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THE HOLY QUR-ÂN

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
مُحَمَّدٌ وَوَسَلَّى عَلَیْ رَسُوْلِہِ الْکَرِیْمِ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

SHA'BAN, 1342 A.H.

VOL. XII.

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NOTES

H.E. The Egyptian Minister.

We take this opportunity of extending, on behalf of all Muslims in England, a very cordial welcome to H.E. Aziz Izzet Pasha, the Egyptian Minister recently accredited to the Court of St. James's.

The newly acquired independence of Egypt, and the consequently altered relations between that ancient land and Great Britain, may, perhaps, in minds that are insular and ultra-conservative, have inspired feelings of mistrust towards those responsible for and associated with the change. Such a spirit of narrow Imperialism is alien to Islam; and no true Muslim can ever uphold the cult of national aggrandisement at the expense of right—rather does he rejoice that a great people has regained its freedom, and that another voice will be raised for Islam in the councils of the world.

At the invitation of the Imam, Khwaja Nazir Ahmad, His Excellency paid a visit to the Mosque, Woking, on Sunday, February 3rd. A full account of the proceedings appears elsewhere in this issue.

Virtue and Vice.

“Man has no natural benevolent feelings,” says Hobbes, the great philosopher. He argues that at first man is governed solely by his interests. He seeks power, because it gives him the means of gratifying many desires. It becomes associated with those desires, and is, at last, itself passionately loved. Praise indicates the affection of the eulogist and marks him out for the affection of others. Valued at first as a

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means, it is soon desired as an end ; and to such a pitch can his enthusiasm rise, that he may sacrifice all earthly things for posthumous praise which can never reach his ear. The same phenomenon can be traced, it is said, in a multitude of other forms. Money in itself possesses absolutely nothing that is desirable or pleasurable ; but being the means of procuring us many of the objects of our desires, it becomes associated in our minds with the idea of pleasure ; it is, therefore, itself loved ; and it is possible for the love of money to eclipse so completely or supersede the love of all those things which money procures, that the miser will forgo them all, rather than part with a fraction of his gold.

Hobbes belongs to the narrower school of the Utilitarians. According to these writers, we are governed exclusively by our interests. Pleasure, they assure us, is the only good, and moral good and moral evil mean nothing more than our voluntary conformity to a law that will bring it to us. To love good, simply as good, is impossible. "Take away pleasures and pains," says Bentham, "and not only happiness, but justice, and duty, and obligation, and virtue, all of which have been so absolutely held up to view as independent of them, are so many empty sounds." Thus, everything we do, according to some of these writers, is a form of self-love. They attribute charity, for example, partly to our desire to obtain the esteem of others, partly to the expectation that our favours may in the future, if occasion arises, be reciprocated, and, partly, too, to the gratification of the sense of power, to prove that we can not only satisfy our own desires but also the desires of others.

From such a conception of human nature it is easy to divine what system of morals must flow. No character, no feeling or action, is naturally better than others, and as long as men are in a savage condition, morality has no existence. Fortunately, however, we are all dependent for many of our pleasures upon others. Co-operation and organization are essential to happiness, and these are impossible without some restraint being placed upon our appetites. Divine or State laws are enacted to secure this restraint, and being sustained by rewards and punishments, they make it the interest of the individual to regard that of the community. The educational influence of these laws, and the growing perception of the identity of interests of the different members of the community, create a public opinion favourable to all the qualities which are the means of peaceable and social living. Such are justice, gratitude,

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modesty, equity, and mercy ; and such, too, are purity and charity which, considered in themselves alone, are conducive to the happiness of society, and become, in consequence, virtues. Virtue, then, is a judicious pursuit, and vice an injudicious pursuit of pleasure.

The Islamic Conception.

Divine Revelation, according to the Holy Qur-án, comes for our guidance ; it points out both directions and thus seeks to improve the moral condition of mankind.

And upon Allah it rests to show the right way, and there are some deviating (ways) ; and if He pleases He would certainly guide you all aright.¹

And (Allah) pointed out to him (man) the two conspicuous ways.²

The Holy Qur-án dispels the ignorance which prevents men from seeing their true interests, and makes it more and more the interest of each to conform to that of the other. Thus, observance and respect for chastity, truth, or other things that we regard as virtues, are shown to produce more happiness than suffering, or to accord us more pleasure than pain. The Holy Qur-án evolves a four-fold scheme of ethics. The pleasure which produces no pain is to be embraced. The pain which produces no pleasure is to be avoided. The pleasure is to be avoided which prevents a greater pleasure, or produces a greater pain. The pain is to be endured which averts a greater pain or secures a greater pleasure.³

Man, according to the Holy Qur-án, is the highest of the high and the lowest of the low (xcv. 4-8). Heaven and hell are his own creation. If he has attained perfect self-realization, he has, indeed, created his own Heaven ; and he who has stunted his faculties is condemned to that fire of God which will come out of his own heart. Thus, happiness and sorrow, felicity and misery, are the fruits of his own actions ; they begin to operate in this life, and continue in the hereafter.

Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability ; for it is the (benefit of) what it has earned, and upon it (the evil of) what it has wrought.⁴

And again :—

Whoever does good, it is for his own soul, and whoever does evil, it is against himself ; *then* you shall be brought back to your Lord.⁵

¹ The Holy Qur-án, xvi. 9.

² Ibid. xc. 10.

³ Ibid. v. 16.

⁴ Ibid. ii. 286.

⁵ Ibid. xiv. 15.

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The Muslim Sufi maintains that God is within and without man. He argues that God "made him (man) complete and breathed into him of His *Spirit*." ¹

The Christian Notion.

But there are others of a different opinion. Their obvious resource is in the reward and punishment of the next world only, and these they accordingly present as the motive to virtue. This selfish theory again furnishes interested motives. The sacrifice of our pleasure, without an equivalent reward, is a simple act of madness and unworthy of man. The spring of all their actions is to gain Heaven and avoid hell. They argue that, being born sinners, they cannot expect reward in this world; but faith in a certain ritual will secure reward in the next.

If a Christian who holds the view of happiness and misery in another life, be asked, why a man must keep his word, he will give this as a reason: because God, Who has the power of eternal life and death, requires it of us. But if a Muslim be asked why, he will go further and answer: because to do otherwise would be dishonest, below the dignity of man, opposite to virtue, disobedience of the Divine Will, a set-back to the achievement of man's goal—which, according to the Holy Qur-án, is to become as like God Himself,² as may be possible for man, in this world as well as the next.

In short, if the effect of virtue were to prevent or destroy more pleasure than it produced, or to produce more pain than it prevented, its more appropriate name would be wickedness and folly; wickedness as affecting others, folly as affecting him who practises it.

Discarding the notion of sin, let us take two wholly different types of character—the thrifty, and the speculative. Both types grow out of a strong sense of the values, and a strong desire for the attainment, of material comforts; but they are profoundly different, both in their virtues and their vices. Thriftiness is one of the regulators of life. It produces order, sobriety, moderation, self-restraint, patience, and all the virtues which are designated by the term respectability. The speculative character, on the other hand, is restless, fiery, and uncertain; very liable to fall into great and conspicuous vices. The former may produce an ungenerous nature, the latter a generous; but which of the two is the greater evil? A gambler can gain more than he loses, but

¹ The Holy Qur-án, xxxii. 9.

² *Ibid.* ii. 138.

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at someone else's expense. There is no spectacle more piteous or more horrible than that of an unfortunate, perhaps foolish, loser writhing in anguish beneath a more fortunate gambler's yoke.

The Betting Tax.

They ask *you* about intoxicants and games of chance. Say : In both of them there is a great sin and means of profit for men, and their sin is greater than their profit.¹

O you who believe ! intoxicants and games of chance . . . are only uncleanness, the devil's work ; shun it therefore that you may be successful.²

Why is gambling, together with certain other recognized vices, tolerated in Christian countries ? Why is fornication not illegal ? The solution must be sought in the Canonical Law. Man, it is urged, is a sinner by nature ; he cannot be otherwise. So to declare their illegality would be in direct contravention of the Divine Will ; for how else would sinners be forthcoming to be redeemed ?

Besides, these are crimes against the Laws of God, and not those of the State ; the punishment must be in His hands, in the hereafter, and not in this world. The State can, but dare not, prevent them. It can, and does, support the Church, and give a State imprimatur to the practice of betting. In the last Parliament a Select Committee of the House of Commons on the proposed Betting Tax was appointed to examine and report whether such a tax was desirable and practicable. While writing on the subject, in a previous issue,³ we pointed out that the turnover on betting in this country was about £100,000,000 a year. The Committee was of opinion that it was much more than that ; and that, therefore, the calculation that a 10 per cent. tax would produce £10,000,000 errs on the side of moderation. The report made no secret of the fact that there must be legalization of betting.

