole three times.
5. Q. What acts are forbidden to those in a state of grave impurity?
A. All persons in a state of grave impurity are forbidden:—
(1) To pray.
(Continued on page 3)

Freedom Of The Individual As Revealed In The Holy Quran

By C. VAITYLINGAM

Headmaster, Bageythul Hasanath Free English School, Colombo
AND
Formerly Detective-Inspector of Police, C. I. D., Colombo.

FREEDOM of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of action and personal freedom is the divine birth-right of MAN. Enlightened thinkers today do not deny this. Neither can they tolerate a system or scheme of things that would positively deny this inherent urge in MAN; for slavery results from obscuring this eternal freedom which is vital and real.

And intelligence vetoes adverse popular opinion or misguided human authority where there is an urgent necessity to lay bare pernicious propaganda, to expose a "farrage of falsehood and bluff and bluster" and to voice the truth. Truth brings the elements of liberty. The power of God brings deliverance to the captive. No power can withstand Soul-Force.

It is argued over and over again that tyranny is justified because it brings about good for a pretty good number of people, because it procures orderliness and peace, because it will end warring faction, because it fulfills all practical needs and because it welds into unity elements that appear discordant and erratic.

This belief, that denies individual freedom virtually or apparently, appears for a time to improve practical conditions which are entirely material by checking licence and other abuses which victimise individual rights.

But the core of tyranny is its seeming power to obtain obedience through fear, instead of through intelligent self-discipline, and the basis upon which it rests cannot be made sound by over-zealous eloquence.

Tyranny rejects spiritual values, without which existence is a meaningless dream. Tyranny devoid of reality, devoid of divine attributes that ensure the continuity of all right ideas must fail with "audible cracks" before the Law of God as revealed in the Holy Quran.

God is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient and omniactive governing all creation through spiritual law. This nugget of truth was revealed by Allah through his Holy Prophet (may his soul rest in Peace) to all his faithful. And this Divine Law can be understood and demonstrated by all for their mutual good. There is nothing in mortal belief that can intervene between Allah and His Creation.

God And Man

Man cannot be separated from God, the Cause of his being, the Source of all real existence. Sooner or later every mortal will awake from the dream of Separation from Allah to hear and respond to the Divine Principle or Law. It will then be manifested to be understood as existing in everlasting harmony.

Today tyranny is symbolised in Herr Adolf Hitler—the meglomaniac—who has plunged the world into utter chaos and confusion, murder and bloodshed, rape and rascality, by pernicious propaganda and "farrage of falsehood and bluster." But truth will sweep away the refuge of LIES and BLUFF and the waters will overflow its hiding place.

The Holy Quran reverses the evidence before the human senses and brings into tangible relief the true sense of good government that manifests the unalterable relationship that exist before Allah and MAN—his vice-regent on this solar system.

And let not true Muslims violate it by interposing a command to worship the idols of human will. Every man, woman and child must be FREE to offer their sole allegiance to Allah. The dawn of His Day brings spiritual illumination on human thought, on human

(Continued on page 5)

Letters To The Editor

Explanation of Extract from "The Masnavi"

Sir,—With reference to the explanation sought by "Student" in your issue of the 28th October of a passage from the *Masnavi*, I venture to give the following interpretation.

Man in regard to his corporeal nature, stands at the lowest point of degradation; nevertheless, in regard to his spiritual nature, he is at the summit of nobility. He takes the impress of everything to which he directs his attention, and assumes the colour of everything to which he approaches. Wherefore philosophers say that when the reasonable soul adorns itself with exact and faithful impressions of realities, and appropriates to itself the true character of such realities it becomes such as if it were itself altogether essential Being. In like manner, the vulgar, by the force of their conjunction with those material forms and extreme preoccupation with these corporeal liens come to be such that they cannot distinguish themselves from these forms or perceive any difference between the two. Well says the Maulavi of Rumi (may God sanctify his secret) in the *Masnavi*.—

O brother, thou art wholly though, For the rest of thee is only bone and muscle:

If thy thought be a rose, thou art a rose-bouquet; If it be a thorn, thou art fuel for the fire.

When will this mortal dress be torn away.

And beauty absolute His face display,

Merging my soul in His resplendent light

Blinding my heart with his o'erpowering ray?

If your correspondent wants more particulars of the life after death of a materialist, let him refer to Surat "Nabau" in the Koran.—Yours truly, S. L. MAHMOOD HADJIAR, J. P.

Eid Greetings

The Editor, "Star of Islam", Colombo.

Sir.—It is customary among the Muslims all over the Federated Malay States, Straits Settlement, Java, in some parts of India, Mecca and Medina to send greetings to relatives and friends during the Eed-ul-Fitr and Eed-ul-Aduha though it is not done in Ceylon. I take this opportunity to send you, in anticipation, my hearty greetings on this Great Day. In Ceylon it is generally termed as *Eed-ul-Fitr* (Arabic), *Nombu Perumal* (Tamil), *Lembaran Puasa* (Java and Ceylon), *hari Raya* (F. M. S. and S. S.) and *Ramazun-Ke-Eed* (India).

May this great day bring you, the numerous contributors, the well-wishers and the readers of the "Star of Islam" all joy, peace and happiness. May this journal see the dawn of a second year of Eed-ul-Fitr-Mubarak—might of it and the delight of it, shedding its "glorious light" of the Doctrine and Teaching of Islam.

Assalam Alaikum Wa-rahmatullahi Wa-barakatu-hu. SHAIK KHUDA BUX.

Children's Corner (Continued).

