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Edited by AL-HAJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

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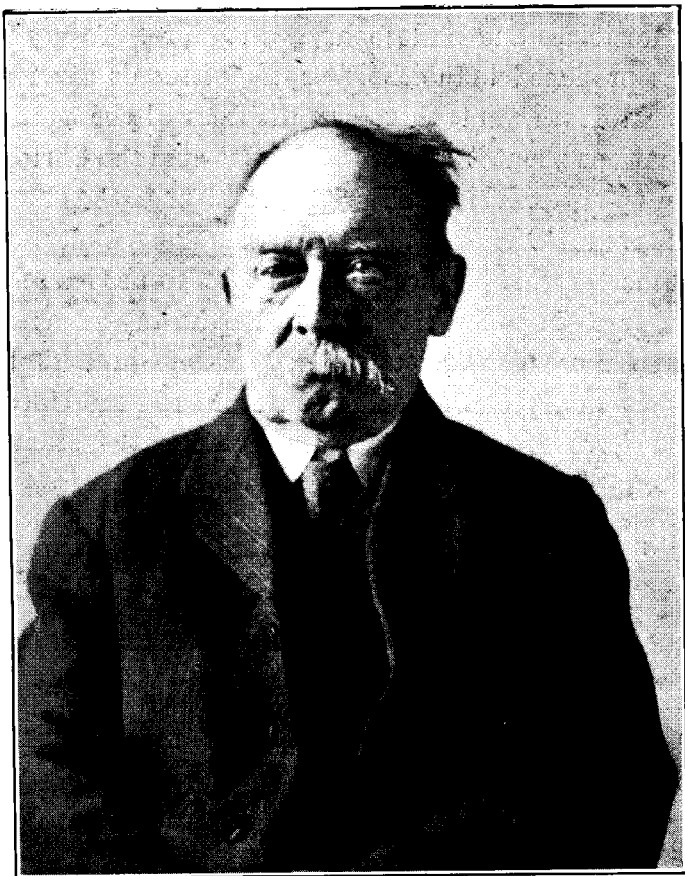
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THE HOLY QUR-AN

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MOLD, FLINT, WALES :
October 15th, 1931.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE,
WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

I have reached Islam through a great maze of studies—rationalism, metaphysics, science, philosophy and the doctrines of various Christian sects—extending over many years. All these doctrines and “isms” offered in turn divergent specifically individual points of view. They seemed at first sight to afford satisfactory solutions of the great problems of life and death (and the hereafter), but when examined critically they produced no evidence of the continuity of the life after death.....

(See overleaf.)

I owe to psychological research my emergence from all such doctrines and philosophical quagmire. To my mind it has produced indubitable proofs of man's survival of physical death, and, therefore, disposes of the agnostic's contentions about it as thoroughly as it does the Christian's claim to an exclusive and privileged place in the Kingdom of Heaven. Once satisfied that man does continue his existence of this physical life, I began to need a religion more free from dogma and mediævalism—in short, a religion more conformed to explications in accordance with the whole manifestation of Nature and the Universe, and I have found that, to my entire satisfaction and peace, in the teaching and practice of Islam.

Very respectfully yours,
HENRY SANDBACH.

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engage all my attention. They would not or could not see then that it was not a business but a labour of love that carried me there.

The environments were far from encouraging, and it appeared to be a fruitless task. On the one hand, the English were not only a religiously disposed people, but they were also tenaciously attached to their own faith. On the other, Islam was shrouded in dense clouds of misrepresentation; nay, not only misrepresentation but gross misinterpretation and misstatement of facts to which the faith had been scurrilously and maliciously subjected. Though I was a Muslim by birth and a close student of my religion, I was, to my intense surprise, informed of innumerable things believed to be existing in Islam of which I had never heard before. But I had faith in the righteousness and truth of the cause which I had in hand. I was well assured that honesty of purpose accompanied by true zeal and unremitting labour was certain of an ultimate success. Without thought of result or reward, I devoted myself to what appeared to be a thankless task. But success in my case proved to be not far to seek. Only ten years' hard work enabled me to create an appreciative audience for Islam in the new land, and effect willing conversions to our Faith from the ranks both of the learned and the nobility. I also observed sure signs of decay in the structure of the Church. My dreams seemed to have come near realization when after a dozen years I saw vacant "pews and empty benches" in those churches, chapels and other places of worship which I had found in 1912 full to overflowing with the church-going class. In 1923 I published my most successful book "*The Sources of Christianity*." I did not and do not claim to have discovered anything new, but my book seemed to serve as a preconcerted signal for coming events. It acted like a stick of dynamite in a mine or a quarry. It immediately brought

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to light all that was lying hidden in the minds of many dignitaries of the Church. I proclaimed boldly that Christianity, as popularly accepted, against its teachings, was Mithraism pure and simple, and not the religion of Jesus at all ; that Christendom had become engulfed in a welter of cult and mysticism, and that it was not the birthday of the Lord of Christianity, but admittedly of a Sun God that was wrongly celebrated on Christmas Day. My clarion call was straightway re-echoed on all sides. Churches became deserted, because conscientious people felt that they could not worship the sun in the name of Jesus. It also widened the circle of Islam in England, and the workers at Woking began to welcome new faces daily. The valleys in the West resounded with the Azaan—the Muslim call to Prayer,— which a certain poetical mind¹ thought to be a thing of the past in history.

Now I presume, and, I think, with justice, that not only has the Occidental mind almost become purged of the wrong ideas formerly entertained about Islam, but also that my work on destructive lines against the fabric of organized Christianity is almost at an end, as far as I am concerned, and that I must now devote myself to the constructive side of my task. The scientific world, on the other hand, has taken a new turn, involving the decline of atheism, and a revival of belief in the existence of God. But the same reasons that wrought this wonder among the educated classes, tended also to set them against religion in general. They began to worship the *God of Nature*. They held that Religion and the Scriptures hitherto believed to have been inspired by God, did Him but little credit as their author. The Maker of the Book of Nature could not well be also the Author of the Books which has been popularly received as Revelation, since these books contained scarcely any teachings that

¹ Dr. Mohammad Iqbal.

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would further the ends of civilization. They found religion a great disturbing factor as regards the peace of the world, whereas in every corner of Nature, outside the province of Man, it maintained perfect harmony. The recent Armageddon was fight to the death between the followers of the Prince of Peace; it disclosed depths of brutality and vandalism, unparalleled, till then, among the so-called Christians. In short, it is no longer a fight between Islam and Christianity in the West, since the latter was already a vanquished foe, and had laid down her arms before science and culture, both of which adversaries had in the first place derived their inspiration from Islam. The conflict was rather between Science and Culture and Religion itself, which had become a back number, and could not hope to regain its position unless and until it could satisfy the demands of the modern mind. The clouds that are threatening Religion are sure to send a joyful rain on the field of a Faith whose end and object is to further the cause of humanity, civilization and progress. I think that the time is now ripe for appreciation of Islam and its Book in their true light, and the manner in which they meet the requirements of the day. I believe that the Holy Quran contains enough material to accomplish the desired ends. The appreciation of my few articles on the Quran which appeared in the last volume of our periodical, encourage me to continue the work. Most of our readers, together with a sufficient number of our new brethren in the faith, ask us to devote more space to this subject. In fact, this is the real object of a publication like our journal. Ours is not a topical journal. It has neither to serve a political nor any other similar human end. It has been established to propagate Islam and advocate its cause in Western lands; and we could not do better than acquaint the people of those lands concerning the Book of our Faith.

ANTI-GOD POST-WAR PROPAGANDA.