But, according to the law of England, betting is not in itself illegal ; bookmakers may make cash bets on a race-course and receive credit bets in their offices by post, telephone or telegraph. The bookmaker contravenes the law only when his clients resort to him in his place of business other than at a race-course, for the purpose of making bets.

The Committee, after having examined forty witnesses

¹ The Holy Qur-án, ii. 219.

² Ibid. v. 90.

³ *Islamic Review*, vol. xi. p. 202.

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and asked them more than ten thousand questions, concludes its draft report by saying :—

Your Committee are unanimous in the view that betting is a useless thing, except in so far as it gives pleasurable excitement for some, and for others an escape from the monotony of their daily work. It is in the main unproductive except to the bookmakers. In other words, it is not inaptly described as “a mug’s game,” as practised by the vast majority of backers. It is a foolish occupation or habit. It is a pure luxury and a fitting subject-matter for taxation unless there are strong reasons for allowing this luxury to escape.

Whether or no the Committee, as a whole, or by a majority, would have endorsed that view we cannot well judge from their report, which consists mainly of an historical survey of betting and the method by which it is carried on at the present day. Their evidence is extremely disquieting to all who realize the evils which too often follow in the train of gambling, and it discloses “an enormous growth in the practice of betting, the most notable feature of which is its extension to women of the working-classes.” The epidemic has affected the clergy as well.

Betting on Sermons.

The Rev. J. Glass, Vicar of Leyton, in his opening address at the Chelmsford Diocesan Conference, on betting and gambling, said :—

A member of this Conference, when I came into the room, offered to lay me five to three that I would not get my resolution through. . . . People to-day have a flutter on anything from the race-course to the pulpit. Once a bet was made as to whether I would preach from the Old or New Testament. I preached on Prayer Book Revision, and was told that I had won the bet myself ; but I never got it.

The Rev. Mr. Lees, Vicar of Brentwood, said he saw no difference between a man putting twopence on a horse and another ringing up his broker and asking for £500 to be invested in oil shares. Both wanted something for nothing, and, he went on to say, that “all the wardens and church officers were doing that. The biggest gamble I know is being ordained. Betting was not a sin ; but it was a damned folly.”

The question of paramount importance is : What is the Church going to do ? Two witnesses representing the Free Churches, Dr. Gillie and Mr. Benson Perkins, are, we are told, strongly opposed to a tax on betting. The evidence of Dr. Wellton, Dean of Durham, and Dr. Lyttelton was that “betting is not immoral in itself but may become so if carried to excess.” That was a point made by the late

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Bishop Ridding in a well-remembered sermon ; and *The Church Times* is

glad to observe, therefore, that men of the position of these doctors, who, while personally they would wish, if it were possible, to eliminate gambling altogether from our social life, recognize that there is nothing morally wrong or sinful in making a bet within one's means. .

This notable journal ridicules the idea of any opposition to taxation, and remarks :—

No one supposes for a moment that betting could be eradicated, . . . betting is not unlawful, but it is entirely unnecessary, and is practised in the pursuit of pleasure and excitement. To tax it might not diminish its volume, but it would certainly ensure that its followers would contribute something of their folly to ease the burden that rests on the sober and industrious.

The ancient custom of divination, dividing of arrows, and drawing of lots, which runs through all the history recorded in the Bible, as a method, permitted and encouraged, of *inquiring of the Lord*,¹ is the basis of the Church opposition to absolute suppression of this pernicious habit of gambling. It has been truly said that the Church is a fraud and its ministers gamble with human souls.

Plays in Churches.

Whereas a Barnet church, "owing to the enormous increase of motor traffic, is to be removed in order to widen the road," a good many are to be dismantled owing to lack of attendance. Others are to add to their activities "a powerful æsthetic and emotional element which, unlike Anglo-Catholic ritual, will not involve any disputative or theological disputations." That is to say, the Church is to abandon, more or less, religion for art. The handmaid is to become the mistress. Actors are to preach instead of the ministers.

To meet the cost of production of these Passion Plays, the seats of the consecrated buildings are sold and booked in advance. The doors are closed and a St. Peter refuses admission to the House of God without a purchased ticket. Faith in Christ or Mammon produces like results. In the Christian West, religion, too, is looked upon in the light of a ticket, which, being purchased by faith, and snugly laid aside, is to be produced at the celestial gate to secure admission to Heaven.

When such as thou with sacrilegious hand
Seize on the apostolic key of Heaven,

¹ Acts i. 24.

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It then becomes a tool for crafty knaves
To shut out virtue, and unfold those gates
That Heaven itself had barr'd against the lusts
Of avarice and ambition.—*Brooke.*

The Church Times describes this revival of the mediæval custom of acting Nativity and Passion plays in church as "altogether admirable." The writer remarks :—

The dramatic representation of episodes in the life of our Lord give them a new and vivid reality. Drama is the most forceful of the arts. It appeals to the eye and the ear. It is dynamic, while painting and poetry are static, and it has initially a greater power to hold the attention and excite the imagination, particularly of the simple and the unsophisticated. The Church is entirely justified in using the influence of dramatic representation to bring home to the people the beauty of the life of its Founder.

The Church, unable to give spiritual guidance, can but offer temptations and allurements.

Say : Shall we inform you of the greatest losers in (their) deeds ? (These are) they whose labour is lost in this world's life and they think that they are well versed in skill of the work of hands.¹

Opera in Church.

The experiment of presenting a grand opera at High Pavement Church, Nottingham, drew a very large audience. *Tannhäuser* was presented on February 4th, and *Lohengrin* and *Parsifal* on the following nights took the place of evening services.

During the performance, Rev. Simon Jones, the minister, gave a dramatic reading of the visit of *Tannhäuser* to the Venusberg, and of his return, sin-laden and weary, and of the timely intervention of his early love, Elizabeth, who succeeded in restoring him to the higher level from which he had sunk.

These readings were in place of the usual scriptural lessons, and for the sermon was substituted an address on *Tannhäuser*, the earth-bound, from the opera. Mr. Jones, in an interview, declared that his plan has the approval of the Church Council, and said :—

I recently heard the Carl Rosa Opera sing *Tannhäuser*. I was deeply impressed with the religious *motif*. It is a pity that the Churches do not use this wonderful instrument to lift the soul. We intend it to be an act of worship, but we believe that religion can be presented in a more interesting way to-day to appeal to modern men and women. We are anxious to get away from the dead and musty past, and for that reason frequently I read, instead of the second Bible lesson, extracts from Ruskin and Wordsworth and other modern

¹ The Holy Qur-án, xviii. 103-4.

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writers. Religion is presented in too narrow a way. I want to enlist all that is best in music, poetry and literature in the service of God.

Ancient customs are revived; old wooden cradles placed within the altar rails, with new babes in them, are rocked, as a modern version of the presentation of Jesus in the Temple; but the flock still revolts against the shepherd.

Osiris Worship in Church.

A remarkable religious service to the Egyptian god Amen-Ra, and the "heretical god" Aten set up by Akhen-Aten, father-in-law of Tutankhamen, was held recently in St. Mark's Episcopal Church in New York. An appropriate "atmosphere" of mysticism was obtained by the use of special lighting effects when the rector and congregation chanted their litany—a compound of Osirian poems and Inca rites:—

Rector: "Hail to thee, beautiful god of every day. Beautiful is thy arising into the horizon of the sky."

Congregation: "Beautiful is thy arising, O living Aten, Orb of light, of the first beginning of life. When thou arisest on the Eastern horizon, thou fillest every land with thy beauty, glistening high above the whole earth. Thou art Ra, the sun-god, and thou carriest away all captive. Thou bindest them fast with thy Love."

The Rev. William Guthrie, the rector, then knelt and prayed to Amen-Ra.

"Hail to thee Amen-Ra, lord of the thrones of earth, ancient of days, lord of the ages, upstayer of things that are foremost of the gods, lord of Truth and Righteousness, begetter of the gods, maker of men and beasts and herbs."

Here endeth the litany.

Mr. Guthrie's object, as he explained, was to "make a comparative study of religions and arrange them in harmony with the Christian religion . . . the service shows that the people of all ages were making preparations for Christianity. Their confessions of faith were in many ways similar to ours."

That has been our contention throughout, only the position is reversed. It is Christianity that has borrowed the pagan rites and rituals.

The Month of Ramadān.