The Ramazan Festival

(A JUVENILE EFFORT AT VERSIFICATION)

By Master M. Salih Hasheem

Thirty days of Ramazan fast
We shall break with buriyani,
We boys and girls, the "Star of
Islam's" pals,
Joining the feast quite merrily.

On this day of the jolly festival,
With the early and timely arrival,
Of kith and kin responding to the
call
Of my father, in our new spacious
hall.

Sweets and cakes and lemonades,
Lavishly served with pome-
granates,
All guests eat, drink, and enjoy,
And we children receive delightful
toys.

We visit our relatives and to the
poor give alms.
We go to the Mosque and hear
the sermon,
And spend the day in a jolly manner
While flutters aloft the Eid's
Crescent Banner.

Simple Lessons in Islam.

(Continued from page 2)

- (2) To walk round the Holy Mosque (*Ka'ba*) at Mecca.
 - (3) To carry the Holy *Quran*.
 - (4) To recite the Holy *Quran*.
 - (5) remain in a mosque-
6. Q. On what occasions is the taking of baths generally recommended?
- A. The taking of baths is generally recommended
- (1) before attending Congregational prayers on Fridays.
 - (2) on the occasion of the two festivals.
 - (3) at an eclipse,
 - (4) in time of drought,
 - (5) when about to wash a corpse,
 - (6) On recovery from an attack of insanity or a fainting fit,
 - (7 for pilgrims to Mecca.
- (To be continued)

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

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22nd May, 1939

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THREE LIONS

For Quality, Purity and Flavour!

The Star of Islam

A CULTURAL WEEKLY

COLOMBO: NOVEMBER 11, 1939



Eid Mubarak

The blessed month of Ramazan is drawing a close and all Muslims will soon celebrate the *Eid-ul-Fitr*. We, therefore, take this opportunity of wishing our learned contributors, our numerous readers, and all our well-wishers *Eid Mubarak*. May the blessings that the month of Ramazan has brought be theirs in bounteous measure, and may the *Eid-ul-Fitr* usher a period of peace, prosperity, and happiness.

In celebrating the *Eid-ul-Fitr* the Muslims are in a sense celebrating their victory over their lower nature. For the sake of God and in obedience to His commands, they refrain from food and drink and give out of what they possess and love in the month of Ramazan. The strict life of abstinence and prayer during the month disciplines and purifies the soul, and on the *Eid-ul-Fitr* Day the Muslim stands radiant and happy glorifying God and thanking him for the great favours conferred. He realises then that he has not only crossed another mile-stone on his spiritual journey, but has also fully equipped himself for the rest of the year. It is this which fills his heart with gladness. It is in this spirit he celebrates the festival.

As all Muslims throughout the world gather on the *Eid* Day, in much larger numbers than on other days, in the mosques and turn their faces towards Mecca, it carries them back to the cradle of their faith, the childhood of their Prophet; it reminds them of the struggle between the old faith and the new, of the overthrow of the idols and the establishment of the worship of the one God; and most of all, it bids them remember that all their brother-Muslims are worshipping towards the same spot; that they form a great company of believers united by one faith, filled with the same hopes, worshipping the same God. And their hearts swell with love and gratitude towards the Great Prophet who has shown them the right path and they invoke the choicest blessings of God on him.

"May His Peace and Blessings be
On Thee Thou Prophet Great,
May His Peace and Blessings be
On Thee Thou Holiest made.

"May His Peace and Blessings be
On Thee Thou "Seal of All"
Prophets sent by Holy Lord,
To guide us to His call."

May His Peace and Blessings be
On Thee Thou Prophet sent
As sign of Mercy, Peace, and Love
To all the world extent.

May His Peace and Blessings be
On Thee Thou Source of Light,
Illuminator of darkness
With torch of Islam bright.

"May His Peace and Blessings be
On Thee Thou most beloved
Of all His creatures on earth
And of all those above"

The close of Ramazan makes every Muslim, who has strictly followed the requirements of the month, as clean and as pure as a new-born babe. And every effort must be made to preserve the purity and spiritual splendour. This could only be done by the regular performance of the five-times daily prayers and by the fulfilment of all Islamic requirements. Let each one of us in all earnestness and humility pray to God,

"To purge us off all our sins
And make us neat and clean
And guide us on the way of those
On whom Thy Blessing's been—

"The path of Thy *Nabiyjoon*,
And path of *Siddeeqeen*,
The path of Thy *Shohada*
And path of " *Saleheen*."

"May Thy Blessings be till end
On 'Ashraful Murseleen
On all his 'Ahle-Bayt' and
On all his 'Sahebeen'

"May Thy 'Rahmat' be ever
On all thy 'Momineen'
On us too O! Our Lord and
On all our kith and kin

"Assalato—Wassalaamo
Ala Rasool-il-Kareem,
Ameen-Alhamdo-lilla-
He-Rabbil-alemeen".

Musings Of A Pensioner-XIV

Idea of Merger With God Is
Opposed To The Tenets of
The Quran

Relic of Greek, Hindu, and Buddhist Ideas

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

IT will be seen from my previous articles that I am endeavouring to prove that the idea of merger with God as the goal of man's life is a relic of pantheism borrowed from Greek, Hindu and Buddhistic ideas and that this notion is diametrically opposed to the tenets of the Quran. I think I had better give some of the verses of the Quran to refute this view and then proceed to discuss the bearing of Hinduistic and Buddhistic thought on the identity relationship. The modern educated Muslim—I am referring to those outside Ceylon—is so impatient to figure as a leader of religious thought that he or she is only anxious to absorb as much as possible with the least effort so that he or she can dish such easily acquired thoughts into a lecture or article and then serve them forth to an admiring mixed audience.

