

The Islamic Review

FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

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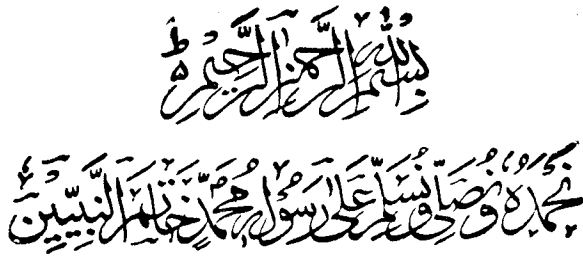
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THE
ISLAMIC REVIEW

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XXXI]

DHU'L-HIJJA, 1362 A.H.
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[No. 12

BY THE LIGHT OF THE QUR-AN

“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden, the extensiveness of which is (as) the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who guard (against evil).

“Those who spend (benevolently) in ease as well as in straitness, and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men; and Allah loves the doers of good (to others).

“And those who, when they commit an indecency or do injustice to their souls remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their faults and who forgives the faults but Allah? And (who) do not knowingly persist in what they have done.”—*The Family of Amran*. Vv. 132—134.

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A RETROSPECTION AND THANKSGIVING

Can man solve his own social problems without any light from God? Is any reference to God really necessary in the interest of our happiness on earth? These are the questions that are agitating the human mind at the moment. Conventional religion, that has no bearing on the social behaviour of man, may be permitted to exist but man is not sure if it is proper to allow religion to interfere with the affairs of his worldly life. At bottom, therefore, it is a struggle between religion and irreligion. Will religion take up the challenge? That is the question.

The faith of Islam has indeed taken up this challenge. It has proved itself capable of convincing rational humanity that true religion will help it to live happily in this world as well, nay without it, it cannot live happily indeed. And in the presentation of this momentous argument, no method of preaching has been so effective as the circulation of this green monthly which enters with the next issue, by the grace of God, Who is the source of all strength and resources, the thirty-second year of its existence.

As we look back, it seems that the existence of this journal is in itself a proof of Divine control of human affairs. It was started at a time when the Christian world was almost sure that, as a religion, Islam had breathed its last. On the other hand, the Muslim world had absolutely despaired of any possibility of the Christian West listening to the message of Islam with any appreciation and love. This despondency had reached such great depths that one of its greatest poets had characterised our efforts at the Islamisation of the West as equivalent to applying collyrium to the eyes of an ant. That is the reason why our efforts have not been able to rouse the enthusiasm of the

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Muslim world to the extent they should have done. It is true that with the increasing response from the West to the message of Islam broadcast from Woking, the Eastern Muslim interest in the cause is also on the increase. But the despondency entertained over centuries is still found lurking. The misgiving on the subject receives expression in different forms at different times. Happily this does not worry the workers in the least. They see the horizon before them shining with the approach of a new age—the age of faith and love, of sympathy and consideration—the age in which self-control and self-abnegation are to be regarded as the highest values in the human society—the age, above all, which will see man drawn towards the Supreme controlling Spirit of the Universe, as the seatide is swayed by the attraction of the moon. They see this vision unfolding itself before their eyes just because they have their inspiration from the infallible revealed words of God incorruptibly recorded in the pages of the Holy Qur-án. And they feel gratified and thankful in utter humility that they have been able to share this vision with many others that have come in contact with these pages.

The successive editors of the *Islamic Review* have been working throughout under one overpowering conviction, viz., that the present miseries of humanity have their origin in the abominations of man-worship and self-worship and that their remedy lies in the true worship of God and in taking His revealed Word for guidance in all the affairs of life. That is why, for every problem that confronts humanity to-day, they have provided for their readers and, through them, to the world at large, solutions from the words of the Holy Qur-án in the most appropriate manner and conforming to the best canons of logical thinking. They know that man has always been rational, in spite

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of appearances to the contrary and that the present-day humanity has been all the more so, notwithstanding the foolish way it has been acting of late as a social entity. They are accordingly confident that the tide of rationalism that seems to sweep off all faith from the minds of men endangers not religion proper but all that passes for religion, but is not really so at bottom. It causes them a deep anguish to see that a rational and scientific civilization should go side by side with the most dogmatic and puerile set of religious beliefs. Being sheer anachronisms, these latter needed only a determined blow which has been given by the spirited lines of these pages, with the result that official Christianity has virtually bowed before the rising tide of religious Islam in the world. The best thinkers even in religious circles of Christendom have come to the conclusion that in Islam alone lies the safety of human civilization. Western Islam has already produced saintly characters reminding people of the good old days of early Islam. Islam has come to be regarded, at least in England, as a religion of the land. British Muslims have begun to feel the necessity of a compact social life in Islam and have even given proofs of their religious self-respect by protesting against the observation of a leading political figure of Great Britain that the Britishers were fighting for the existence of Christian civilization. This change in the relationship between Islam and Christendom was certainly undreamt of a generation ago. The Sun of Islam is unmistakably rising from the West. Indeed God fulfils Himself in many ways.