The month of Ramadān is that in which the Qur-án was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction; therefore, whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or upon a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of days; Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty, and (He desires) that you should complete the

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number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for His having guided you and that you may give thanks.¹

The object of fasting, like other principles of Islam, is not to cause privation and suffering, but to create piety and rectitude. So says the Holy Qur-án :—

O you who believe ! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so as to make you pious and guard (against evil).²

The hankerings of man for hunger and other appetites, the fountain-head of his activities, are as often as not prone to cause iniquity, and thus entail suffering. The institution of Fast helps him to control these natural desires. "Fasting is half patience," says the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Patience, in the words of the Holy Qur-án, is more than a mere resignation to adversity. It consists in avoiding temptations. It is the chief asset of man which makes him successful in the battle of life. It is the prime element to build up character, which is made and not born.

The teaching of moral qualities or the recommendation thereof is not the object of religion ; its sole function consists in effecting a moral training, and prescribing rules of life. Islam, therefore, did not confine itself to mere assertions like : "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," but it went further and laid down a disciplinary code of life to make people meek and patient.

Fasting does not mean starvation. It is a means to curb our evil desires and to control carnal passions. The month of Ramadān is a month of training, when by refraining from gratifying our natural needs and desires, we learn to shun evil means to that end. Besides the inner man, our hands, eyes, tongues, minds, hearts, are all to undergo rigidly this training.

The fast begins at dawn and ends at sunset. It is not obligatory on the aged, the ill or the wayfarer. Every one is a judge for himself of his capabilities of fasting.

The month of Ramadān begins this year on April 5th. To relieve the members of our staff, who, of course, will be fasting, of some of their daily work, our next issue will be a double number for April and May.

¹ The Holy Qur-án, ii. 185.

² Ibid. ii. 183.

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WOMAN : HER SUBJECTION, EXPLOITATION, AND EMANCIPATION

By KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from p. 77, Vol. XII. No. 2.)

WOMAN IN ANCIENT ROME.

THE authorities that might be cited on the real position of woman in Rome are very numerous ; but I content myself with a few whose right to speak cannot be questioned. Professor Samuel Dill, in his fine work, *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire*,¹ furnishes ample evidence on the subject. Discussing the status of woman at Rome, he says :—

The Roman matron from the earliest times had secured to her by family religion a dignified and respectful position. . . . In the early years of the Empire . . . her status both in law and in fact really rose. There can be no doubt that the Roman lady, of the better sort, without becoming less virtuous and respected, became far more accomplished and attractive. . . . She became more and more the equal and companion of her husband, and her influence on public affairs became more decided.”²

William Lecky, the distinguished historian, also notes that women “arrived during the Empire at a point of freedom and dignity which they subsequently lost and have never altogether regained.”³ After dealing with the vices of Imperial Rome, he adds :—

Yet there is probably no period in which examples of conjugal heroism and fidelity appear more frequently than in this very age, in which marriage was most free and in which corruption was so general. Much simplicity of manners continued to co-exist with the excesses of an almost unbridled luxury. Augustus, we are told, used to make his daughters and granddaughters weave and spin, and his wife and sister made most of the clothes he wore. The skill of wives in domestic economy, and especially

¹ Page 137.

² See also Dill's *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, pp. 76-81.

³ *History of European Morals*, ii. p. 128.

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in spinning, was frequently noticed in their epitaphs. Intellectual culture was much diffused among them, and we meet with several noble specimens in the sex of large and accomplished minds united with all the gracefulness of intense womanhood and all the fidelity of the truest love.¹

In the history and legends of early Rome we have ample evidence both of the high moral esteem in which woman was held, and of her prominence in Roman life. The tragedies of Lucretia and of Virginia display a delicacy of honour, a sense of the supreme excellence of unsullied purity, which no Christian nation could surpass. The legends of the Sabine women interceding between their parents and their husbands, and thus saving the infant republic; and of the mother and wife of Coriolanus averting by their prayers the ruin impending over their country, entitled women to claim their share in the patriotic glories of Rome. A temple of Venus Calva was associated with the legend of those Roman ladies who, in an hour of danger, cut off their long tresses to make bowstrings for the soldiers.² Another temple preserved to all posterity the memory of the filial piety of that Roman lady who, when her mother was condemned to be starved to death, obtained permission to visit her in prison, and was discovered feeding her from her breast.³ There is a similar legend of a daughter thus feeding her father.⁴

Many stories are told of the affection of husband for wife, wife for husband, children for parents, and parents for children. Thus we are informed of Tiberius, the father of the Gracchi, that he caught a couple of snakes in his bed, and, on consulting the haruspices, was told that he must neither kill both nor let both go; that if he killed the male, he himself

¹ *History of European Morals*, ii. p. 130.

² Capitolinus, *Maximinus Junior*.

³ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, vii. 36.

⁴ Val. Max., lib. v. cap. 4.

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would die ; if he killed the female, his wife, Cornelia, would die. He did not hesitate in his choice. He loved Cornelia. He therefore killed the male snake, and a short time after this occurrence he died.¹

Who has not read with emotion of the tenderness and heroism of Porcia, the daughter of Cato and the wife of Brutus, claiming her right to share in the trouble which clouded her husband's brow ; how, doubting her own courage, she did not venture to ask Brutus to reveal to her his enterprise till she had secretly tried her power of endurance by piercing her thigh with a knife ; how once, and but once in his presence, her noble spirit failed, when, as she was about to separate from him for the last time, her eyes chanced to fall upon a picture of the parting interview of Hector and Andromache. Her husband, in alarm, came near her, and she then addressed him :—

Brutus, I, Cato's daughter, was given unto thy house, not, like women who serve as concubines, to share thy bed and board only, but to be a partner in thy happiness and a partner in thy sorrows. But, with respect to thy marriage, everything is blameless on thy part ; but as to me, what evidence is there, or what affection, if I must neither share with thee a secret sorrow nor a care which demand confidence ? I know that a woman's nature is considered too weak to carry a secret, but, Brutus, there is a certain power towards making moral character in a good nature and an honest life : and I am Cato's daughter and also Brutus's wife, whereon hitherto I had less relied, but now I know that I am invincible to pain.²

There are numerous instances in which wives resolved to share the ill-fortunes of their husbands, to endure calamity along with them, and to die rather than survive them. I will mention but two of them.

Paulina, the wife of Seneca, opened her own veins in order to accompany her husband to the grave ; when much blood had already flowed her

¹ Plutarch, *Tibe. Gracchus*, i.

² Plutarch, *Brutus* (Long's translation).

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slaves and freedmen bound her wounds and thus compelled her to live; but the Romans ever after observed with reverence the sacred pallor of her countenance—the memorial of her act.¹

The form of the elder Arria, wife of Pætus, towers grandly above her fellows. Pliny gives the following narrative, received from her granddaughter:—

Her husband, Cæcia Pætus, was ill; her son was also ill, both, to all appearance, with a fatal attack. The son died; a youth of exquisite beauty, of equal modesty, and dear to the parents as much because he was their son as for other reasons. She made all the preparations for the funeral, and paid the last rites to him in such a way that her husband remained in ignorance of what was going on. Whenever she entered his chamber she pretended that her son still lived, and was even improving in health. And when he often asked, "How is my boy?" she would answer, "He had a good night; he took a little food eagerly." But when the tears, long kept in check, would overcome her and begin to stream forth, she would go outside and give herself up to a flood of grief, and then come back with dry eyes and calm countenance.²

It was this same lady who taught her husband how to die. Pætus was condemned by the Emperor Claudius to die by his own hand. Those who knew the love Arria bore him, and the heroic fervour of her character, predicted that she would not long survive him. Thræsea, her son-in-law, endeavoured to dissuade her from suicide by saying: "If I am ever called upon to perish, would you wish your daughter to die with me?" She answered: "Yes, if she will then have lived with you as long and as happily as I have with Pætus." Her friends attempted, by carefully watching her, to secure her safety; but she dashed her head against the wall with such force that she fell upon the ground, and then, rising up, she said: "I told you I would find a hard way to death if you refused me an easy way." All attempts to restrain her were abandoned, and her

¹ Tacit., *Annal.*, xv. 63–64.

² Pliny, *Epist.*, iii. 16.

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death was, perhaps, the most majestic in antiquity. Pætus for a moment hesitated to strike the fatal blow; but his wife, taking the dagger, plunged it deeply into her own breast, and then, drawing it out, gave it, all reeking as it was, to her husband, exclaiming with her dying breath: "My Pætus, it does not pain."¹

It would be difficult to find a more touching image or a deeper expression of conjugal love than this noble example of the constancy of a Roman wife which has been for so many generations a household word among mankind.