Unless I give these verses now there is a danger that my thesis will not be read right through by my Muslim readers outside Ceylon. So much has this *cacothet scribendi* seized hold of some of my Muslim young friends outside Ceylon that one or two Indian magazines, to my knowledge, make a trade of this failing and immediately after publication of an article the author or authoress is served with a request for subscriptions for the proposed dissemination of Muslim literature including the article in question and of course his or her photograph amongst the misguided non-Muslims. Thereafter publication of further articles is conditional on the honouring of further exactions. And thus the world goes round. And now by the discovery of the radiogram there is the additional mania—perhaps I had better disguise the failing under its Latin name—the *cacothet loquendi*. And so the world goes round. There is a Tamil proverb that the quantity and quality of grass eaten by a bull depends on its size. Why cannot my young Muslim friends—outside Ceylon—learn first to be humble and to absorb knowledge, then to criticise it themselves within their own minds and finally publish it.

Some of the learned Moulvies are of opinion that the perfect man in Islam becomes absorbed in God like a drop slipping into the sea—to use an expression of Iqbal—or like the plop of a rain-drop into a pool—to borrow a phrase of Dr Urquhart formerly Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University. These Moulvies do not explain when this metamorphosis happens; is it during life, immediately perfection is attained, or is it at death or is at the final resurrection?

Quranic Verses Against Pantheistic Theory

This idea of the "plop" is perfectly legitimate and logical in pantheism, for it occurs either in this life or definitely at death and then there is no more trouble of a re-birth. But in Islam, do these *Alims* believe in the theory of the *Karma*? Can anything be more clear than verses 93—96 of chapter 19—entitled *Mary*

"93 Not one of the beings
In the heavens and the earth
But must come to (God)
Most gracious as a servant.
94 He does take an account of them (all), and hath
Numbered them (all) exactly.

95 And every one of them
Will come to him singly
On the Day of Judgment
96 On those who believe
And work deeds of righteousness
Will (God) Most Gracious
Bestow Love."

Do these learned *Alims* contend that the perfect man comes to God on the Day of Judgment first alone as a servant and then after his accounts have been balanced, God will allow him to "plop" into Himself?

In the *Surathul Tahrim* chapter 66 verse 8, in *paradise* the Prophet and his foremost and most exalted followers—our Prophet the *Sayyidul Wajid* the highest and first of mankind—will pray for more light.

"The Day that God
Will not permit
To be humiliated
The Prophet and those
Who believe with him
Their light will run
Forward before them
And by their right hands,
While they say, "Our Lord
Perfect our Light for us,
And grant us Forgiveness;
For Thou hast power
Over all things."

Even our Holy Prophet will pray for the greater perfection of his light. Do the *Alims* and Moulvies contend that our Prophet is not the most perfect of man? If he was already absorbed in God why should he pray for more light? Or is it suggested that on the day of judgment our Prophet's perfection would not be so complete as to allow him to be merged in God? If the latter is the suggestion, my first observation is that these learned men are not true Muslims, and my second, why more light, when all that light is going to be immediately afterwards quenched in God? Need I refer to the hundreds of other verses in the Holy Quran? The Holy Quran speaks of the *Lila* or meeting with God; the sinners will be blind on the dread day and will not be able to speak to God. So the highest bliss of the meeting is reserved for the perfect man. In the *Surathul Gashiya* (chapter 88) Allah refers to the perfect man as follows:

"Other faces that Day
Will be joyful
Pleased with their striving."
Verses 22 and 23 of chapter 75 are as follows:—

(Continued from page 6)

ISLAM.—THE RELIGION OF BEAUTY

Its Contribution To Life

By MRS. MAS MUZEENA HASSIM *nee* AHLIP.

Reflect upon the Sun, his light,
The moon when from the sun she takes
Her little gleam of light;
And, too, the day when does the sun
Expose the world to sight
And when it draws a veil above
Consider then the night
The Heaven and its construction
The Earth and its extension
The Soul and its perfection;
So to the soul he did discover
By inspiration grand
Its wandering from the realm of truth
Its guard against Hell's band
He will indeed successful be,
Who does it purify
He will forsooth a failure be
Who does it putrefy

Koran x c i

Religion makes the great contribution to the richness, the fulness and harmony of life. The soul is all important but for the flower of the soul to blossom in all its fragrance and varied beauty all that the world has to give of joy, and love, of laughter and of tears has to be part of the experience of the individual. Art and nature are enemies if they are worshipped or admired in their own right, but if they are considered, as the Muslim should consider them, only as handmaidens of religion then the vision of the poet and the painter opens up the world of reality to the individual. Certain it is that the reality cannot be apprehended in his nature by the individual but the symbol of the poet and the colour of the painter makes one aware of the grandeur and the transcendence of God. Truth cannot be realised in his nature through the imperfect medium of the mind, but it only reveals itself to the individual in an isolated example, in a flower, in a tree, in the sunset's ray and moonbeam, in short in a symbol which to us stands for reality. The tones of Bach and Handel recall to our minds the grandness of the celestial harmonies, the vision of Goethe and Wordsworth tells us though imperfectly how magnificent the purpose of life must be, how transcendent is God; and the white radiance of eternity is stained by the individual mind through whom vision is made known to the world. Nature too is the handmaiden of religion for the soft hues of sunrise, the riot of evenings' sunset sky, the birds for ever asinging as if their young hearts are carolling to make us realise that beauty lies in our own hearts, the music deep, profound of the mighty ocean's swell, even the silent noon and midnight serene which in its silence is grander far than music's sound for it awakens the soul to a realisation of itself, in them all we see the hand of God who created us and all things for a definite purpose. We see the hand of God Who created nature, a world of beauty that we may realise the might and love of God, that we may grow from more to more, that mind and soul, the intellect and the spirit might be attuned, and make one music, a harmony. What heart would not thrill, what eye not find happiness in watching and listening to the sunbird frolicking in mid air, from burnished heart,

the sun's bright ray being reflected beam upon beam in colours innumerable, green and gold and silvery black, blue and ebony, from its little throat sounds heavenly sweet ever cascading into the listener's heart? Verily in this is a sign for those who believe.