That it will be no easy task I have no doubt at all, but I believe that if, as has been the case, I have been thrice spared from the clutches of death, in the last five years, it was for this work. I see, now, no other object in my living any longer. I think my work is almost done, and, indeed, my labours have borne fruit beyond my expectations. But they will remain incomplete if I did not serve the glorious Quran in the way I have in mind. I propose, therefore, to write a series of articles on the Book, introducing the commentary I have notified to publish very soon. Each of them will be complete in itself. I shall welcome any suggestion from any of our friends in this matter.

I am still in a convalescent state, for it is now nearly 18 months since my mortal diseases left me, but I am as yet too weak to leave my bed. Medical advice in my case is dead against my doing any mental work at all, but I felt myself forced to disregard it. I believe, as said before, that I have been spared for the work, and who can tell when the inevitable will remove me from the scene? The sooner I begin the work, therefore, the better. But I have firm faith in the efficacy of a prayer offered in sincerity of heart. And I beseech my friends to help me in this way.

HOW TO COUNTER ANTI-GOD POST-WAR PROPAGANDA.

BY

**SHEIKH MUSHIR HUSAIN KIDWAI OF GADIA,
BARRISTER-AT-LAW.**

No nation should close its eye to the fact that the future lies with science. The Great War impressed practically the need of scientific knowledge for civilization. It is true that the most scientifically advanced nation did not win in the last war, but that was because numerical odds were terribly against it. Further, it was blockaded

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from all sides and could not get either sufficient food stuff or raw material. Then its defence, though well organized, was not scientifically well developed. The scientific inventions either for defence or attack were in their infancy. There were not sufficiently large number either of Zeppelins or submarines or long range guns, and so forth. The future war when it comes, in ten or twenty years, if not in a year or two, as foretold, will depend more upon scientific contributions to the destructive side of mankind. That war will be all-destroying. It is for this reason that every nation is devoting itself to have ready at hand new, though secret, destructive inventions. And it is, therefore, that man is developing scientific mentality. It is a pity that it is so. Science, which could be made a blessing, is being harnessed to help man in his war-like and blood-thirsty ambition. Hence it is that we notice a moral weakening of human nature and anti-God movements. These movements are further encouraged because of irrational notions of God Himself which are prevalent among the people of the West. Christianity, as known to the West, offers extremely irrational God-idea. Besides, the Christian God-idea is not in the least helpful to mankind, socially, morally or intellectually.

Therefore, if it is meant to save the world from being rushed by anti-God movements, it would be extremely necessary to offer not only a natural and philosophical God-idea, but also such an idea of God as would be useful to mankind in improving his moral, social and intellectual life on this very earth. I hold, after a deep and critical study of Islam, that Islam and Islam alone presents such an idea of God which can be satisfactory even to a "rational mind," as Gibbon says.

The greatest achievement of Islam is that it has produced such a noble and rational conception of Allah that it can satisfy a man of the highest intelligence and education,

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as that of the lowest. It was, therefore, that no Muslim, howsoever learned in science or philosophy he may have been, ever disbelieved in God, nor can he do so to-day if he has the correct notion of God in Islam. The more learned a Muslim is, the more convinced he becomes of the existence of God. Ali said that he was more concerned for the existence of his soul than of his mind.

Suppose there is an expert physicist. His conclusions cannot but be that there must have been a "*First Cause*." Islam says, yes, there was a First Cause, and calls Him *Him Al-Mubdi*—the Great Originator or Beginner. It goes a step further and says to the expert physicist that belief in a First Cause alone ought not to satisfy. There must be one *The Very First* and also the *Very Last*, viz., *Huwa 'l-Awwal and Huwa 'l-Akhir*. But to a biologist neither the existence of a First Cause alone will satisfy, nor the fact that there was one *the First and the Last*. He is puzzled to know wherefrom not only this energy came, but the life itself. Sometimes he thinks that it came into existence accidentally on the earth. Then he says it must have come from some other planet. Islam tells him that it came from *Al-Hayy*, *the Ever Living*, and *Al-Qayyūm*, *the Self-Existent*. So the God of Islam can satisfy the cravings of not only a physicist and astrologer, but also of such a person as is expert in both these branches of science. In the same way it can satisfy an expert in *all the branches of science*. It can do more. A moralist, or a statesman or a legislator or a social reformer can well say to his scientist brother expert in every branch of science, what does it matter after all, to an ordinary citizen in this world, whether or not he believes in a *First Cause*, or a *Source of Life*? Of course, every man should try and find out the mysteries of this Universe. He should try to find out the 'How and

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Why.' And no religion encourages or helps man more than Islam in that enquiry. But Islam does not confine its help to scientists alone. After all, the world has only a few scientists. The crowning success of Islam lies in helping, as no other institution does, a moralist, a statesman, a social reformer and a legislator. It is this unique characteristic of Islam that it is both a religion and an institution—marvellous as a religion and not less marvellous as an institution.

A moralist and a legislator (and every law must be based on moral principles) know that human nature is such that it often needs guidance to use its inherent faculties in a proper way and to check their wrong use so that he may not injure himself or, worse still, injure others. Man is a social being, therefore he must be a useful and good member of society. Therefore a moralist lays down high ethical maxims and a legislator, or a statesman, good laws. But after all the moralist, the statesman and the legislator are all men. Why should their fellow men with a democratic bent of mind submit to the principles and laws laid down by them? But in good society and citizenship it is necessary that each member of the society should submit to moral laws. To achieve this end the statesman appoints the police force and a court of laws. However, no police force can be all-seeing, and a defiant man can do whatever he likes, if he is clever enough not to let him be found out. But the Islamic Guardian is He Who is All-Knowing, All-Seeing, All-Living—Who is present at the most hidden places, neither sleep overtakes him nor fatigue, and to Whom our most secret thoughts are known, before Whom our own eyes, hands, ears and tongue, in short every organ will bear witness.

Thus, the God in Islam does not only satisfy our intellect, but He also elevates our character and makes us good, not only in ourselves but also for the whole society,

ANTI-GOD POST-WAR PROPAGANDA.

for the whole world. Islamic conception of God is such that even the haughtiest atheist should bow to it, if he is educated and intelligent enough, for the matter of that there cannot be any haughtier man than my humble self. I would not bow before any but the God of Islam. I would not bow before the mighty atom or mightier (as it has now been discovered that even the atom is divisible) molecules if they lack life, *i.e.*, are inferior to me in that respect. I would not bow before the all-prevailing energy if it lacks intelligence and will-power. So these gods of science would not satisfy me, nor would the God of any other religion.

I would not bow down before a God who would stoop down to incarnate himself in a man or woman or an animal or any created thing. But I would certainly respect the man who would elevate himself and reach as near God as is humanly possible. I, therefore, respect Waris Ali Shah; I respect Krishna, Rama, Buddha, Epictetus and Socrates. I respect Jesus, Moses and all the Biblical prophets, as all of them tried to get nearer and nearer God. Above all, I respect, in fact more than respect, Muhammad, who got as near God as could be possible (*cf.* The Quran Chap. 53 : 9).

One can judge for oneself after reading the Ninety-nine Names of God and their full implications, how very beneficially and successfully the conception of such a Being can mould the character of man. I am giving this whole list to enable the reader to appreciate fully the saying of the Prophet, which reads: *Takhallaqu bi Akhlaqi'l-Lah.*

Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his close followers and companions did imbue themselves with Divine Attributes, and it was thus that in only a few years they changed the century old habits of the Arabs, which were

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not different from the cattle they lived with, into angelic virtues and brought down on this very earth the kingdom of God which Christ dreamed of, but failed to go anywhere near its realization as his ministry was abruptly cut short. It was thus that they formed in a very short period a wonderfully democratic nation and a wonderfully internationalist state. It was then that they inculcated in that nation an insatiable thirst for knowledge and progress, and prepared it for the world conquest, not only territorial but also intellectual and cultural.