Thus, by the time of the beginning of the Christian era, woman had attained a liberty and distinction which she has not even yet completely regained in the West.

"No taxation without representation" was asserted in Rome nearly two thousand years before it was heard of in England. And it might have been an accomplished fact centuries ago had this country remained non-Christian. It is, therefore, misleading to speak as if Christianity had rescued woman from the despotism of Rome.

But we must go further. The Christian Church must explain how it came about that, whereas we find woman in Rome, eighteen centuries ago, on the eve of complete independence; in the intervening eighteen hundred years, and particularly during the period when the power of the Church was paramount—the Middle Ages—woman fell to a lower position, socially, legally, and even morally, than she had ever occupied under the Greek and Roman civilizations?

Sir Henry Maine, the distinguished jurist, in his *Ancient Law*, answers the question. After reviewing the Roman Law, touching marriage, he goes on to say:—

The consequence was that the situation of the Roman female, whether married or unmarried, became one of great personal and proprietary independence, for the tendency of the later law,

¹ Pliny, *Epist.*, iii. 16; Martial, *Epist.*, 1. 14.

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as I have already hinted, was to reduce the power of the guardian to a nullity, while the form of marriage in fashion conferred on the husband no compensating superiority. But Christianity tended somewhat from the very first to narrow this remarkable liberty.¹

The opposition on the part of Christianity was based on the teachings of St. Paul, and on the supposed religion and ethics of Christ. Thus, under the influence of its "passion for ascetism," Christianity went on to fatal excesses. I approach the subject once again under cover of the same great authority. He says:—

The latest Roman law, so far as it is touched by the Constitutions of the Christian emperors, bears some marks of a reaction against the liberal doctrines of the great Antonine jurisconsults. And the prevalent state of religious sentiment may explain why it is that modern jurisprudence, forged in the furnace of barbarian conquest, and formed by the fusion of Roman jurisprudence with patriarchal usage, has absorbed, among its rudiments, much more than usual of those rules concerning the position of woman which belong peculiarly to an imperfect civilization.

Justinian, in his *Institutes*, tried, it would seem, to approve some of the existing Christian prejudices, and to reconcile them with those of pagan Rome. In so framing his codified jurisprudence, he covertly but most efficaciously, undermined the Roman customs and ideals, which he purported merely to interpret. In consequence,

the Chapter of law relating to married women was for the most part read by the light, not of Roman, but of Canon (Church) law, which in no one particular departs so widely from the spirit of the secular jurisprudence as in the view it takes of the relations created by marriage. This was in part inevitable, since *no society which preserves any tincture of Christian institution is likely to restore to married women the personal liberty conferred on them by the Middle Roman law*, but proprietary disabilities of married females stand on quite a different basis from their personal incapacities, and it is by the tendency of their doctrines to keep alive and consolidate the former that the expositors of the Canon law have deeply injured civilization.²

¹ *Ancient Law*, p. 160.

² *Ibid.* p. 162. (Italics are mine.)

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Sir Henry Maine goes on to remark that there are many traces of a struggle between the secular and ecclesiastical principles, but the Canon law nearly everywhere prevailed. He then points out that the legislations "which are least indulgent to married women are invariably those which have followed the Canon law exclusively, or those which, from the lateness of their contact with European civilization, have never had their archaisms weeded out."¹ To substantiate his remarks, he gives concrete examples from the laws of various European countries, and referring to the Common Law of England says :—

And yet more stringent in the proprietary incapacities it imposes is the English Common Law, *which borrows far the greatest number of its fundamental principles from the jurisprudence of the Canonists*. Indeed, the part of the Common Law which prescribes the legal situation of married women may serve to give an Englishman clear notions of the great institution which has been the principal subject of this chapter. I do not know how the operation and nature of the ancient *Patria Potestas* can be brought so vividly before the mind as by reflecting on the prerogatives attached to the husband by the pure English Common Law, and by recalling the vigorous consistency with which the view of a complete legal subjection on the part of the wife is carried by it, where it is untouched by equity or statutes, through every department of rights, duties and remedies.

This is a very grave indictment of the action of the Christian Church by a distinguished legal authority ; it is a prosaic statement of the facts that must outweigh any number of apologetic works. Nor will the idea that the Canon law was framed in defiance of the real teachings of Christ diminish the charge ; for, as I will show, it is due to the explicit and emphatic teachings of the great Christian Fathers and the Church, under the clear directions of its most sacred writings, that woman was thrust back into that most cruel form of subjection from which she has just liberated herself.

But before I pass on to consider the development

¹ *Ancient Law*, p. 163.

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of the Christian attitude towards woman and her aspirations, I must deal with the other side of the picture—that general degradation of the character of the Roman woman, from which, we are told, Christianity rescued her—a false charge, and a groundless assertion. We are told that Christianity appeared at a time when the Roman Empire was falling to pieces; when, therefore, morals were low, society in an utterly corrupt condition, and licentiousness universally prevalent.

There is no sure foundation for this opinion. First, "Rome" is made to cover the Roman Empire, and a particular period to cover the whole of Roman history. As a matter of fact the vices pilloried by the later Roman moralists nearly always concern the Court and its environs. It would be just as fair to take this as typical of all Roman life, as to take the Courts of England under the Restoration, and of France under the Regency, as a criterion of the life of these countries; or, indeed, to take the *Liber Gomorrhæicus* of Cardinal Peter Damian as an illustration of "Christian Morals."

The once popular idea of an entire corruption of Rome in the first century is happily exploded. Nevertheless there are some who still adhere to the popular notions which are derived from a Bohemian writer, a bitter satirist, a pessimist historian, and a scandal-mongering biographer. There is, perhaps, no picture of the last days of the Republic, or the first years of the Empire, so black as that painted by Ammianus Marcellinus. But there is no sure foundation for his opinion, except that a prejudiced mind can find a good deal of matter with which to occupy itself. Drumann, in his laborious work of six volumes, has collected all the biographical facts that records of that period have sent down to us. He points out that Romans trembled before their wives and adduces instances in which Romans were betrayed by them. He mentions but three examples of such

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treachery; and we may be sure that these were all the instances which the records of the period furnished him with; for it is not likely that any one has escaped his most diligent search. But he also mentions eight instances in which wives saved their husbands at the risk of their lives, or followed them to exile. If a comparative, though perhaps rash, inference is to be drawn from these facts, it is that, even in the midst of wild disorders and corruption, wives were far more frequently true to their husbands and prepared to share every peril with them; and that we have really no proof of degeneracy, but, on the contrary, of strong affection and devotion between husband and wife.

In this connection appeal is often made to the frequency of divorces. In early days Romans did not divorce their wives; and Mlle. Bader, a Roman Catholic lady, suggests an explanation. "The Roman husbands," she says, "did not divorce their wives, they killed them." This grotesque idea is too fantastic to be considered seriously. Long before the close of the Republic the absolute control of the *paterfamilias* and of husbands, had become obsolete; and, indeed, even at the earliest stages of Roman history, a wife could only be put to death after a verdict had been given by the *Comitia Curiata*, or a little later by a magistrate (*Prætor*). But when this state of things ceased, the obvious course was, unless the wife committed a great crime, to dissolve the marriage. And it seems to me that women would prefer, at any moment, divorce to death. This altered state of matters implies a softening of manners, an advance in civilization, and certainly not a degeneracy in morals. It cannot be denied that divorce became frequent after women attained freedom; but much exaggeration prevails in regard to this matter.

Again, frequency of marriage is deemed indicative of an exceptionally low state of morality.

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Marquardt notes a few cases of frequent marriages. But there is nothing wonderful or degrading in this. Many men and women in modern times marry three or four times. Maidment mentions the case of the Reverend David Williamson, who "after threescore married his seventh wife." He refers to Kirkton's *Church History*, and mentions many other similar cases of Church divines.

The satirists and moralists were fond of using exaggerated language with regard to women. The charges refute themselves by reason of their very overstatement. Their truth would have made social life impossible. Besides, to quote Letourneau, "neither the satires of the poets nor the objurgations of moralists suffice to prove that the Roman woman was essentially inferior to her male companion." The morbidity of a few of the wealthier women does not characterize the sex. The larger class of less wealthy women was "as high as it ever was, as high as the average morality of any age."¹

The vagueness with which these matters are discussed lends itself to absurd exaggerations. The records of Suetonius and Lampridius, and the sixth Satire of Juvenal is held out as an illustration of pagan morals. What do we find? Juvenal talks of a woman having eight husbands in five years. Martial mentions a woman being married to her tenth husband. At once the conclusion is drawn that this was a common thing with Roman women. Seneca describes some noble Roman ladies as reckoning their years, not by the number of consuls, but by the number of their husbands. And this also is taken as a common feature of Roman life. Tertullian complains that he could observe no difference between a woman of quality and a common strumpet; and the expression is taken as proof of the most widespread immorality. A reference to his *Apology* (chap. vi) shows that he was merely deploring the growth of

¹ Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, p. 76.