The Koran opens up the hearts to a realisation of its own beauty. There is beauty in the hearts of all, and the known shows how that beauty may be increased and made perfect. To that art and nature make their contributions. Religion is above them all, the mighty influence which calls upon beauty and love to serve in her ranks to uplift the heart of man, to extract every bit of happiness from the meanest things around.

"To me the meanest flower that blows
Thoughts that do often lie too deep
for tears.

Religion prescribes ways and means by which the soul may be purified of its dross, of selfishness, anger, jealousy, fear and pride and brought to realise the unity of life whereby the individual reaches his or her greatest stature in so far as he or she consciously and conscientiously works to ameliorate the condition of his or her neighbour.

Prayer brings the soul nearer to God and is an effort to get a glimpse of the Divine Plan, penetrate the veil of mystery so that the individual, being attuned to that plan, may look upon what comes his way with equanimity, and not long after things he cannot attain or dream of what may not be

Of all sad thoughts of tongue or pen
The saddest are these "It might
have been."

But he will do his best, the reward is entirely God's and he or she who realises the transcendence of His Holy Plan will gladly surrender his will to God and trust only to serve him and not ask for reward. Such an one is not likely to worship Nature or Art for they are only a means to an end. Such an one is little likely to worship the world and regret leaving it, for in his heart is the trust in the

"One far off divine event
To which the whole creation moves,"

Jama'iyatul Islahid Dini

(Muslim Reformation Society)

Proceedings of the meeting of the Jam'iyyat held on 14th and 22nd October, 1939, for popularising the study of the Holy Quran with its meanings.

The President and members of the Jama'iyatul Islahid Dini (Muslim Reformation Society) were "at home" to Muslim Divines, Scholars and Educationists at the Zahira College at 4-30 p.m. on Saturday the 14th instant when means for popularising the study of the Holy Quran with meanings were discussed. A lively discussion in which S. M. Jamaldeen Alim Sahib (of the Maradana Mosque), Maulavi M. E. Abul Hassan, Maulvi Hibathul Careem (of the Colpetty Mosque), Mr. A. R. A. Salahuddin (of the Grand Mosque), Mr. Syed Rauf Pasha, Mr. M. L. M. Sabir and Mr. A. R. M. Razeen (Presided) and others took part, the following resolutions were unanimously passed:—

1. As the greatness of the Muslim Community in the past was due to their faithfully following the Quranic teachings and their subsequent decline was due to their neglect of those teachings, this meeting is emphatically of opinion that the study of the Holy Quran with its meanings must be popularised among all sections of the Muslim Community.

2. It is further of opinion that the study of the Arabic language should be made compulsory in all classes in Muslim Schools.

At a meeting of the Society held on the 22nd October the following resolu-

tions were passed implementing those passed at the representative meeting held on the 14th October.

1. This meeting appreciates the encouraging messages received from many Muslim friends and hope that they would co-operate with the Society in making a success of the Scheme for popularising the study of the Holy Quran with its meanings among the Muslims of Ceylon.

2. That a course of studies be drawn up for the training of Quranic teachers who will teach the Holy Quran with its meaning to Muslims at classes to be formed under the direction of this Society

3. A committee (subject to their consent) with power to add was formed to draw up the courses of studies.

Freedom Of The Individual As Revealed In The Holy Quran

(Continued from page 3)

hope and on human charity and fellowship. Without an understanding of the will of God, Islam will be shorn of its beautiful, all-embracing power gifted to mankind with a voice of thunder in the hoary deserts of Arabia by Our Holy Prophet (may his soul rest in Peace) not very long ago. The illusion of mortal will cannot set itself against the Divine will, for in so attempting, it is self-destroyed.

If individuals, Muslims, or non-Muslims are united in a prayerful effort to see true freedom and law as divine attributes mankind must gain a fuller understanding of the Will of the God revealed in the Holy Quran, for obedience and submission to it brings about the destruction of EVIL and enthronement of PEACE AND FREEDOM in its trail.

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Musings Of A Pensioner--XIV

(Continued from page 4)

"Some faces, that Day
Will beam (in brightness
And beauty),
Looking towards their Lord

The last words uttered by our Prophet before he breathed his last were "Fi Rafeekal Ahla"—"in the company of my Highest Friend"—not "merged in the substance of God."

In the doctrines of the Sufis by Al-Kalabadi (see the translation by Arberry) there is a reference to a saying of our Prophet which is as follows;—

"Verily ye shall see your Lord as ye see the moon on the night of its fullness, without confusion in the vision of Him." In chapter 39 verses 68 there is a reference to the blowing of the trumpet on the last day. "And the trumpet shall be blown, so all those that are in the earth shall swoon, except such as Allah pleases, then it shall be blown again, then lo! they shall stand up waiting."