I think a word of warning is also needed to those who ponder over the Ninety-nine Names of Allah. They must keep in mind that the Islamic definition of God is: *Laisa Kamithlihi Shayan*, there is nothing like unto Him. You cannot, therefore, symbolize the Islamic God as you do the Vedic gods by carved stones, woods, animals, or the elements like fire or water, or planets, like the sun and moon, nor can you anthropomorphize Him or attribute human passions or weaknesses to Him. So you can neither represent God by Jesus or Krishna nor can you attribute sons or daughters to Him. The Quran has, therefore, avoided the use of "Father" or "Love" in connection with God. In the opening prayer a Muslim does not address God, "Our Father in Heaven." He addresses Him with the higher and nobler attribute of "*Rabbu'l-Alamin*," thus avoiding "Our" and "Father" "in Heaven" as they put limitations. In the same way, a Muslim does not call God "Love," but Al-Wadud, Ar-Rahman to avoid a suggestion of carnal or bodily selfish relationship between God and man. A Muslim has been told by God Himself that He is near—nearer than even a man's own jugular vein, nor has he got to look so far as Heaven for his prayers to be answered. He has been promised '*ud'uni astajib lakum* "call upon me and I answer," and again, "I am near you to answer your prayers."

ANTI-GOD POST-WAR PROPAGANDA

Islam has always avoided pantheistic ideas, yet it asserts that God alone is eternal, and that there was nothing but God and there will remain nothing but God. Also that everything is from God and everything returns to Him. The inference from this is obvious. Then, God says that, after creating man, *nafakhtu fihī min Ruhi, i.e.,* I breathed My Own Spirit into him. So every man has something—"the chief thing"—of God in him. Upon such conceptions is based Muslim Sufism or Vedantic Mysticism or Christian Catholicism or Ritualism to satisfy the cravings of a man inclined that way.

Now read and re-read the following Ninety-nine Names. I wish I wrote a whole book explaining Them with all their implications showing how all the glory and advance of the Muslim nation was based on a firm belief in the Ninety-nine Names of Allah, which I give below :—

These are His ninety-nine names : 1. Hu ; 2. Ar-Rabb. 3. Ar-Rahman. 4. Ar-Rahim. 5. Al-Malik. 6. Al-Muntaqim. 7. Al-Quddus. 8. As-Salam. 9. Al-Mu'min. 10. Al-Muhaimin. 11. Al-'Aziz. 12. Al-Jabbar. 13. Al-Mutakabbir. 14. Al-Khaliq. 15. Al-Bari. 16. Al-Musawwir. 17. Al-Ghaffar. 18. Al-Qahhar. 19. Al-Wahhab. 20. Ar-Razzaq. 21. Al-Fattah. 22. Al-'Alim. 23. Al-Qabiz. 24. Al-Basit. 25. Al-Khafiz. 26. Ar-Rafi. 27. Al-Mu'izz. 28. Al-Muzill. 29. As-Sami. 30. Al-Basir. 31. Al-Hakam. 32. Al-'Adil. 33. Al-Latif. 34. Al-Khabir. 35. Al-Halim. 36. Al-Azim. 37. Al-Ghafur. 38. Ash-Shakur. 39. Al-'Ali. 40. Al-Kabir. 41. Al-Hafiz. 42. Al-Muqit. 43. Al-Hasib. 44. Al-Jalil. 45. Al-Karim. 46. Al-Mujib. 47. Ar-Raqib. 48. Al-Was'i. 49. Al-Wadud. 50. Al-Hakim. 51. Al-Majid. 52. Al-Ba'is. 53. Ash-Shahid. 54. Al-Haqq. 55. Al-Wakil. 56. Al-Qawiy. 57. Al-Matin. 58. Al-Waliy. 59. Al-Hamid. 60. Al-Mohsi. 61. Al-Mubdi. 62. Al-Moi'id. 63. Al-Momit. 64. Al-Mohyi. 65. Al-Hayy. 66. Al-Qayyum. 67. Al-Wajid. 68. Al-Wahid. 69. Al-Ahad. 70. As-Samad. 71. Al-Qadir. 72. Al-Muqtadir.

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73. Al-Muqaddim. 74. Al-Mu'akhkhir, 75. Al-Awwal. 76. Al-Akhir. 77. Az-Zahir. 78. Al-Batin. 79. Al-Wali. 80. Al-Muta'ali. 81. Al-Barr. 82. Al-Tawwab. 83. Ar-Ra'uf, 84. Malik-ul-Mulk. 85. Zu 'l-Jalal wal Ikram. 86. Al-Muqsim. 87. Al-Jami. 88. Al-Ghani. 89. Al-Mughni. 90. Al-Mu'ti. 91. Al-Man'i. 92. Al-Hadi. 93. Al-Badi'. 94. An-Noor. 95. Al-Azli. 96. Al-Baqi. 97. Al-Waris. 98. Ar-Rashid. 99. As-Sabur.

One can judge from the above given Ninety-nine Names of the Creator how beneficially and successfully the conception of such a Being can mould the character of man.

NOTES.

A new creed desired.

CHRISTIANITY AGAIN IN A MELTING POT.

Faith in the West has been from time to time in the melting pot of modernisation. But it is sure to produce good results at this time. The Modernist churchmen have approached the matter right earnestly. Their culture and education would not allow them to stoop to any nonsense, especially when we see their work of 15 years in cleansing the church of all that had been incorporated into its faith from the pagan origin. They had in fact finished their noble work by the end of 1924 when they entered on constructive lines by declaring that man entered into the world with pure and perfect nature, and that his goal was to clothe it in Divine apparels. The declaration came in 1925 and 1926. We had impatiently been waiting for the next move which the Modernists had to take because everything of heathen origin had till then been rejected. The Modernists seem to have been waiting

NOTES.

the time when the Christian public in general could digest their conclusions. The electric rapidity which characterises the happening of events at present could not fail to influence the public in this matter. They appear to be satisfied with the knowledge that their faith was not that of Jesus, and that heathendom was ruling Christian land ever since.

Though the "Church Times" (London) remarked in 1926 that the conclusion of the Modernists was based on Islamic tenets as preached in Woking and had nothing to do with the religion of Christ; but no one took notice of the timely warning, as it may be presumed, by the Church.

It should not be forgotten that the godhood and Atonement of Christ were mere offshoots of the basic principle of Christianity which was that man came into the world with a sinful nature, and that he deserved punishment under Divine justice. But God out of His love sent His beloved son to pay the penalty of the sin. The Quran, on the other hand, taught that man was given *Nature*¹ of *God* on which he was fashioned, and he was given a religion to assume Divine colours.² So it is clear that the Modernists denied the very basis of the Church religion and followed the Quran in this respect.

The pill prepared by the Modernists was very bitter, but it was swallowed willingly and became digested. The Modernists have therefore touched a new chord. In the last June it was declared that they were not satisfied with the current creed, it should be deserted and a new creed formed. It is a very *happy and noble start*. Why should a man, endowed with intelligence and rationality, bow down to fetishism, as it is the same fetish thought in a

¹ 2—132.

² 30—29.

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refined form if some god incarnate were given the place of inanimate divinity. We appreciate the noble efforts of the Modernists, and with a genuine desire to help them, we publish our new commentary. We request them to read these pages and assure them that they will find enough of material in the pages of the Quran to base their new creed on its tenets. We also have been enabled by some Muslim friends to distribute our journal free of charge in desired circles. The manager will be pleased to know *the address of such Modernist gentlemen as wish us to place their names on the list of our complementary readers.*

Do not miss the Golden Occasion.