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luxury and complaining that all women dressed alike.

The dictates alike of reason and of justice forbid us to believe the worst accounts that have been recorded. "We should rest assured," says Dean Inge, "that in the worst times virtue has never left the earth, and that in its broad features human nature is the same for good and evil as it was two thousand years ago. The testimony of an age against itself is always overdrawn."¹

People do not denounce evils merely because they detest them; but because the denunciations will be acceptable to others; so the existence of the evils, if they existed at all, provides evidence also of the existence of a class to which such writings were meant to appeal. And society is never so corrupt as many of the contemporary moral censors would make it. On this aspect of the subject I may quote a few authorities whose judgment is beyond question. Rev. Principal Donaldson, in the work already cited, says:—

Examining history, then, I think we must come to the conclusion that the Roman ideas of marriage had not a bad effect either on the happiness or morals of the women. If we take the period of Roman history from 150 B.C. to A.D. 150, we shall be surprised at the number of the women of whom it is recorded that they were loved ardently by their husbands, exercised a beneficial influence on them, and helped them in their political or literary work. Many of these women had received an excellent education, they were capable and thoughtful, and took an active interest in the welfare of the state.²

Professor Samuel Dill is equally emphatic:—

If Society at large had been half as corrupt as it is represented by Juvenal, it would have speedily perished from mere rottenness. The Inscriptions, the Letters of the younger Pliny, even the pages of Tacitus himself, reveal to us another world from that of the Satirist. On countless tombs we have the record or the ideal of a family life of sober, honest industry and pure affection. In the calm retreats in Lombardy or Tuscany, while

¹ *Society in Rome under the Cæsars*, p. 73.

² Donaldson, *Woman*, p. 120.

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the capital was frenzied with vicious indulgence or seething with conspiracy and desolated by massacres, there were many families living in almost Puritan quietude, where the moral standard was in many respects as high as among ourselves. The worst period of the Roman Empire was the most glorious age of practical Stoicism. The men of that circle were ready, at the cost of liberty or life, to brave an immoral tyranny; their wives were eager to follow them to exile, or to die by their sides.¹

I am only discussing this point with a view to correct the absurd, yet popular, picture of the Roman Empire being one vast body of corruption, afterwards purified by Christianity. Against this picture of moral depravity there stands the unchallenged opinion of Gibbon.

If a man were called upon to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman Empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors whose character and authority commanded universal respect. The forms of the civil administration was carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws.²

It is possible that a few women may have become notoriously loose in character. It is true that some, who were engaged in political affairs, were reckless and disagreeable. A well-known woman played a most important and daring part in the Catilinarian conspiracy, and it was through a woman that the plot was revealed. Cicero's wife certainly knew more of political affairs than he knew of her household arrangements. Livia, the wife of Augustus and the mother of Tiberius, was, according to some, the prime mover of most of the public deeds during the reigns of both. But are we to place them among

¹ *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, p. 2.

² *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. ii.

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the bad because they enjoyed a great freedom, even if some of them made an ill-use of their opportunities? For nothing really is recorded against their characters. I quote, again, Rev. Principal Donaldson. He says :—

It would be absurd to deny that there were many bad women in Roman society, just as there have been bad men and women in all societies, *but we are apt to form too gloomy a picture of the conduct of the women, because it has been the delight of writers, who wish to demonstrate the superiority of Christianity to heathenism, to bring out with special prominence the supposed vice and humiliations of pagan women.*¹

I am not denying that there were licentious women in Rome, who perhaps plunged into vice; I am not denying that there might have been some foundations for the railing accusations, exaggerated as they are, which Juvenal brings against them. I am only asserting the picture of Christian purity *versus* pagan immorality to be false, glaringly false. Society could not exist for any length of time were it, as a whole, of a vicious character. As a matter of fact, the Stoic philosophy, along with other Eastern cults, had completely altered the tone of Roman society before the middle of the second century. The luxury and gluttony of the Augustan Age, the licentiousness of freed women, and other disorders of the pagan world, were healed by purely pagan influences. Clearly, what was needed, as far as women were concerned, was not to destroy, but to purify, consolidate the new liberty, and to transfer it to a sounder foundation.

This is what the Christian Church disdained to do, and what the pagan moralists, aided by the philosophic ideals of the Eastern cults, had done and were doing. St. Jerome scornfully told his Christian followers that, whenever he met a woman of sedate and spiritual appearance at Rome, he knew at once that she was a Manichean.

It is evident in history that the Romans were

¹ *Woman*, p. 128. (Italics are mine.)

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never struck by the purity of Christian morals and the austerity of Christian life; what did impress them was its narrowness, fanaticism, and intense superstition. And against all the claims of Christians regenerating pagan society there is the solid, the crowning, and undeniable fact that it was not pagan Roman society which ultimately collapsed, but it was Roman society Christianized that broke down. Roman civilization declined step by step with the increase of Christian influence. Science, literature, the great structure of Roman Law and even morality, as I will show, became on the wane. The gradual advance of Christianity resulted in a progressive decay. And that, by itself, is one of the most damning counts in the indictment against Christianity.

Unfortunately, Roman civilization was replaced by a monstrous barbarism, and Europe fell with a terrible rapidity into the swamp of the Middle Ages. Woman fell back all over Europe into a worse state of subordination, into an abyss from which she has not yet fully emerged. How this dire result came about, and why she had to linger so long in the abyss, I shall discuss in the next issue.

(To be continued.)

VISIT OF THE EGYPTIAN MINISTER

On Sunday, February 3rd, H.E. Aziz Izzet Pasha, the newly appointed Minister of H.M. King Fuad of Egypt to the Court of St. James's, paid a visit to the Mosque, at the invitation of the Imam, Khwaja Nazir Ahmad.

The day was fine, with a tendency to cold and cloudiness, but the sun shone brightly at intervals, giving a touch of Spring to the wintry aspect of trees, lawns, and bloomless rhododendrons. We notice that the stately firs are somewhat fewer than aforetime; and that the delightful glimpse of wilderness that used to greet the stranger as he rounded the corner by the Mosque, has disappeared, doubtless to make

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room for improvements. Nevertheless those that remain looked picturesque enough against the blue of the February sky; and could not fail to strike one who saw them for the first time with a grateful sense of aloofness from Woking, and the world.

His Excellency arrived punctually at 1.30, and was received by the Imam, by whom he was conducted to the Mosque, where an address of welcome from the British Muslim Society was read by Lord Headley, the Society's President.

The address was as follows :—

TO HIS EXCELLENCY AZIZ IZZET PASHA, *Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of H.M. King Fuad of Egypt to the Court of St. James's.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the Members of the British Muslim Society, desire to offer to your Excellency, our Brother in the Faith, a most cordial and fraternal welcome on the occasion of this, your Excellency's first official visit to England as the accredited representative of H.M. the King of Egypt.

We are confident that the dawning of a new era in the age-long history of Egypt, is the herald of a future of national glory, honour and prosperity in full accord with the unique and glorious traditions of that ancient land; and that the new and intricate problems which are arising, and must inevitably arise in the near future, will find right and worthy solution under the gracious guidance of His Majesty. More particularly do we desire Your Excellency to convey to His Majesty King Fuad our most heartfelt thanks for the truly royal welcome extended by His Majesty to our Brothers the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, Lord Headley and Mufti Abdul Mohyi on the occasion of their recent pilgrimage to Mecca; a welcome whereof the memory will not lightly be effaced from the hearts of British Muslims.

We of the British Muslim Society, most of whom owe our conversion to the Faith of Divine Reason—which is Islam—to the tireless and unselfish labours of the Woking Muslim Mission in England, and its devoted leader the Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, while too keenly conscious of the bitter and relentless prejudice still put forth by the Christian Church (in all its denominations) against Islam, can in all sincerity affirm of our own experience, that from Islam towards Christianity, or any other religion of the One True God, there proceeds nothing but toleration, sympathy and active goodwill.