Ideal of Perfect Manhood

As Iqbal points out in reference to those who can withstand the shock of the blast:—"Who can be the subject of this exception but those in whom the ego has reached the very highest point of intensity? And the climax is reached when the ego is able to retain full self-possession, even in the case of a direct contact with the all-embracing ego. As the Holy Quran says of the Prophet's vision of the Ultimate Ego:—

"His eye turned not aside, nor did it wander." (53-17). "This is the ideal of perfect manhood in Islam. Nowhere has it found a better literary expression than in a Persian verse which speaks of the Prophet's experience of Divine illumination:—"Moses fainted away by a mere surface illumination of reality: Thou seest the very substance of Reality with a smile!"

"Pantheistic sufism obviously cannot favour such a view, and suggests difficulties of a philosophical nature. How can the infinite and the finite egos mutually exclude each other? Can the finite ego, as such retain its finitude besides the Infinite? This difficulty is based on a misunderstanding of the true nature of the infinite. True infinite does not mean infinite extension which cannot be conceived without embracing all available finite extensions. Its nature consists in intensity and not extensity; and the moment we fix our gaze on intensity, we begin to see that the finite ego must be *distinct*, though not *isolated*, from the infinite. Extensively regarded I am absorbed by the spatio-temporal order to which I belong. Intensively regarded I consider the same spatio-temporal order as a confronting "other" wholly alien to me. I am distinct from and yet intimately related to that on which I depend for my life and sustenance."

If my readers find difficulty in understanding the above remarks of Iqbal let me give the two concluding paragraphs of Professor Dawes Hicks' Hibbert lectures, which explain the ideas more clearly:—

Playing with Ambiguity of Terms

"A similar line of argument would lead, I think to the conclusion that a 'universal self-consciousness' if by that be meant an actually existent reality, is a contradiction in terms. Any self-conscious mind that exists must, as an *existent*, be concrete and individual, and equally so whether the mind in question be the mind of man or the mind of God. As an existent reality, God must be one of many existents. His existence cannot be the existence of others, nor the existence of others His. To meet this contention with the easy retort that it allows us but a finite God is surely to play with the ambiguity of terms. "Infi-

nite is a slippery notion, and is susceptible of varied meanings; 'infinite' in the sense of being that besides which and beyond which nothing else can exist, a divine consciousness, it is true, can never be. The totality of things, or what philosophers name the Absolute, cannot be identified with God, so long as God is conceived as a self-conscious Being. What philosophers designate the 'Absolute' must include God and other minds, the world of nature and the world of values not indeed as isolated and disconnected entities, but rather as intimately related to one another and more especially to God and as thus forming a system or coherent unity. If then, by 'infinite' be meant the 'Absolute', God is not infinite. A quantitative whole of Reality, or one Reality that includes everything would no doubt, be 'infinite' in the sense of mere bigness or immeasurable magnitude; 'infinite' in the sense of being qualitatively perfect and complete it need not, and I should say, would not be. But it is 'infinity', I take it, in the latter sense that religion is concerned to ascribe to God. The heaping of Pelion upon Ossa may mystify and bewilder; as an incentive to devotion it is powerless. Christian (Sic!) reflexion has made us familiar with the conception of the infinite worth and value of an individual soul. And from that conception there is here light to be won. For it suggests an 'infinity' very different from that of mere vastness. The infinitude of knowledge and of love has nothing in common with the endlessness of space. To know or to love anything or any one genuinely or intensely is to be 'infinite' in regard to that person or thing. The mind of Peter Bell was limited and imperfect not because it was other than the primrose, but because it failed to appreciate the primrose; the poet was free from that limitation, not because the primrose was in any sense part of him, but because he could appropriate its beauty and experience the joy of such appropriation. And, so likewise, in regard to the world, God may be 'infinite', not because He is the world, nor because the world is part of Him, but because in and through Him the world has meaning and significance; because His knowledge of it is complete and His solicitude for it perfect. To me, at all events, it seems simply a misuse of language to call an individual finite or limited merely because there are other individuals distinct from himself. If there were no other individuals, then his being would indeed, be impoverished and his sphere of influence confined.

Where The Roads Divide

"8. Unless I gravely err, the issue which in this lecture we have been considering is destined to be the issue that will be forced more and more upon the reflexion of thoughtful minds in the coming time. In the latter half of the Victorian era we were confronted with a materialism according to which the basis of the universe of existence was matter; and thought, feeling consciousness of every kind, merely a by-product or concomitant of certain material processes. To that view no serious thinker of the present day would give his countenance, nor can it ever be resuscitated as a tenable philosophic theory. In the field of physical science itself the conception of a vast complex of material elements as the ultimate reality of the world of nature and of life has been definitely abandoned, and is clearly seen to be utterly insufficient to render intelligible even the physical events going on around us. The physicist is finding himself confronted with problems which half a century ago had not been so much as formulated. "Mind" says Sir James Jeans, "no longer appears as

LIBYA

Arab Land Passing Into Hands Of Mussolini's Hordes

An active preparation is going on in agricultural farms of Libya where the second quota of twenty thousand Italian settlers are being sent this month (October), says the Agenzia Le Colonie, Rome. 44 firms with 62 building yards, over 5,000 Italian workmen and 12,000 Muslims are figures which prove what enormous work is going on.

The colonising scheme includes the founding of 8 new Italian farm districts besides the extension of several other villages occupied last year.

The total number of these houses to be built in Tripolitania will be 883, while 569 will be built in Cyrenacia and besides these there are all those houses built privately or by firms or companies with land or other government grants.

A very extensive net-work of roads will connect these farms and the rural centres with the main arteries of the country.