A most wonderful régime has dawned on us. Adherents of almost all persuasions have become tired of their convictions excepting Islam. Christians as well as others do not wish to give adhesion to their respective faiths. But with all this, religion is again in requisition. If Science has compelled men to believe in the existence of a God, Who rules Nature in the best way, they have also become alive to the fact that they could not achieve better civilisation than the one which will come to them if they followed the ways of the Lord in the rule of nature. But to do so is to observe a true religion which is no other than to give implicit obedience to His ways. Islam literally means this, and it will be the object of our pages to prove so. The world at large will willingly come under its flag if we could carry Muslim Literature to the four corners of the world. We hope our pages will surely meet the need. But we urgently request Muslim co-operation in enabling us to widen the circulation of the Review in the non-Muslim, especially Western, quarters.

NOTES.

A Party of 42 visits the Mosque.

On Saturday, the 31st October, a party of 42 persons, all belonging to the Gilbert White Fellowship, visited the Mosque at 3 in the afternoon. They were entertained to tea at the Sir Salar Jung Memorial House. After that at about 4 o'clock they were taken to the Mosque when, at the request of the party, the Imam gave a short exposition of the Islamic faith for about 20 minutes. Questions were then invited, and the discussion that followed occupied about three quarters of an hour. The questions were very pertinent, and referred mostly to all those charges that have been levelled by the West against Islam. The party left after 5 o'clock.

The appreciation of the entertainment and of the discussion, is very nicely expressed by the Honorary Secretary of the Society in the course of a letter reproduced below:—

The Gilbert White Fellowship,
Worcester Park,

THE IMAM.

Dated 2nd November 1931.

DEAR SIR,

I write on behalf of the members of the Fellowship, who were so hospitably entertained at the Mosque on Saturday afternoon. They desire me to tender you their warm thanks for your gracious welcome and the kindness displayed on explaining everything they wished to know so unreservedly. I think you showed the simplicity and beauty of your religion so clearly : as one of our oldest members remarked to me afterwards, "It is actually what Christ tried to teach."

I hope that we as visitors did all that we should do, for sometimes one offends through ignorance, and I should feel very grieved if we erred in any way or hurt anyone's feelings.

With renewed thanks and much appreciation of your kindness in welcoming and entertaining such a large party :

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) WINIFRED M. DUNTON.

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The Prime Minister of a Hindu State at the Mosque.

Quite unexpectedly when we were busy with the party mentioned above, there came to the Mosque an unassuming Hindu gentleman accompanied by another Hindu student. They listened to the speech of the Imam as also to the discussion that followed. When the party had departed, these two new guests were again entertained separately to tea, and it transpired gradually that the gentleman was no other than Mr. M. C. Sharma, the Prime Minister of Dholpur State. In the course of the conversation he expressed his admiration for the liberal basis of our preaching here. As he told us, he had read the English translation of Maulana Muhammad Ali from page to page, and was tempted to see with his own eyes the activities of our Mission here, owing to the huge fame it had acquired. It is rumoured that the Dholpur State is intending to build a temple in London, and that this visit of the Prime Minister to the Mosque has some bearing on their project. God alone knows.

Our coming number.

The month of fasting begins in the early middle of this month. We shall have to issue a double number for the coming two months as our staff will as usual avail of our subscribers' courtesy in having a little of holidays in the said month. We, however, are pleased to announce that the learned author of the commentary¹ proposes to discuss a most intricate, but at the same time important subject in Religion. The next instalment in the double number will speak of life after death—Barzakh, Resurrection, Hell and Heaven—under the heading, "Our Evolutionary Journey." It is a matter of satisfaction that though he deals with his subject on scientific lines, yet he is too jealous to subordinate Quranic tenets to any newly-fledged idea, may it be under the name of Science.

¹ See page 21 *infra*.

NOTES.

NOTICE OF BOOKS.

“THE MIRROR OF TRUTH AND GUIDE TO HAPPINESS.”

By Muharrem Nadji (The Christopher Publishing House, Boston, 1931), pp. 119 : price 1 dollar 25 cents.

By virtue of its apt quotations from Western writers, of its happy selections of *Hadiths*, excepting perhaps in the case of a few of them, and of its illuminating explanations of the principles and practices of Islam—the book is, indeed, a welcome addition to the Western Islamic Literature. Mr. Nadji, in the midst of his devotional trend of writing, has not ignored the demands of modern rationalism ; and this fact makes this treatise, concise though it be, fit to be placed in the hands of any European or American seeker after truth.

THE KHWAJA AGAIN DOWN.

After arranging into chapters the material he had written as introduction to his commentary,—the first instalment of which is appearing in these pages,—he was laid prostrate again. This was the fourth mortal attack in these five years, and was more dangerous than any of the former ones. All medical hopes as to his recovery were lost, but God be glorified Who has most graciously spared him to us. May God give him enough of health and strength to complete the work he has so courageously begun even in his convalescent days to meet a most dire need.

ISHAAT-ISLAM

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THE HOLY QURAN AND ITS COMMENTARY

CHAPTER I.

REVELATION A NECESSITY

Providence sees to the satisfying of every appetite in us ; for the law of Demand and Supply must obtain everywhere in the Universe, or the object of Creation would remain unfulfilled. Besides our appetites, all our instincts and tastes have been studied, as it were, minutely. If the human eye longs to look on beautiful things and the ears to hear pleasing notes, the whole of Nature is teeming with beauty, rhythm and musical harmony. How can we think for a moment that Providence ignores our chief cravings if He has met every requirement with such exactitude ? If consciousness appears appreciably in animals, it obtains in man the capacity to reach perfection. Knowledge is its chief requisite, and it must come from Above like other things we need. In knowledge lies its nourishment and its strength. We crave to know more and more of everything. The more unseen a thing is, the more our curiosity is roused. God is the most Unseen¹ of all.

How could we rest content and remain without trying to know Him ? It would be an insult to His Providence. If He implanted in us this most natural demand, the supply

¹ 6—104.

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—this knowledge—came in the form of Revelation. Revelation, therefore, is in fact, a necessity and it must be satisfied.

Unfortunately we live in days when most of the received Revelations are unable to meet the demands of culture, and culture has consequently denied the existence of and necessity for Revelation. A Book from God should, therefore, give us convincing reasons for its appearance. I wonder if the Bible, or any of the other books accepted as Divine, contain such reasons. The last Book of God, however, is full of them. To begin with, the Quran advances the same argument to which I have alluded above. He, it says, is the Creator and Nourisher of all the worlds. He looks to the sustenance required in the order to which a thing belongs. Man has passed through many physical worlds in his evolutionary journey, and enters into the world of consciousness when he assumes the human form. He needs some nourishment from the Universal Sustainer which means something in the way of conscious knowledge. If God out of His own accord has provided for all needs, He must surely send us knowledge as well, and that knowledge has come to us in the form of the Quran.

Secondly, the Book speaks of the Law of 'Measure'¹ which plays a most important part in the Universe. All was chaos² till the law of measure and proportion converted it into the cosmos. The whole world is now a thing measured.³

Ethereal specks through different phases of specialization—their combination in various measures and quantities—reach ultimately the kingdom of the elements, where they accumulate and enter into the human frame. Matter reaches its perfect form⁴ in man's body though that body is composed of the same materials⁵—starch, proteids,

¹ 55—7.

⁴ 95—4.

² 241—11.

⁵ 23—19, 21.