We feel that the root of this trouble, as of most evil, lies in misunderstanding; and in extending our cordial good wishes

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to Egypt on resuming her rightful place in the comity of free nations, we are confident that a momentous step has been taken towards the re-establishment of Islam in the Councils of the World; and that with a wider knowledge and clearer comprehension, alike of the principles and practice of our Faith, the clouds of prejudice and misunderstanding will presently disperse; and Christian and Muslim find common ground at last in the service of Allah.

We pray that the blessing of Allah may be with Your Excellency, and with the great and ancient country of which you are the representative.

We remain,

Your Excellency, Your sincere Brethren in Islam,
THE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH MUSLIM SOCIETY.

*The Shahjehan Mosque, Woking,
3rd February, 1924.*

The following is the text of His Excellency's reply:—

Pray accept my most cordial thanks for the warm welcome you have given me to-day at the Shahjehan Mosque.

The reputation of this Western vanguard of Islam is very great among our brethren throughout the East, where Mussulmans keep watch over the highest spiritual interests of our Faith.

We are all of us aware that Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, the distinguished founder of this Mission, whose absence to-day we so much regret, is one of those enlightened thinkers of Islam who has long perceived that the Muslim world must begin to take cognizance of the position and feelings of the West if she is to be given a place worthy of her greatness. He laid the foundations of this Eastern stronghold at a time when prejudice was doing its utmost to destroy the last vestiges of Oriental greatness. He succeeded in inspiring confidence in the hearts of those impartial and high-minded Europeans who knew how much human civilization owes to Islam.

Thanks to their sympathetic interest and support in advancing the spiritual and intellectual development of the East, this Mosque has succeeded in creating an atmosphere of goodwill and confidence. And now that important friendships have been formed in this country, where religious and political toleration has always been traditional; and now that our aspirations towards a reconstruction of the East are more thoroughly grasped, we may well claim that Mussulmans themselves will do all in their power to come to a better understanding with the Western world, of whose science, technical equipment and knowledge they are so much in need, without on that account sacrificing their spiritual heritage.

It is the object of our desire to win complete equality with

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Western nations, but if we are to master their science, we must work hard indeed. But while we are well aware that the West must, for many years to come, be our teacher in the sphere of the technical sciences, we claim that we too have something to teach the West in the domain of spiritual culture. And we believe that the history of Islamic civilizations deserves more study in Western universities than it receives at present.

The history of Eastern civilizations is the most neglected branch of modern historical research, and it is for this reason that the intellectual leaders of the Anglo-Saxon world have not always understood the Eastern problems. It is our duty to see to it that in the future Islam should be the object of more careful study among the Western peoples. For science and history are the great moral powers that ultimately mould all human thought.

Islam is indeed one of the greatest moral and spiritual forces of the world, and if this force is placed at the service of humanity nothing but the highest good can follow.

The greatness of Islam as a human confraternity consists precisely in the splendid and glorious part our religion and our social ideals have already played in creating the moral unity of Western Asia and North Africa. And we shall only be fulfilling the highest traditions of Islam if we bring every force to bear that can contribute towards achieving the moral unity of all the nations on earth, without regard for distinctions of race or creeds. From this standpoint we Mussulmans are the teachers of a world all too sadly divided, the racial quarrels of which have never been accepted by Islam as a principle of rulership. We have been the heralds of racial equality ever since the earliest days of Islam, and I venture to say that our Holy Prophet did more for the moral unity of a large part of mankind, than any other historical figure since his days.

I will convey to His Majesty King Fuad, my august Sovereign, your greeting and kind expression of thanks for the welcome he gave to the distinguished Hadjis, Lord Headley, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and Mufti Abdul Mohyi, on their return from their pilgrimage to Mecca. I am sure His Majesty the King, who is so enlightened and cultured, and who has done so much for Egypt's intellectual and moral advancement, will be very much pleased and interested to hear of the progress of your spiritual and moral work in this country.

May Almighty Allah help us all, Muslims as well as our brethren of other creeds, towards the establishment of that human confraternity which constitutes the deepest trend of human history. I thank Him, the Most Merciful and Omnipresent, and I thank you all as well, for the great honour you have done me in according me this hearty welcome at the Shah-jehan Mosque.

Prayers in the Mosque followed, with a brief but eloquent sermon by the Imam on the Esoteric Aspect

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of Islam. He pointed out that this side of Islam is very often misunderstood in the West. From the writings of the mystic poets, Western scholars wrongly infer that they were either agnostics or atheists; whereas they were and are merely syncretical writers, their source of inspiration being the Holy Qur-án.

A large and representative company had assembled to greet His Excellency, including Lord Headley (El Farooq), Sir Abdullah Archibald Hamilton, the well-known Sussex baronet, whose recent conversion to Islam has caused such a stir throughout the Christian world, Mr. Habibullah Lovegrove, Secretary of the British Muslim Society, Mr. Felix Valyi, Dr. Mustafa León, the Consul-General of Afghanistan, and others.

Luncheon was partaken of at 2.30, and with the departure of His Excellency the guests gradually dispersed, bearing with them, we hope, yet another haunting memory of Woking's beautiful Mosque in its setting of Surrey pines.

The proceedings, under the direct personal supervision of the Imam, passed off without a hitch of any sort to mar the pleasure of a most enjoyable day.

J. B. MUNRO.

THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF ISLAM

By DR. KHALID BANNING, PH.D.

ONE of the greatest differences between Christianity and Islam has always been the attitude taken by the adherents of these religions towards investigation and criticism. Whereas the history of Christianity is full of persecutions, inquisitions, burning of heretics and the like, Islam has been marked from its very inception by the greatest liberality with respect to investigation and criticism; isolated cases of persecution being rather the exceptions which go to prove the rule. Whereas

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the text of the Qur-án, as well as the traditions regarding the Holy Prophet, were subjected to a very close scrutiny from the outset, and every detail was brought forward regardless of its tendency, such procedure with regard to the Bible has only been permitted since a very recent date, and was due rather to the disintegration of Christianity than to its progress. Even to-day the Catholic Church, and most of the Protestants, demand blind belief from their adherents, or as Dante has expressed it,

Non ragionam di lor ma guarda e passa.

Islam, on the contrary, based as it is on reason, truth and nature, and having nothing to fear from scientific discovery or critical investigation, permits a minute scrutiny of every one of its aspects, and an examination of Divine origin may not be considered out of place.

During the years before and following my conversion to Islam, in the various discussions which I have had with educated Christians and free-thinkers, I have found many persons who had long lost their faith in the Divine origin of Christianity, which they regard as a man-made religion; but who nevertheless professed the faith openly, in the firm belief that religion, or Christianity, was necessary for the welfare and development of the human race; whereas, as they believed, universal atheism would bring about a disintegration of public and private morals and consequently the eventual fall of European or Christian civilization. Others regard Christianity as desirable from a pedagogical point of view, and give their children a Christian education. Such persons regard all religions as of human origin, invented by wise men for the betterment of the human race; and many profess Christianity, not from any conviction as to its beliefs, but merely for the sake of example to others. In our present "enlightened" age this view of Christianity has

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become more and more prevalent among "broad" and "liberal"-minded people.

In discussing religion with Christians of this variety, I have times and again heard the statement made that the Holy Prophet was a man of high ideals, touched with the pitiable condition of his countrymen, who was desirous of benefiting them and improving their condition. These are, of course, possibilities which are worthy of consideration, and, as we regard Islam as the only true religion, and of Divine origin, and not merely a well-meaning deception for the betterment of the Arabs, or of mankind, it is necessary for us to submit every aspect of this question to a minute scrutiny.

In approaching this problem I think it best here to leave the question of the sincerity of the Holy Prophet out of account, as I assume that the reader is familiar with the life of the Prophet. Only a bigot or theorist, completely devoid of all knowledge of the facts and of human nature, could attempt to claim that a human being could have undertaken such a hopeless task as that of establishing Islam amongst the Arabs against such terrible odds, undergoing thirteen years and more of persecution and derision of the worst kind for selfish reasons. If in some of our standard dictionaries, and in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, statements to this effect are found, they can only be ascribed to gross ignorance of the facts, and the apathy of Muslims in making known their religion in Europe, and may safely be relegated to the same category as "harem" and "fatalism." If, however, the sincerity of the Holy Prophet is admitted, there are nevertheless various degrees of sincerity with which I here intend to deal. Accordingly the question before us is the following :—

Is Islam of a certainty the one religion of humanity revealed by the Most High, or is it a pedagogical system invented by man with good intent and

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altruistic motives, for the betterment of the Arabs or of mankind and the uplift of humanity ?

In order to answer these questions let us consider a few of the principal facts, seeing that to deal with all of them would require volumes.