But weaning is always a difficult task. As was expected, the destructive process has left, some lacerations on the emotions of men and these show themselves in various anti-religious movements such as Socialism, National-Socialism, etc. At bottom

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these are all anti-religious. We, however, are not in the least disturbed at their appearance. We know these constitute a crisis in the course of convalescence in the spiritual condition of Europe. They are shortly to make way for a healthy reconstruction and rehabilitation. Only they need a careful handling. As the readers can see, we are not unmindful of the needs created by this new situation either. For minds infected with the ideas contained in these social movements, these pages regularly provide healthy instructions and helpful and constructive suggestions.

In India, the Hindu community is also in turmoil. The powerful liberal thinking generated by the scientific West has played havoc with the age-long conservatism of the Hindu mind. The spirit of nationalism infused by the West has added strength to this anxiety for an overhauling. The awakened Hindu mind is in search of new values and a new bond of social existence. It grasps at every new thought produced by the West, but after repeated bitter experiences is growing increasingly suspicious of any help from that quarter. These also need a sympathetic handling. With all our detestation of the idol-worshipping cult of Hinduism, together with its curse of untouchability, we cannot afford to forget that it is India that has sent forth the conquering spirit of Islam to the present-day world. And the bulk of Indian Islam is drawn, as we know, from the Hindu race. We have, therefore, an obligation to the people of India—a land with one of the most ancient civilizations in the world and a home of a long series of spiritual movements. On the other hand, discerning eyes will notice in the cultured Hindu mind a suppressed appreciation for the religion of Islam notwithstanding its hostility to the political ambitions of the present-day Muslims. The readers cannot have failed to notice that of late these

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pages have contained articles that are calculated to set the Hindu intelligentsia to seriously thinking over their religious position.

Our head bows down in gratitude to think that it has fallen to the lot of this one single journal to attend to all these multifarious needs of modern humanity. We are aware we are not equal to the task. We know our failings have been many. And yet ours is the only paper that has been chosen to carry out this most difficult of all tasks at this critical point of history. It is a privilege of which the management of this paper no less than its supporters, can rightly feel gratefully proud.

It is the characteristic of truth that it has always the slenderest backing from the people of the world. This no doubt provides an opportunity for the hand of God to show itself. But it is equally a misfortune for humanity that it does not readily fall in with the scheme of God. Be that as it may, it is a privilege to be the collaborators of God in any new scheme. But privilege always entails responsibilities. And we, who are conducting this crusade on behalf of Islam, have our responsibilities. We have to bestir ourselves to the utmost. We have, to begin with, to make sacrifices of money. We have to exert ourselves physically and mentally. We have to make use of our influence, private and public. Indeed, if we intend to serve the cause of God, we must remember what God demands from us—what prices we must pay for it :

“Surely Allah has bought of the believers their persons and their property for this that they shall have the Garden.” (*The Holy Qur-án* 9 : 11.)

Let us, the Management and the supporters of this Messenger of Truth, keep this demand before our eyes and step forward in the new year with unrelaxing

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energy and undimmed vision of our objective. Nay, let us summon increased determination as the prospects become more and more hopeful with the passage of time.

EDITOR.

TO OUR FOREIGN READERS

We have been sending copies of this monthly to some important foreign libraries. The readers in these libraries are requested to make a dispassionate study of the thought-provoking articles contained in these pages. And if they find them useful in the interests of their religious knowledge, they should do well to ask their respective authorities to make this journal a regular feature of their Reading Table.

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TO OUR OLD PATRONS

The current issue is being sent free to some of our old patrons who, for unavoidable reasons, have, for some time past, been unable to be in touch with this torch of Islamic light. The present issue may possibly arouse in them a fresh zeal for the cause. In that case they may kindly send their new subscription of 12 shillings or Rs. 7-8-0 to the following address :

The Manager,

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THE KINGDOM OF GOD—ANOTHER NAME FOR CIVILIZATION

BY THE LATE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

(Founder of the Working Muslim Mission)