³ 13—8

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grease, liquid, sugar, phosphorus, salts, etc.—of which other animals have also been made. It is a case of the difference of the “Measure,” under which the same things assume different shapes and morals. The Book, when speaking of this Law, refers to man’s chief gift, that is, his speech,¹ which is only the product of the different measures in which sounds come from the mouth as a consequence of the exercise of the guttural, lingual, dental and labial organs. Consonants, when arranged in different measures, through vowels, become articulated and convey meanings. Thus, ‘bit’, ‘but’ and ‘boot’ have each got two consonants ‘b’ and ‘t’, as the bed-rock of the three different words; but the letters, by themselves, are meaningless. They acquire different significations from the use of our labial and dental organs in various measures by the employment of ‘i,’ ‘u’ and ‘oo.’ Music, rhythm and harmony are only different measures of the sound we emit. After referring to our speech, the Book makes² mention of the Heavens and of the luminaries therein, and of the vegetable world. All these work in certain measures³ and do perform their respective functions. If things in a chaotic state in the physical world are capable of producing such wonderful results, when they work in measures, the necessity for our knowing the Law of “Measure,” as applied to consciousness, that is to say, to the moral and spiritual order, is plain enough, seeing that evil and good are only different measures of the same thing. Morals in their primitive form are mere animal passions, but they lose their carnal nature and become sublimated into high morals and spiritual excellence when the Law of “Measures and Proportion”—that is, propriety of their use—is observed. We needed to be guarded against their abuses, and the knowledge required for this protection was revealed in the Quran. The eighth and ninth verses of chapter 55

¹ 55—4.

² 55—5-6.

³ 55—7.

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consequently says, "that you may not be inordinate in respect of the measure and keep up the balance with equity and do not make the measure deficient."

Thirdly, the Quran says, that we have in us capabilities¹ of the highest order. Rationalism² holds the same view. But the Quran goes further. It discloses, that if we soar to the highest of the high, we may also descend to the lowest of the low.³ We do, therefore, need knowledge that may keep us on the right path and act as a safeguard from pit-falls by the way. Such knowledge can only be from the Creator of things that become good⁴ or evil in different forms. Nay, God lies under a sort of obligation to us in this⁵ respect and therefore He should enlighten us.

Fourthly, if we are to be punished for breaking any Law, we ought to know of that Law beforehand, seeing that Nature seems to be inexorable in exacting her penalties. The Quran admits this principle⁶ and God sends us the required knowledge. The Book, in the concluding section of its second chapter, speaks of God's government over the whole universe, of our accountability to Him for every action we do and of the punishment we are likely to receive for our misdeeds.⁷ The Book says that God has sent His Laws to every nation through His messengers, but that the Law was not a burden.⁸ Let St. Paul make it a curse, if he will. It is a blessing, since it repeatedly informed us of the bounds⁹ we had to keep in order to secure real happiness and prosperity.

Fifthly, we are often in the dark and do not know how to come out of it. Surely, we need some light from the Unseen to guide us when thus benighted.¹⁰

¹ 95—4.

⁴ 103—2.

⁷ 2—284, 285.

⁹ 2—187.

² Professor Lecky.

⁵ 16—9.

⁸ 95—5.

⁶ 17—15.

³ 2—286.

¹⁰ 14—1.

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CIVILIZATION UNDER THE QURAN.

The Book puts forward several other cogent arguments to justify the coming of Revelation, and they will be noted later on, as occasion arises. But here I will speak of one thing that often appeals to me. Both culture and the Quran tell us that we are the Lords of Nature. But we were content to remain its menial servants for ages. We could not claim our position, could not even dream of doing so, until the fact of that position was revealed¹ to us from the Most High. We ought to have known how to utilize things of Nature, but that power was a treasure, sealed from us *till the coming of the Holy Book*. Then all the manifestations of Nature gradually began to receive homage from us, though they had to pay us the same. No secular knowledge could have brought them under our dominance, till a Word from God enlightened us, and turned the tables in our favour. We could not have made any progress at all, if Nature had not begun to serve us. Let Modern Culture meditate on two things, to wit :—(a) All our civilization depends on our mastery over Nature; (b) no human effort, prior to Islam, could enlighten us as to this principle of civilization. Was not Revelation, then, a necessity if the Quran came to open our eyes to this grand truth ?

CIVILIZATION IN VEDIC² DAYS.

There have been times in the world's history when Nature was worshipped as God, and its various manifestations accepted as deities. Such days could not be favourable to the growth of progress, since it would be sacrilege even to think of exacting service from the object of our adoration. If the people of the whole Northern hemisphere, especially in countries situated above the temperate zone, bowed down before the Sun as their God,

¹ 14—32-33.

² The Vedas, the revealed books of the Hindus.

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so much so, that the great luminary was given the place of the Son, in the Trinity of Zoroaster, and fire, his first-begotten child, received also homage as God from his followers in Persia, the ancient Rishis in India did the same. The first hymn of the Rig Veda, the Sacred Book of the Hindus, adores fire, as a deity. The rest of the Book contains hymns invoking other gods, like 'Water' and 'Air.' A new school of thought in the Hindu community, which is adopting the Monotheism of Islam, asserts that *Agni*, *Vayu* and *Jal*—the Sanskrit equivalents of the three said elements—are the three names of God represented in the elements that are most useful to mankind. We need not bother about this interpretation of the new scholars, since they cannot get away from those times when India was frankly polytheist and worshipped these same elements. The utmost that could be said on the subject would be that the sacred words were then misinterpreted by idolators. Even now most of the Hindus take exception to the new interpretation. How could such a time be favourable, as I said before, to material civilization? So India had to go without this sort of progress. Though civilization in ancient days in this country has been much boasted of, unfortunately history cannot bear out the boast, seeing that men of old, in India, did not cultivate the art of writing history. Inscriptions discovered by archæologists are the only written history we possess. Doubtless they indicate some sort of civilization, but a very small part of Nature seems to have been reduced to human service in those days. Even the earth was not, at that time, properly cultivated, and its treasures remained undiscovered to an even greater extent. We read in the Vedas only of rice, pulse and a few other cereals. Even the poetical imaginings of Kalidas could not beautify the garden of Shokantla—the heroine of his

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drama—with the variety of flowers we now find in the gardens of the civilized world. The Great Mughal was the first, in India, to enhance the beauty of Nature in various ways. The earth, with its wealth of beautiful hues and colours, which has created in us the taste for decorating our surroundings with them, was not cultivated before Islam. If India remained satisfied with yellow, the colour of the popular Indian flower *gainda*, which pervades the whole garden of Shokantla, Persia loved the deep red which resembles fire. The earth was prepared so as to produce flowers of various colours, and gardens began to present the most fascinating scenes, by reason of their many coloured flowers, when the Quran¹ declared that God created the world full of hues to act as our reminder that we should cultivate in ourselves æsthetic tastes.

Similarly, such an important aspect of civilization as the culinary art was not being properly cultivated anywhere in the world at that time. If India remained contented with her cereals, vegetables and pulses in her kitchens, people in the West could find no better victual than raw beef or the undressed flesh of game. Persia, no doubt, had her special food in some improved form ; but the Muslim, for the first time in the world, was inspired by the Quran² to convert the flesh of various animals and corn and other grains into various delicacies. Fruits³ were transformed into drinks, preserves and pickles. Different condiments⁴ came to season the dishes on our table, while many-coloured flowers were used for its decoration. The art of weaving also had to wait for Islam before any improvement came its way with the refined⁵ taste in clothing ourselves, cultivated under the Muslim regime. While people in temperate zones used *Khádi* and a coarse kind of silk for their apparel, Indian

¹ 16—13. ² 23—19-21. ³ 16—67. ⁴ 23—20. ⁵ 7—26.

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Rishees preferred to remain naked, save, of course, for the lower part. The inhabitants of the Northern regions used the skins of wild animals to protect them from cold. But there, again, the Muslims made wonderful progress. Cotton, silk and wool were found to make the most fascinating kinds of cloth. Akbar, the Great Mughal, obtained some thirty different patterns from cotton; and the name of Nurjehán should ever be remembered, wherever scents and perfumeries are in question.