The villages, from the Casa del Fascio, Government institutes and offices, town councils, the Fascist Reception Home, the houses for doctors and midwives, the post office, artisan shops and stores to the market, the schools and dwellings for teachers, the Church and clergy-house, barracks for the Royal Carabineers, a houses for storing food and homes for the superintendents of the areas, will be built as the other villages were last year. Besides those schools forming an important part of each agricultural centre, numerous others will be built in the surroundings of each farm district so that all children can reach those schools without having to cover too great distances.

In carrying out this scheme, continues the report, improvements in the standard of life of the Muslims has also not been neglected. Six new Muslim villages with farm districts are to be created besides the two villages of Alba and Fiorita already built.

an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter, not, of course, our individual minds but the mind in which the atoms out of which our individual minds have grown exist as thoughts." I confess I am not at all clear as to the way in which 'this statement should be interpreted. Many of Sir James Jeans' utterances would seem to indicate that he is intending to inculcate a theistic view of the universe not essentially different from that which I have been trying to unfold. But, in the passage just quoted, he would appear to be reaching forward to a pantheism more or less of the type we have just been discussing. I am not saying that the latter way of thinking is altogether devoid of attractiveness, or that it may not yield to many minds what seems to be a satisfactory solution of the problems of philosophy. But it is well to see clearly where the roads divide. Religious trust and aspiration are justified on the one basis: they can derive, so far as I can see, little sustenance from the other. Religion, in its highest form, rests, as I conceive it, upon belief in a Supreme living and personal Mind; it loses its meaning if the ultimate ground of things be taken to be a system of thought—contents which preserve their timelessness being while human souls, such as these are then supposed to be arise and pass away."

Ode To The "Star of Islam"

By MASS I. CASSIERE

O hail! Noble "Star of Islam"!
A meteor bright o'er Zeilan*
Thy messages send across space
To warn of sins our human race.
Thou give lustre unto life's page
And guide us in our pilgrimage.
Our Prophet to us advice gave
"Seek knowledge from cradle to grave".
To clear your mind's murky qualm
Muslims read the "Star of Islam".

*Ceylon.

The Story Of Aligarh

(Continued from page 7)

no vendor is allowed to enter into the University area or if a licensed dhobi takes much charge for dress of a student or takes more time than, is fixed, proctor will take immediate steps, and the dhobi is liable for heavy fine or cancellation of licence. The surgeon inspects all the meals or eatables of vendors and clubs in the University area daily. An electric whistle which blown daily in the first time of class in the morning and at 9 p.m. for sleep of students at night, after which no student is allowed to go outside the hostel or enter the hostel without proper pass of respective wardens, by the game keeper. For sanitary management, a sanitary department is under the University. Twice a whistle is blown whenever a member of the University expires, for which the college will be stopped and all the students are expected to reach the hospital and for proper *Namaz* and the dead body is taken by the students in the presence of all the students, to the burial ground, Minto E, which is reserved for only Muslim students and professors. The whole expense is carried out by the University, properly a largely attended condolence meeting is held. And such other Islamic education is managed in its good path by the University. From no other University in India are students coming out of the University, so cultured and well behaved as from Aligarh University.

(To be concluded).

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THE STORY OF ALIGARH

BY M. MOHAMED

(Formerly of Aligarh Muslim University and now of Government Technical College, Colombo)

[Continued from the issue of the 14th October, 1939]

Library

Besides every hostel has its own common room and libraries, as I have stated before, there are also special seminar libraries attached to all different departments. The University library contains more than 30,000 in general and 17,000 in the oriental section including about 4,000 manuscripts, with the subhanulla collection. A reading room, which is under the library, subscribes to various important journals, and periodicals (more than 30). The library supplies books and the reading room is always open to the students. The school Museum of the All-Indian Muslim Educational Conference is open to the Training College students.

Sports and Games

The University has separate clubs for Cricket, Hockey, Foot ball, Tennis, Bad-minton, Volley ball, Swimming and Athletic sports. The presidents are selected from the staff, and these clubs are controlled by the general games club. The Bhopal, gives a grant of 2,000 a year to the cricket club. The late Sir Nawab Mohamed Nasrullah Khan of Bhopal, presented a silver trophy which is presented to the winner of All-India Cricket Tournament and every year in Aligarh. Nawab Jang Bahadur of Hyderabad has presented a shield, presented every year to the winner of All-India Football Tournament. A magnificent gymnasium has been constructed by the magnificent donations of Captain Syed Dr. Sir Mohamed Ahmed Syed Khan, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., M.B.E., L.L.D. and H. H. Maharaja Takoji Rao Jolkar of Indore state, is fitted up with scientific and up-to-date apparatus. Provision is also made for resting and Binnet Military Drill has been made compulsory for the school boys, and intermediate students and optional for the degree students. It is proposed to start a Miniature Rifle Club.

A regular Riding School is maintained and the best horses are provided by the University. Instruction is given by a retired officer of Bengal Cavalry. The course lasts for not more than 9 months. The institution has its own swimming largest covered bath 105 feet by 30 feet, which is provided with shower baths, hot water bath, dressing rooms, retiring rooms and a restaurant. Separate hours are fixed for bath to the school and University students. Wardens are appointed to teach swimming and other games in water. The students are only allowed with the chief doctors' certificate, for fear of epidemics. There is a competition every year in swimming and medals are awarded to the winners.

Societies

Every hostel is provided with its own common rooms, majlis, debating societies, elocution rooms and dramatic association whose object it is to promote the intellectual recreation, along with social life during leisure hours. The most important of these, is the University Union, founded in 1864 by the late Mr. Theodore Beck. The constitution and organization of the union is modelled on those of the Cambridge Union. The Pro-Vice Chancellor is the president of the union and other office-bearers are elected from among the students. Every student is a member of the union. A silver and gold trophy has been pre-

sented by late Nawab Bahadur Dr. Sir Haji, Mohamed Muzamilulla Khan, Khan Bahadur, K.C.I., O.B.E., L.L.B., the Ex-Vice Chancellor of the University, which is given ever year to the institution which obtains the highest marks in the All-India Debating Competition held under the University union in Aligarh.