The Holy Prophet was a practical man, a successful business man, versed in practical problems, not a dreamer, nor theorist, nor professor, nor bureaucrat.

From childhood he was known among his people as truth-loving, sincere and reliable, for which reason he was given the title of "Al-Amin," "The Trustworthy." There is nothing in his early life to show that he was of an adventurous or over-ambitious nature. His family life with Khadija was quiet and exemplary. Late in life, and after rising to power, he still adhered to his simplicity of habits, and continued to perform the simplest household duties himself, treating all with kindness and showing the utmost compassion for the weak and the needy, the widows and orphans, never abusing his power, and leaving his entire wealth to the needy-poor.

He was forty years old when the first revelation was received. He was a fully matured man in the prime of life ; neither an impetuous youth nor a dotard.

His wife Khadija, who was fourteen years older than himself, and to whom he had been married fifteen years at the time, believed in him immediately. This is exceedingly remarkable. Khadija was a prominent, wealthy, successful business woman, whose knowledge of human nature must have been highly developed. Had Khadija not been absolutely certain of the Holy Prophet's fullest sincerity, she would never have supported him with such vigour and fidelity, as she could never have believed in the success of such a movement under the then existing conditions, had she not believed implicitly in the Divine Revelation. Without this the triumph of Islam in Arabia would have been inconceivable.

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Our opponents will doubtless say that this applies as well to Christianity, and that this religion could also not have been propagated without Divine aid. The conditions prevailing during the rise of Christianity were, however, quite different and the ground was very favourable for the growth of mystic beliefs. One has on the one hand but to read the Latin and Greek poets from Homer to Virgil, and on the other the various prophets of the Old Testament, in order to form a clear view of this. Even in Ovid we find, eighty years before Christ, a description of certain events connected with the death of Julius Cæsar which were applied almost verbatim to the crucifixion; I mean the earthquake, the darkness, the openings of the tombs and the dead coming forth and walking in the street. In other words, Christianity was the outgrowth of superstitions and beliefs existing at the time.

Not so with Islam. No concessions were made to then prevailing superstitions and prejudices. It was uphill work and against the current. Our space is too limited to go into details. The Quraish as guardians of the Kaaba had every cause to oppose Islam for material reasons. There was no race of men at the time who were less religious by nature than the Arabs, no nation on earth in which there was greater lack of unity or more complete disruption by feuds. In the whole Arabic peninsula there was no demand for monotheism. There could have been no greater contrast than that between idolatry and the conception of One God—not a God who created man in his own image, and who consequently was fitted with eyes, nose, hands, etc., but the conception of One All-Supreme Being Who was omnipotent, Omniscient and everywhere present. But let us consider the question from another aspect.

Let us assume for argument's sake that some person should arise and either for altruistic or selfish reasons invent a religion for the purpose of uplifting

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and meeting the needs of humanity. Or let the reader take a concrete example such as Joe Smith and Brigham Young, Dowie, or Mrs. Eddy. No man, no matter how high he stand morally and intellectually, can free himself entirely from the influence of his surroundings. He would certainly make concessions to prevailing prejudices, and such opinions which happened to be in the centre of public interest at the time. Just at present such a prophet would run a good bit of universal brotherhood, pacifism, and some socialism, into his creed. It can safely be said that the inventor of a man-made religion would never attempt a hopeless task against terrible odds, in direct contradiction of prevailing tendencies, and submit to thirteen years of persecution and derision. Perhaps there may be theorists and unpractical persons to assert the contrary, but such persons merely betray an utter ignorance of human nature, and unfamiliarity with practical life.

THE BOOK OF JOB

By JAMES A. SPROULE

THROUGH the courtesy of one of our fellow-citizens, I was permitted to peruse a new translation of the Book of Job by the celebrated Hebrew scholar and author, the late Morris Jastrow, jun. The author truthfully says in his preface or "foreword" that the Book of Job suffers from its celebrity. "Regarded by universal consent as the literary masterpiece of the Old Testament, and indeed as one of the masterpieces in world literature, the average person feels himself dispensed, by virtue of this admission, from the necessity of reading it, much as Milton's *Paradise Lost* is universally admired, but comparatively little read." As an English classic, the King James version will always retain the distinguished position which it holds, but as a translation it is in need of a much more thorough revision than has been given to it either in the Revised or other English translations.

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The writer states that, barring the two introductory chapters, which tell the story of Job in prose form, and the prose epilogue at the end of the book, there are not ten consecutive verses in the symposium between Job and his friends; or in the speeches of Elihu; or in the magnificent closing chapters placed as speeches in the mouth of Yahweh, the text of which can be regarded as correct. "The Book of Job, like most Bible literature, is composite—the work of many authors. With the exception of the Book of Esther, which is a propagandist romance that may not be earlier than 100 B.C., there is not a book in the Old Testament that can be assigned to any individual author." Literary unity is not to be found in so late a book as Daniel, written 160 B.C.

There are two Jobs: first, the Job of the prose preface, common to the folk-lore of Eastern countries. We read of him in India, and in ancient Babylon, a model of piety and of silent resignation to the Divine will; and then there is the other Job in the symposium, voluble in his denunciation of the Divine injustice, cursing the day and hour of his birth.

The story of Job was but a peg on which to hang many amplifications. The first is the symposium between Job and his friends from the third to the twenty-seventh chapters. This portion is sceptical and non-Jewish. It emanated from bold and independent thinkers who questioned conventional beliefs. Orthodox circles among the Jews took up the book and proceeded to amplify it. Job is said to have lived in the Land of Uz; the name and spelling is non-Hebraic. In the dialogue between God and Satan, the specific Hebrew name Yahweh is introduced, but Job himself is represented as using the general name Elohim—Deity. El Eloah and Shaddai are employed as synonyms of Elohim because they conjure up the picture of a Being of universal scope and power. From the fact that Yahweh and Satan converse, as it were, face to face, many have been led

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to believe the Book of Job to be of Persian origin—the dualism of Zoroaster—where the control of the universe is divided between Ahura Mazda and Ahriman. Yahweh is proud of Job's piety and boasts of it. Satan, the adversary, asks: "Does Job serve Thee for nothing? Smite him and he will curse Thee to Thy face."

As indicating the changes which the Book of Job has undergone, according to Origen, one of the fathers of the Christian Church, the Septuagint, or Greek version, was one-sixth shorter than the Hebrew version, there being 890 instead of 1,070 verses.

"In the ancient Orient, plagiarism belongs to the virtues, and the quotation mark had not been discovered."

Many additions crept into the text through copyists writing down marginal notes, which some reader had inscribed. Hebrew poetry has no rhyme, but it has rhythm, three beats to the verse; and these additions can sometimes be detected.

It will shock many pious persons, especially those who believe in a literal resurrection of the body at the end of the world, and who quote Job:—

I know that my Redeemer liveth;
And when after my skin this is destroyed
Then without my flesh shall I see God.

What Job says, when properly translated, is:—

Oh that my words could be inscribed
Graven for all times in the rock,
Then I would know that my defender will arise
Even though he should arise in the distant future.

Job was evidently looking for a human vindicator, justifier—or redeemer, if you please.

Another famous mistranslation: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." It should read: "Though He slay me, I tremble not." Some unknown writer or editor furnishes Job with two speeches in chapters xxix and xxxi, after which appears the first Hebrew name in the book—that is

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to say, Elihu—who proceeds to lecture Job and his three friends. And these three men ceased answering Job because he was justified in their eyes. And the anger of Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was kindled because he, Job, regarded himself justified as against God; and against his three friends, Bildad, Zophar and Eliphaz, was his anger kindled because they could find no answer.

Elihu and Barachel are the first Hebrew names to appear in the book, Jewish Orthodoxy evidently intending to find an answer to Job's complaints.

Buz, whence Elihu hailed, was situated in Northern Arabia. The Prophet Ezekiel was likewise a Buzite.

Most of the four speeches ascribed to Elihu are inserted poems by different authors, who essayed to answer the questions asked by Job in the older portions of the book. The second appendix to the book of Job, forming chapters xxxviii–xli, consist of eight nature poems. The first starts with the often used expression :—

Who is this that darkens counsel
By words without knowledge?
Where wast thou when I laid the earth's foundations?
Declare if thou hast the knowledge.
Who determined the measures that thou shouldst know?
Or who stretched the measuring-line o'er it?
Or the corner stone thereof, who laid it?
When the morning stars sang together
And all the Sons of God shouted for joy,
When I made the cloud its garment
And thick darkness its swaddling band,
Who barred the sea with doors?
When from the depth it broke forth
And I established for it my decree
And to the doors set a bolt
And said, Thus far come but no farther,
And here shall thy proud waves break.