The whole aspect of the world was completely changed when the Revelation of the Quran brought us a new Gospel reversing the relations which had hitherto existed between Man and Nature. Nature was not the Master, said the Quran, but our minister and servant. The Book did not reveal the truth in terms or analogies, but it made particular mention of things like the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, the oceans and the rivers, the mountains, the day and the night—the gods of the ancient world—and declared that we were their¹ masters. The Gospel also spoke of means that would enable us to reduce Nature and make it our servant. Civilization thus began to progress by leaps and bounds. Tastes and appetites, not felt before, widened the circle of our necessities in every department of human activity. The Book went so far as to assure us that whatever wish we cherished or imagined would find means for its fulfilment² in the resources of Nature. No wonder the world waxed enormously rich in all that made for comfort and happiness. The Book also disclosed certain wonderful truths, and I would again ask the people of culture and science to reflect if anything else was needed to complete our progress than the Revelation promulgated by the Quran; the world would still have remained in the dark, even now, if the Quran³ had not come to enlighten it.

¹ 14—32, 33.

² 14—34.

³ 2—257.

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Soon after the time of Jesus, an age of utter decline and decay settled down on the world as though it had been awaiting for his departure. The Divine flame which he had kindled in the human breast in the valley of the Jordan began to smoulder, and had already gone out utterly in other parts of the world. Religion had everywhere deteriorated into a code of the emptiest sort of ritualism promulgating a sickly species of theology that killed the spirit of material progress. While the Church in the West taught that man was a vile creature on God's earth and that everything in the earth had been created to pamper the flesh and kill the spirit, Brahmanism, in the East, preached that man had no intrinsic worth at all, nor was there anything of good in him. His only salvation lay in separating himself from all worldly affairs and in leading the life of a recluse in the jungle. Such theologies and philosophies were fatal to progress. Absolute death—spiritual, moral and material—overtook the world, and dense clouds of wickedness and ignorance darkened its horizon. In this, the gloomiest epoch that had ever been known, a silver line appeared on the Arabian coast. A voice like a thunderclap came to a son of the desert, who sat meditating over the miseries of the world in the recesses of Mount Hira near Mecca. It was a message from on High, a message that was unique in its character even in the world of Revelation. All former Messages either spoke of tribal well-being—like that which came from Sinai or through the Vedas—or they alluded to personal favour, like that heard on the banks of the river Jordan. The Revelation in the cave of Mount Hira brought a universal Gospel to humanity and revealed that the lowest of the low (for such had men become at that time) was destined to be the greatest of the great. The words¹ declared that the *Most Honourable*

¹ 96—3.

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God intended to raise him to a degree of eminence that would mark him out as the best¹ among His creation. It also disclosed the way whereby man must attain such a dignity, and the acquisition of a new learning was the remedy ordained by the Revelation² to raise him from his degradation.

Was it but a pleasing phantasy born of the Prophet's own mind, or a Promise from the Most High, or was it a matter for the coming events of history to decide? Yet the Revelation was of a character unique in its grandeur and sublimity, and such as had never been heard before. It remained silent, however, for full six months, when the hearer of the great Gospel was bidden again to begin his work of reformation among the People of Ignorance, as they proudly called themselves. Many other Revelations followed, but it was sometime towards the end of the Prophet's Meccan period that the nature of the prophesied greatness was defined in a chapter entitled the *Bee*. It announced³ that the rule of the Lord on earth was going to be established very soon, and that this rule was no other than the self-same kingdom of God, with man as His vicegerent⁴ on the earth, which had been so anxiously besought⁵ by Jesus in the prayer which has risen continually from every Christian home since then; the first three sections of the chapter⁶ gave the salient features of the kingdom. The first section dealt with the various animals already under human subjection, but the second described certain most surprising phenomena in the kingdom of Nature. It told that the water that comes from the clouds and causes the trees and plants and herbage to grow, comes for the service of man; that night and day, the sun and the moon, and all other luminaries in the starry land, had been created by the Lord to serve the needs of man. After speaking of great oceans, mountains, rivers and roads

¹ 17—70.

⁴ 2—30.

² 96—5.

⁵ Mall 6—10.

³ Ch. 16—1.

⁶ Ch. 16.

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as parts of the same kingdom, it proceeded to put the whole case in a nutshell. It said that the world was full of gifts for man, that had not as yet come within his comprehension.¹ Truly, a wonderful Gospel. A creature like the man, who at that time had lowered himself to such a state of degradation as to be ready to worship everything he saw as his Lord, was, all of a sudden, given these startling tidings that every other manifestation of Nature, including that greatest luminary, which had hitherto been worshipped as God all over the world, were his servants and ministers, and that it was his lot to act as their sovereign. On another occasion the Revelation enunciated, one by one, all the objects that had received human adoration, till then, as God. The Book declared that all these things were the slaves of man. In short everything which had been revered as his lord and master till yesterday was his servant. The message came to a man who belonged to a nation poor in all respects, yet he was chosen by God to take in hand this wonderful task. Let the worldly-wise people of culture and science look at the matter in the light of history and ask themselves whether this idea of man's greatness had ever dawned on the human mind before Muhammad? It was not mere imagination but a reality; though much of it has not yet materialized. The days are yet to come when the acquisition of new sciences,² as prophesied by the Quran, will enable us to bring even the mighty³ sun under our yoke, when he will work as a hand-maiden in our kitchen for the purposes of supplying light and heat.

The same chapter also gives us an insight into the things which had kept man down, and of which the reversal would carry us to the peak of greatness. All our present eminence depends on our reducing Nature to our service. But we have accepted its various components as our

¹ 17—18.

² 96—5.

³ 14—32, 33; 16—12.

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God, and a worshipper, as in duty bound, cannot expect any menial service from his Lord. We could not hope to change our destiny unless we cultivated in ourselves a strong sense of Monotheism. (Ch. 16, section 3).

The Book also taught us the way to achieve this miracle. We were told that the whole of Nature was ruled through the agency of angels, who would be obedient to our will,¹ if we acquired the necessary knowledge. The Quran did not leave us in any uncertainty as to the nature of that knowledge. The service of God was clearly the first requisite in obtaining this ascendancy over the angels, but we had also to study² the universe at large in the light of the said service. We had to understand Nature in order to discover the utility to ourselves of its various components. We had also to learn the manner and the law in and under which they would disclose their properties to our advantage. We had to find out the make³ and shape of things as well as their ingredients and the proportions in which they combine to create other things and the particular laws applicable to them. Our attention was drawn to the phenomena of Nature.⁴ We were told of their benefit to us and bidden to find out how to manufacture them for ourselves, should need arise. For instance, we have to-day discovered the ingredients of water, and the proportion in which they become combined to produce the form of water. But the Quran tells us to go further and ourselves to do the work of Nature in creating water. The verses which enjoin these various duties demand from us to do *tafaqquh*, *tadabbur*, *tafakkur* and *taaqul*. Unfortunately, it is impossible to convey in any other language, the precise meanings of these Arabic words. They

¹ 2—31, 34. ² 3—189, 190.

³ The word *Khalq* in the text (3—189) literally means, *shaping and manufacturing* of things, as well as *combining* of their ingredients in the proportion into which they mix. The verse enjoins upon us the *Taffakkur* of these things which means to find them out.

⁴ 1—164.