The prominent speakers and leaders are invited thrice a month to the Strachy hall or union, for the benefit of the students. Every year students are awarded with social prizes, who makes regular good Speeches throughout the year. Moreover Cox prize is awarded to a student who obtains the highest marks in the union speech competition. Every one of the students is given the liberty of speaking his own opinion, whether he is a non-Muslim or a Muslim on the stage within a jurisdiction of manly freedom. In no other University such a liberty is granted to the students.

Proctorial Management

A proctor is appointed with a decent salary. In his aid proctorial monitors are selected from among the students, who will be posted in railway station, town and cinema theatres. If a student is found in the above places without proper University uniform which consists of a Turkish coat or sheriwani white trousers, or pyjamas, boots with sock, and fez cap, their names will be reported by the monitors, and the student is liable to heavy fine which in no way is excusable. The students are ordered to have proper pass from their hostel wardens; if not they will be fined heavily. University uniform must be worn by the students at the University functions, lectures, in the dining hall, when visiting or interviewing with any University officer. Now the students have made it a culture to wear the uniform whenever they go outside their hostels. Aligarhian condemn those who don't wear their proper uniform, as far as they are students, who will not be proud of wearing such a decent Islamic uniform of such an esteemed University?

Islamic Culture

The conveyance of the brotherly salaam Assalamoo Alaikum is on the tip of the tongue of any Aligarhian. The students are taught how to behave properly, gentlemanly in Islamic way, that Aligarhians have seat reserved wherever they went. They are respected everywhere, especially outside the University in Aligarh, irrespective of caste, creed, dignity and age. They leave an impression which is in no way fading in the minds of those who come in contact with them. The culture has reached to its zenith and can be experimented from the fact that the students are treated in seat, talk and food in equal status of, with the officials of the University, with whom they are talking or interviewing. The students are also treated in the same status when they are given a garden party, irrespective of money they are paying, irrespective of family from which they are coming, irrespective of hostel in which they are residing. The Nawabs' or ruler's son, who is residing in the most costly hostel and in the most luxurious circumstances, and the poorest student who is residing in most cheap hostel with the hopeless circumstances are treated in the equal status, by the officials of the University and given the same food and seat in parties. Is it not pukka Islamic? More over restrictions and precautions are taken by the University on her sons not to practice the un-Islamic actions. Bulls under proctor are appointed to circuit through out the whole day and night in the stations and drinking bars, and other non-Islamic area. If a student, whether Hindu or Muslim is found in the intoxicating bar or any bad area he will be dismissed without question. Without the license of proctor

(Continued on page 6)

THE STATE OF ARABIA BEFORE THE ADVENT OF HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD

By A. M. SHAFI.

When Arabia was immersed in barbarism, darkness, and ignorance there appeared a most successful, social, religious, political and moral reformer, Muhammed by name at Mecca in the 7th century A. D. with the light of Islam, the Religion of Peace. Polytheism was the religion of the Arabs. Infanticide was popular and customary. Devil worship existed. The people were drunkards and gambling was the chief pas-time. The number of women a man might marry was unlimited; he could add his step-mothers to this number. Female infants were buried alive. The indigent were oppressed by the rich. There was no justice whatsoever. Woman was considered as mere chattel. She was thought to be an accursed creature, she had no rights, and suffered badly at the hands of man. Kings were adored.

Suddenly the dark and ugly map of Arabia was turned into an excellent and lovely picture with the appearance of the Saviour of Humanity thus changing the aspect of Arabia and the whole world. It is intelligible what great difficulties our Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace) had faced to teach the mission of Allah when it was opposed by his kinsmen who were among the idolaters.

The task of Prophet Muhammad was to reform what Gibbon, the historian calls "human brutes," and he successfully performed it. The Qu-raish who were the enemies of our Prophet left no stone unturned to put a stop to the teachings of Prophet Muhammad even by offering him bribes but in vain. The whole of Arabia accepted the creed of the Holy Prophet. The barbarous Arabs were

united politically. Caste system was banished. Fraternity and Equity were established. Having thus accomplished his service as a Leader and Reformer to humanity, Our Prophet Muhammad, the Greatest moral teacher passed away peacefully unto Allah. May the blessings of Allah be on him and his followers.

"Muhammad is a man among men as pearl among stones."

Encouraging Arabic In Muslim Schools

The Executive Committee of Education has approved certain proposals to enable the introduction of Arabic in the syllabus of schools where Muslim children are in the majority.

It has been decided that the appointment of Muslim teachers to teach Arabic in such schools should be accelerated.

In this connection the committee has agreed that a person in possession of the final certificate in Arabic of a Madrasa and a working knowledge of Tamil should be recognised for the present as a competent teacher for the purpose, but that after a period of 5 years after 1940 only such persons as have passed the J. S. C. in Sinhalese or Tamil, in addition to possessing the final certificate in Arabic, should be recognised as Arabic teachers in Government or Assisted Schools.