These speeches, placed in the mouth of Yahweh, contain some of the finest passages in the book, and cannot be read without a thrill :—

Has the rain a father,
Or who has begotten the dew-drops?

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From whose womb comes the ice ?
And who has engendered the hoar frost of heaven,
So that water is congealed as a crystal,
And the face of the deep is frozen ?
Canst thou bind the chains of the Pleiades,
Or loosen the bands of Orion ?
Canst thou lead out the Dippers at their season ?

Animal life is described in the lion, crocodile and the ostrich :—

Dost thou hunt the prey for the lion ?
To still the hunger of young lions,
As they crouch in their dens,
And lie in wait in the covert ?
Who provides his prey for the raven,
When his young ones cry unto God ?

The Book of Job ends as it began, in prose. It is stated that Yahweh blessed the latter end of Job's life more than the beginning, for he had thousands of sheep, camels, cattle and oxen; also his family was doubled, and none in the East were so fair as the daughters of Job.

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TRAVELLERS by the South-Western section of the Southern Railway gazing placidly at the typical English scenery of Surrey frequently experience a sudden shock of surprise when, a little on the London side of Woking Station, they observe an authentic and obvious Moslem Mosque, its minarets and pinnacles rising to the sky between the prosaic roof of an aeroplane factory and the staring face of a modern railway orphanage.

A somewhat similar shock comes to the average Englishman when he hears that some well-known fellow-countryman has "embraced Islam." Most of us know little of Moslem faith and even less of the prophet of Islam, Mohammed, and we tend perhaps to look at the Woking Mosque as a place of profound mystery, and to think that English folk who become followers of the prophet are condemned to wear perpetually two sheets of plain cloth, one covering the loins and the other the upper part of the body, in which Lord Headley, best known of English Moslems, recently made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Truth to tell, there is nothing very mysterious about the mosque down here among the Surrey pines. Unbelievers are welcomed at the regular Sunday morning "discussions," while at other times no difficulty at all need be experienced in securing permission to view the interior, which is very simple.

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STRENGTH IN ENGLAND.

Apart from the obligatory offering of five daily prayers there is practically no ritual about the faith of Islam, and the Woking Mosque contains very little beyond a somewhat ornate pulpit, a reading desk containing a copy of the Qur-án—usually known in England as the Koran—and a number of chairs. Carpet covers the floor, and an electric stove heats the place.

There is no altar, there is practically no decoration; indeed, the place almost rivals in its simplicity an English Nonconformist chapel of the older type.

Who are the people who use this strange place of worship, and what is its history? The answer to the first question is that except on the occasions of special festivals the average congregation at the Woking Mosque is only about thirty, and as this is the principal centre of the Moslem faith in this country, it would appear that the British adherents of Islam are a very small and select body. I am told they number perhaps 1,000, scattered all over the British Isles, and apart from the mosque they have a Prayer House at Notting Hill Gate in London.

On Sunday afternoon a "discussion service" similar to the morning service at Woking is held, and the average attendance is forty to sixty.

Plans are now well forward for building a mosque in London, but up to the present no site has been secured.

Of course the total number of Moslems in the British Isles is much more than 1,000, and it is estimated that the average Moslem population is about 10,000, largely consisting of Indian students. But these are not the especial consideration of the staff at Woking, which works almost wholly in a voluntary capacity for the conversion of Christians.

BARONET'S CONVERSION.

Attention has recently been focussed on the faith by the conversion of Sir Archibald Hamilton, Bart., of Selsey, Sussex, who is a former master of hounds and president of the Selsey Conservative Association. His change of religion seems to have inspired a large number of other Englishmen to ask for information concerning Islam, and the Imam of the Woking Mosque—Khwaja Nazir Ahmad—tells me that since the announcement of Sir Archibald's conversion the staff attached to the mosque has been overwhelmed with inquiries with which it has difficulty in keeping pace. In the two months prior to Sir Archibald's formal profession of faith some twenty other Britishers embraced Islam, and the Imam is convinced that there has recently been a decided movement in this country toward the "true faith."

I had a very long conversation here this afternoon with Khwaja Nazir Ahmad, an Indian barrister and engineer, and a cultured man, who speaks English perfectly, and is at present in charge of the work at Woking. There is no priesthood in

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the Moslem faith, and the Imam and his staff can only be described fairly as voluntary workers in the service of Islam. It may be stated here that Moslems strongly object to being called Mohammedans.

“We worship one God, Who has no partner or co-sharer,” said the Imam. “We regard Mohammed as the last prophet of God, but we do not worship him, because we recognize him as a man, as were the other prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and others. Hence the followers of Islam are not Mohammedans in the sense that followers of Christ are called Christians.”

WORLD-WIDE PROPAGANDA.

The history of the Woking Mosque is interesting. It was built about thirty years ago as part of an Oriental institution . . . and the mosque and its adjoining premises were unused until the year 1911, when his Holiness, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, a prominent member of the Indian Bar, came to this country and reopened the mosque, at the same time starting the *Islamic Review*, a monthly paper which at first was semi-political and religious in tone, but which subsequently became a purely religious organ. The *Islamic Review* still exists, and it is sent every month to *every country in the world*. It is printed in English for home consumption and for the use of residents in certain English-speaking settlements abroad; in Hindustani for Indian reading, in Malay for Java, in Arabic, and so forth. It is sent to all public libraries in this country and America, while under the direction of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din bodies have been organized in India, called the Woking Moslem Mission Trust and the Basheer Moslem Library, the latter existing for the free circulation of literature among non-Moslems.

EVERY GRADE OF SOCIETY.

The avowed object of all this activity is the propagation of Islam in English-speaking countries, and converts are claimed not only here but in the United States, in Canada, in South Africa, the British West Indies, etc. “There are no professional missionaries in Islam,” Khwaja Nazir Ahmad told me yesterday, “but it is the duty of every Moslem to propagate his faith. It was the conversion of Lord Headley in 1912 which really brought us into prominence in this country, but before that date there were several scattered English Moslems, although they had not always publicly avowed their faith. At present our English converts include about a dozen entire families, while every grade of society and all sorts of professions and business are represented.” The Imam showed me photographs of many British converts, including university professors and graduates, Army officers and men, business men and tradesmen.

“Why are we progressing in England?” echoed the Imam in answer to my question. “Why, because ours is above all

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the religion of common sense. Our belief is that faith without action is of no avail, and although our form of prayer is fixed, for uniformity's sake, our religion is one of continual progress. Our faith is simple. We believe in one, and only one God (Allah), from Whom all has come and to Whom all must return, while all Moslems must also follow Mohammed, who was the last prophet of God. There is no priesthood in Islam. And we think that every soul is responsible for its own actions.

INTOXICANTS FORBIDDEN.

“Islam points out both the ways—that which leads to God and is good, and the other which leads away from Him, and is evil. Islam forbids impurity of any kind, while all intoxicants are also forbidden, so is gambling and the flesh of the pig. It enjoins prayers, fixed alms to the needy, fasting, affection to parents, and kindness to all creatures—even animals and birds.”

One may add just a word about the attitude of Islam to Christianity and other religions. Christ is regarded, of course, as merely one of the prophets of God, while the contention of the Moslem is that to the sincere Christian intolerance to others is a necessity. On the other hand, Moslems call their religion that of all humanity, and say that “Islam was the religion of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus; it was, in fact, the religion of every prophet of God who appeared in any part of the world, while it is also the religion of every human child that is born.” According to Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, who is at present in India, but is clearly regarded as the head of the Woking mission movement, the Moslem “embraces every beauty in every religion, and turns his face from what has been added by man to the religion of God.”

Without for a moment entering on the thorny path of religious controversy, one might suggest that the heads of the Christian Church in England would be well advised not to ignore the challenge of Woking.—*Yorkshire Observer*.

INCREASING CONVERTS TO MOHAMMEDANISM.

The fact that Sir Archibald Watkins Hamilton has joined the faith of Islam draws attention to the number of converts which are being made to this Eastern religion, many of them of aristocratic birth. It is computed that there are now about 1,000 who have been converted from Christianity. At present there is one mosque at Woking, Surrey, and a Prayer House at Notting Hill Gate, London.

The Moslem campaign in Great Britain is controlled by his Holiness Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, editor in this country of the religious paper, the *Islamic Review*, and chief of the Mission.

Week by week the number of British believers in the creed of Allah has risen. At the same time the attendants on a Sunday at the Woking Mosque have increased in number.