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signify thinking, meditation and contemplation in general. So, at least, they have been rendered by almost all the translators of the Quran into English, but the words refer to a special and particular kind of knowledge which we have to acquire through contemplation. For example, *tafaqquh* means our knowledge of the features in a thing which enables us to distinguish it from others; under *tadabbur*, we find out the object for which things have been created, and through *tafakkur*, the properties of things and the proportions in which their various ingredients have been combined. *Taaqul* is such a knowledge of things as will enable us to find out how to make them for ourselves. Under these injunctions the early Muslims established laboratories, made scientific researches and inaugurated various branches of science. To facilitate this study and stimulate our interest therein, the Quran announced as follows :—

- (a) The whole world was full of potentialities.¹
- (b) Everything in the universe was for a purpose.²
- (c) They all were for our service, use and benefit.³
- (d) Not a single thing in the whole universe, however insignificant it might be, had been created without its proper⁴ use, they have been created to minister to us; and that everything we need is already provided.
- (e) No labour is wasted.⁵
- (f) Right actions would receive ample reward.⁶
- (g) Idleness should gain nothing.⁷
- (h) Nothing in the universe is changeable in its Nature.⁸

¹ 52—4, 2—22.

² 2—164, 15—19, 20.

³ 29—58.

⁷ 1—3.

² 3—190, 14—33.

⁴ 3—190, 14—33, 34.

⁶ 6—161, 7—170, 12—56, 18—30.

⁸ 30—30.

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- (i) The whole world is chained by the law. Everything in it follows¹ certain laws, and we can turn everything in it to our advantage if we discover and use the said law. The laws in Nature are none other than the will of the Most High (76—30).
- (j) The laws of Nature are unalterable.²
- (k) Knowledge³ and the discovery of new sciences will enable us to turn these things in Nature to our use.
- (l) Things in Nature stand in a complementary relation to each other.⁴
- (m) They combine with each other in a fixed proportion to create new things.⁵
- (n) God's blessings are open⁶ to all.
- (o) His ways are shown to him⁷ who seeks after them.
- (p) There were material treasures in the world for us to work upon. The word *Rahaman* literally conveys this idea that they were open to all and ready to respond to our needs if properly approached.⁸
- (q) Everything is already designed and comes to perfection⁹ under the principle of Evolution.
- (r) Man had not to create anything. Everything was already in existence. He had only to strive and use his limbs and he would have an ample reward.¹⁰
- (s) Everything is for our good but its mishandling makes it evil.¹¹

¹ 3—82.
² 2—31 34 ; 96—5.
³ 87—2 ; 3.
⁴ 29—69.
⁵ 20—50, 87—24.
¹¹ 4—79.

² 17—77 ; 35—43.
⁴ 86—11, 12.
⁵ 1—1.
⁶ 1—1 ; 17—20 ; 67—3.
¹⁰ 53—39, 40.

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- (t) Good or evil even in the least measure brings recompense.¹
- (u) No one will bear our burden.²
- (v) The whole universe is in a measured³ order, and we have to observe it if we wish to invent other devices or things for our comfort.
- (w) There are limits and bounds for everything, their trespass entails⁴ loss.
- (x) Human nature possesses the best⁵ of capabilities, but we need divine guidance for progress.
- (y) There are pitfalls in our ways.⁶
- (z) True success only comes to him who exerts to excel others in his occupation of life.⁷

With such a guide before them, it was not a surprising thing that the early Muslims should have become keenly interested in scientific research. They were induced to explore Nature. They were assured that their labour would be amply repaid. This naturally gave a strong impetus to learning, and the Muslims reaped a goodly harvest in the fields of science. They were the founders of a new civilization. Nay, further, they began to rule Nature, and through it, conquered the world. For centuries they continued supreme, but the riches they thus accumulated, subsequently made them slothful and wrought their ruin. Abuse, excess and self-indulgence shook the structure of their power to its foundations, leaving them an easy prey to others.

The early Muslims, however, bequeathed a vast heritage to their Western successors in the form of that learning which the latter have since pursued under the name of modern science. In fact, the Holy Quran had already so termed it.⁸

¹ 1—3, 18—46.

² 15—21.

³ 95—4.

⁷ 79—1-5.

² 17—15.

⁴ 5.

⁵ 95—5.

⁶ 86—5.

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One of the chief factors of modern civilization is Mechanism. The attention of the early Muslims was drawn to mechanism, by the Quran, when they read in it the doctrine of universe ordered to the requirement of all things necessary in a machine ; and mechanism is only a system of making things work together in a machine.

The Holy Book also said that the whole universe was in a measured order. Everything in it followed a course which came from the Lord, as already remarked, and it was unchangeable. We are repeatedly told that we must learn the various measures and courses that we " may not be inordinate in respect of the measure. " The first nine verses of chapter 55—The Beneficent—bring home to us this truth.

It says that we must respect these measures when we have learned what they are. Every created thing has got some good in it. In different measures it serves the needs of different creatures. If in one measure it is utilized by one species, another species has need of it in another way. The measure of water which a camel needs to satisfy his thirst, will kill a man if taken at one time. The principle of measure works not only in the physical plane, but in the moral and spiritual order as well. The same thing becomes good or evil in different forms and measures. What is immorality in certain circumstances, becomes morality, when the conditions are changed. This doctrine set Muslims to work to discover the various branches of mathematics which were active in different regions of Nature as the Book suggested. Algebra, Statics, Conic Sections and other branches of applied mathematics are amongst Muslim discoveries. It was repeatedly told us that water which brings¹ life to the world, was sent in a given² measure and regulated in prescribed measures, and this was a clear hint for the working out of the science

¹ 43—11.

² 13—17, 23—18.

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of hydrostatics, etc. In fact, the *ilhám* and *wahy*, the Arabic words for revelation, used in the text literally mean hints or suggestions. The knowledge from God comes as a hint to enable the human mind to venture further in finding out things for itself.

I will deal later with other ethics and principles laid down elsewhere in the Quran, but the material I have placed here before my readers will show that the position of men of culture and science, who say that religion has not served the ends of civilization, is absolutely untenable. Let them consider one thing. Muslims were admittedly the founders of modern culture. They enriched the world with their scientific discoveries and produced a unique civilization. It is also an admitted historical fact that there was nothing in pre-Islamic culture to inspire them to scientific research. The Quran came to advocate the acquisition of knowledge for the first time. The Holy Prophet bade his followers to go to far countries in search of it. Moreover, what I have already stated here is sufficient in itself to create a very deep interest in science. Further, to illustrate my meaning, I may mention that astrology was converted into the useful science of astronomy by Muslim research. Men were informed for the first time in the Quran that the whole solar system worked under a given reckoning¹; that all heavenly bodies floated in some kind of liquid, in their respective spheres,² that they had a course prescribed for their movements, which they had to follow in a given time. They could³ neither overlap nor come in each other's way. They had been created⁴ to guide us and help us to find our way on the earth. Besides, if we were assured that all things of physical nature

¹ 55—5. It should not be forgotten that the word *Ash-Shams* which has been popularly translated as the Sun, also means the solar system. The word *Al-Qamar*—the Moon—stands for the satellites in the heavens and the word *As-Sama*, meaning height, stands sometimes for the heavenly bodies.

² 21—33, 36—41.

³ 21—33, 36—40.

⁴ 16—16.

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worked according to certain laws and measures, and that everything in the universe was in a given measure, and that things, though far apart from each other, nevertheless, complemented each other's needs and followed the same law everywhere, it was not difficult for men of science to walk mentally in heavenly bodies with the same facility as they did in the streets of a metropolis. On their charts they could easily work out their course, whether in the air or on or under the sea. These laws would easily enable one to arrive safely at the end of a long and trackles journey. Similarly, this Quranic suggestion that everything in Nature went on in a prescribed course and followed a prescribed law, made them cognizant of the fact that the winds also blow in prescribed ways. It led to the discovery of the meteorological laws which, with the laws of navigation, also studied by the Muslims, saved ships from the buffetings of wind and storm. The Revelation that all rivers had been made to serve man, produced laws of irrigation which, with the suggestion that the earth was capable of retaining water¹ in a given measure, brought so much land under cultivation in the second and third centuries of the Muslim era, in the valleys of the Nile and Euphrates, that Mesopotamia and Egypt became the granary of the world. Even at the present time, the land under cultivation in Egypt is less than it was then. In short, while St. Paul deprecated the law and called it a curse to humanity, the Quran respected it and made the observance of it our religion,² as *Islam* literally means "Obedience to the Law." If the Church religion taught that all beautiful things in Nature should be shunned, since they tended to kill the spirit, the Quran has declared "that these things were not prohibited¹ for those who were the servants of God." In his zeal to convert people outside the Law, St. Paul had to decry the

¹ 13-17, 43-11.