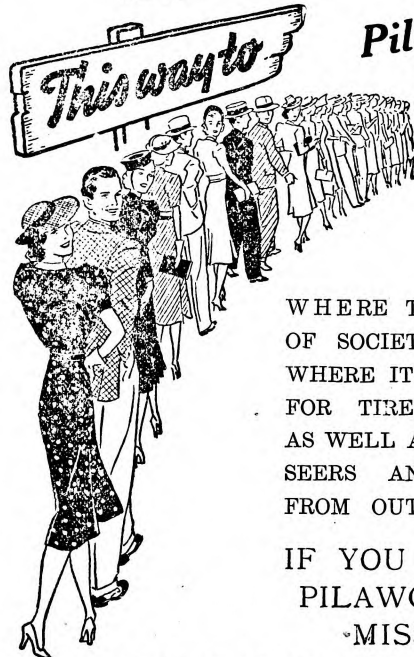
Question of Salaries

It was also resolved that the question of paying these teachers on a higher scale than uncertificated vernacular teachers should not be raised now but might be considered after the period of five years mentioned.

It is expected that before the expiry of that period it would be possible to devise a scheme for the training of such teachers in Arabic as well as in other subjects at the proposed Training School at Alutgama.

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Islam-A Universal Religion of Peace And Progress

(Continued from page 1)

first row. It is this genuine spirit of brotherhood infused by Islam into the heterogenous units of humanity that ushered in a new era of peace and goodwill in the world in those troublous times. "If Islam had done nothing else except eliminating, as it has incontestably done, the barriers of racial antipathy and national exclusiveness among one-third of mankind, scattered over the surface of the globe and covering almost every land and clime, even then civilisation would have been immensely indebted to it for ever."

Islam Raised The Status of Woman

Woman had no recognised status in pre-Islamic time, when she was regarded as a mere chattel, intended for the gratification of man. Even in countries then known as civilised, such as Greece, Rome, Egypt, Persia, man's estimate of woman was so low that it is altogether beyond conception in the twentieth century. The only function of woman, who was looked down upon on account of her supposed intellectual inferiority, was the management of the household and the procreation of children. Nowhere in the world did she get the treatment she was entitled to as man's partner in life. Even among the Athenians, the most cultured and civilised of all nations of antiquity, the wife was the slave of every caprice and whim of her husband—a saleable commodity, marketable and transferable to others at the sweet will of the head of the family. Personal rights she had none; she was precluded from all shares in the property of her father as well as of her husband.

Before the Prophet of Islam the miseries of half the human race did not move any of his predecessors, who had by their sanction perpetuated the disabilities imposed upon woman by the selfishness of man. Some of them characterised her as "the road to iniquity", "the gate of the devil", "the instrument which the devil uses to gain possession of our soul." Even to this day the legal position of woman in most advanced countries of Christendom compares most unfavourably with that of a Muslim woman. Until very recently a married woman in England had no rights independently of her husband, although by courtesy called his "better half". It is only a short time ago that the position of woman in England was improved by some legislative enactments.

It was Islam that for the first time vindicated woman's rights and gave her the high status she was entitled to as mother, sister and partner of man. In fact the improvement which Islam brought about in woman's position was unparalleled in the history of the world. It gave her a status unknown and unthought-of before, and unsurpassed even to this day. The Prophet of Islam declared woman the "sovereign in the house of her husband", and he symbolically placed "Paradise at the feet of the mother". The ideal of wifehood in Muslim society is love and affection, not subordination and subservience. Man and woman, according to the Quran, have obligations towards each other on an equal basis. "And if you men have certain rights on them, they have similar rights on you in all fairness." (Al-Quran). For intellectual and spiritual progress woman has as much capacity as man. In her honour one complete chapter of the Quran was

revealed after her name. The very first verse of this chapter strikes the keynote: "O people, fear your Lord, who hath created you from one soul, and of his kind created his wife and from these hath spread abroad many men and women. And fear your God, in Whose name you ask mutual favour, and reverence the women that bear you. Verily God is watching you." Does not all this give the lie direct to the monstrous allegation made by some unscrupulous non-Muslim critics that Islam recognises no soul in woman?

In the exercise of legal powers and functions, Islam placed woman on a footing of perfect equality with man. The position of a Muslim woman in the matter of inheritance and individual rights is much better than that of her sisters professing other religions. "Men ought to have a part of what their parents and kindred leave: let them have a stated share" (Al-Quran). Thus, fourteen hundred years ago, Islam gave to woman the right to property which she did not get in England until 1578, and has not in France even yet.

A Muslim woman has full liberty in the choice of her husband. No contract is valid without her consent. She has first to declare her consent, man merely accepts her offer. No guardian can give his major female ward in marriage without first obtaining her consent. If married by the guardian in her minority, she can repudiate the marriage on attaining majority. Besides, no marriage contract is complete without the settlement for a dower of the wife. Her claim to it on the death of her husband, has preference over all creditors and heirs to the property of the deceased. She has been given the full right of enjoying and alienating her property. She can do business independently and enter into any contract she likes; her husband has no right of interference. After marriage she retains her distinct individuality and she has not to merge her identity, as her Christian sisters have to do, by assuming her husband's surname as Mrs. So and So. Thus her position is that of an independent co-sharer and a true partner of man. Such is the exalted position to which Islam has raised womankind. "The teacher who in an age when no country, no system, no community gave any right to woman, maiden or married, mother or wife, who in a country where the birth of a daughter was considered a calamity, secured to the sex rights which are only unwillingly and under pressure being conceded to them by the civilised nations in the twentieth century, deserves the gratitude of humanity. If Muhammad had done nothing more, his claim to be a benefactor of mankind would still have been indisputable."

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Printed and published for the Proprietors of "The Star of Islam" by Haris
Cassim Camball, No. 37, Glennie Street, Slave Island, at the Colombo Adana
Press, No. 39 & 41, Glennie Street, Slave Island.