² 5-3.

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Law. The semi-philosophers of Tarsus hardly realised that human progress lay only in obedience to the Law. The formal Church had also to assert that sin was innate in human nature, since sin is a breach of the Law. The dictum that man is sinful by nature involves an assumption that he is incapable of observing the Law. It is a most despicable libel on our character to assert that we are criminal by nature, if sin is innate in that nature. It is an anomaly if legislation exists in Christian land. Parliament and all other legislative bodies are a mere infringement on our liberty. But if it appears, as our experience shows, that most of us are able to observe the Law in all civil matters, how can it be said, as the Church suggests, that we cannot fulfil the Divine Commandments? They are¹ only ten in number. The Muslim world has shown that it does not worship anyone but God. Most of us respect other's property and the womenkind of others. Most of us are dutiful to our parents; and similarly the remaining commandments have been implicitly followed by many of us. It is surely then a wrong principle to hold that we are born with a tainted nature, and that we are unable to follow the Law. It was this principle, no doubt, that for centuries retarded all material progress in Christendom, which began to move forward only when the church dogmas had lost their hold on the human mind.

Briefly, Law is the chief thing in the world and governs the world. The discovery of the principle and our observance of it brought us progress and success; but it was the Quran that first of all taught that obedience² to the Law was the Religion from God. All the seven articles of faith in Islam pertained to the Law. They are as follows:—

- (1) *Allah*—God, the Source of all Law.
- (2) *Angels*—The first agents through whom the laws of Nature come to operation.

¹ 7—32.

² Exodus Ch. 20.

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- (3) *Books*—Revelations that came to man for the promulgation of the Law.
- (4) *The Messengers*—Those through whom the Law was given.
- (5) *The Last Day*—The day when we shall all be judged according to the Law.
- (6) *The Measures of Evil and Good*—As already prescribed, in other words, Law.
- (7) *The Coming Life*—In which we shall be rewarded according to our observance of the Law.

It thus appears that Law and its observance are the pivot on which turns the whole religion of the Quran. In contradiction to the Church, the Quran announces that man comes into this world with a nature created¹ to observe the Law. Herein lies the chief difference between Christianity and Islam. While the former was bound to produce material retrogression in the human race, the latter's aim is to set man on the right path to progress.

The Holy Book is, moreover, not confined to material progress but brings within its scope every branch of human development. It was sent for human uplifting, and could not, therefore, ignore any constituent of human nature. All pre-Islamic religions dealt chiefly with a few doctrines of morality, ignoring other aspects of human nature, and thereby losing their hold on the human mind. If Revelation comes from God to bring out² all that lies within the human frame, it must deal with all sides of humanity. The Holy Book treats of all subjects—morality, spirituality, sociology, economics, politics and æsthetic matters. But the beauty of the Book lies in the fact that it does not separate one thing from the other. It creates a kind of agreement among them all, and works them out in one harmonious whole.

¹ 51—56.

² 2—5.

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It promulgates certain principles that are broad enough to apply equally to every aspect of the question. For instance, it refers to the doctrine of Evolution and its aspects, while elucidating most of its salient truths. The principle of evolution, it should not be forgotten, was taught to the world for the first time in Islam. The Quran began with a chief Divine Attribute—*Rabbu-ul-'Alamin*. Though this Attribute, in the first place, means the Creator, the Maintainer and the Nourisher of the various worlds, the word *Rabb* itself is very rich in significance. Its English translation “Lord,” which we find in almost all English translations of the Quran, is not an adequate one. It impairs the beauty of the Quran, and the reader loses the particular sense to convey which the word has been specially used in many places. It also means the Originator¹ of things and their Combiner² to create new things. It means the Law Giver,³ who frames Laws under which He propounds the shapes which things must assume and the ratio and proportion in which various ingredients must combine with each other. He is the Regularizer, *i.e.*, the Lord Who puts things in the way to perfection. He is the Arranger of the different stages through which they have to pass on their way to completion. He sees to the necessary provision for them in their journey. *Rabb* also signifies One Who reposes all the faculties in things at their inception, and then brings them to perfection, to attain which they pass through various stages. (Lane's *Arabic-English Lexicon*). In short, the Arabic word conveys all that is connoted by Evolution, as well as every other thing necessary for its functioning, so that I am almost tempted to translate *Rabb* by Evolutionizer, if I may be allowed to coin such a word. But *Rabb* has got other meanings too, which I will explain later on. There is no adequate word in any lang-

¹ 2—5.

² 87—1-3.

³ 22—5-8.

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uage to convey all the meanings of *Rabb*. I am compelled to keep the original word when I have to use it in these pages.

The Quran dealt with all sides of the principle of Evolution and based thereon its moral and spiritual teachings. It is really most interesting to observe how the Quran traces Evolution from its very beginning. The Quran is not, strictly speaking, a book of science, but since it concerns itself with the development of humanity, it must explain the origin of man and the various stages through which he passed before reaching that of consciousness, and then teach concerning life after death, if there be any, and prepare man for it. The Book, however, explains it all on the basis of the doctrine in question, especially when it imparts to the reader belief in the life after death.

If biology has come to-day to believe in the continuity of life, it is on account of this same doctrine. No species, it says, can become extinct, unless all its potentialities become actualized. It passes through many stages, one after the other, to reach the goal. This principle also lays down that a faculty which comes to perfection in any one stage, becomes a nucleus for its further development in the next. If some of our faculties are partially developed in some individuals, while remaining in abeyance in most, it would seem that there ought to be a stage for their fruition in all cases. The Quran also alludes to the same principle when it tells of the life¹ to come. Thus in chapter 87, the Book speaks of *Rabb* Who brings all things to perfection by passing them through various forms. When they reach their perfection at a certain stage they die, but only to be re-born again. Then the Book goes on to prove that life after¹ death for the human race is also necessary. In chapter 22 section¹ the Book refers to

¹ 87—16, 17.

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various evolutionary stages through which man has passed before arriving at his present state. There it refers to the vegetable kingdom and therefrom draws a conclusion as to our future existence.

The beauty of the Quran chiefly lies in the richness of the language in which it has been couched. It came in the language of the Hedjaz, and it is admittedly too conservative to allow any change in the form or meaning of its components. The Quranic words are very rich in their significations. Even the language, we believe, is a revealed one. We will deal with the subject later on. Whatever may be the nature of the case in the matter, the words of the Quran appeared to be a piece of Divine work. Like things in Nature, as explained above, we need not give them new meanings, nor re-interpret them to satisfy new demands of life. Their connotations are wide enough to denote every new concept. For illustration, I would refer to what I have written on the 38th page of the present issue. The word *Rabb* though up till now has been taken to mean Creator, Sustainer and Maintainer, signifies, however, about two dozen of processes which every entity passes through in its course of creation before it reaches its final development. These meanings have not been forced on the word *Rabb*, but the lexicons of the language speak of all of them when they give the meanings of the word *Rabb*. I only refer to Lane's *Arabic-Anglo Lexicon* in my support, but the English lexicographer follows *Táj-ul-Urus* and *Lisan-ul-Arab*, the two old Arabic lexicons. The words of the Quran therefore need no re-interpretation. They may become amplified, but on the material already existing.

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