The more I think of the Lord's Prayer (especially of its first portion), the more I am convinced of the prophetic insight possessed by its author, such insight as belongs only to a great messenger from God. It shows that Jesus believed in man's possession of the high capabilities that may reveal in him some of God's features. His Kingdom in the universe discloses beauty, sublimity, grandeur, and splendour; they display themselves in a form consistent with solemnity, seriousness, and high-mindedness. They exclude the slightest idea of vanity or lightness of character. The working of the Governing Hand also discloses transcendental knowledge, and power over all things in Nature. Under His rule they bring forth their inherent faculties, when on their way to progress, thus working out the Great Design. There are also accuracy, exactitude, regularity, and punctuality to be observed in every manifestation of Nature, in obedience to the Great Will; all being the outcome of a premeditated plan, which takes necessary precautions also against all such mishaps as may retard the progress of things to perfection. I have mentioned here only some of the salient features of the Divine Work, since the Kingdom of God could not come on earth, unless its ruler—that is to say, man—possess the requisite qualities. And this is no impossibility. If the Qur-án sets God before man as his model, it also selects certain of His qualities for our imitation. Present-day culture has also enabled us to acquire them, though only to a limited extent.

But could these excellent ethics and morals be owned or cultivated by us under those philosophies

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and theologies which see no good in the human race? Whether such teachings did or did not emanate from these great men who are believed to be their authors—and in my belief they as true reformers and messengers from God could not be responsible for laying down such pernicious principles—they, nevertheless, are passed on under their names. Buddha, they say, observed everywhere trouble and tribulation—the sequel of evil—and saw our liberation from it only in annihilation. His dictum may now be construed by some apologists as meaning Self-Renunciation; but the practice of the religiously advanced Buddhists has always made it synonymous with man's total divorcement from all worldly affairs. The old Brahmans could not see "Reality" in anything. All appeared to them a delusion—*Maya*—with man a self-deluded entity in the universe. They advocated *Tiyag*—separation from mundane things—as the only means for achieving Reality and attaining happiness. A hermit who turned his back on the world, throwing down the burden of all the obligations which society had laid upon him as its member and retiring to the jungle for contemplation, was, according to Hindu theology, the best specimen of humanity.

I do not propose to discuss here the utility or otherwise of these "high-flown philosophies," but they seem to drench, with a cold douche, all the enthusiasm that could possibly actuate man towards achieving civilization in any high form. They may supply us with a good mental food for contemplation, but it is a mental luxury only and baneful in its effects. It leads its followers to deprecate all such manly qualities as are necessary for the defence of our rights. It makes them an easy prey to others' aggression. Ancient India indulged in such philosophies, and produced literature that may be fascinating as literature,

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but no one can deny its harmful influence on the minds of those who took it seriously, seeing that it set them firmly against all the activities necessary in the field of material progress.

The Church in the West went a step farther. It produced a theology, in this respect even worse. It declared that man was born in sin. It asserted that he was an embodiment of evil and by nature incapable of any good. It was in pursuance of such beliefs that every effort to attain material progress was discouraged and looked down upon with contempt in Christian lands in the Middle Ages. "Man was unworthy of the earth, and polluted this sacred footstool of God." So Calvin and other theologians of his class thought of sin under the inspiration which they had received from the Church dogma. Calvin longed for the day when some colossal earthquake would swallow up this loathsome personification of all that was abominable in the eye of the Lord.

Again I say, could such beliefs favour any progress on any line—whether material or spiritual? If sin means disobedience to the Law and is innate in us, we are of course incapable of obeying the Law. Such a condition of mind cannot produce any sort of civilization. It is "Obedience to Law," which the word "Islam" literally means, that carries us to success.

The author of the Lord's Prayer cannot be held responsible for these Church tenets. If the Creator of the universe is also the Source of all goodness, He could be our "Father in Heaven." A son, as an Arabic proverb says, is the secret of his father. He possesses inherently his father's characteristics, good or bad, though it depends upon environment whether such characteristics be fully displayed or not. The son of a wicked man is prone to reveal all the bad traits he inherits, though he may not do so in the face of public

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opinion. Healthy surroundings may convert him to a better state of mind. But his nature is that which he received from his father. How could a creature, whose very nature is compounded of sin, come from the loins of the Heavenly Father? It is mere blasphemy even to imagine it, and a gross libel on the memory of him who laid down so broad a principle of goodness for his disciples when he taught them to approach God with this beautiful prayer. Such a sickening and repulsive creature, as Church theology makes out man to be, could not beseech his Lord for the appearance of the day when the Holy Kingdom, with all the Dignity, Grace, and Beauty thereof, shall come within his reach.

One may pass over these precepts as an accretion to the original teachings of the Great Master, but we fail to find any real purpose served by Divine Revelations if they remain silent on a subject so important in the working out of our civilization. They seem to remain unconcerned, and want us to remain so too, with the inestimable treasures of the universe. Everything in Creation is purposeful, and the purpose lies chiefly in its use to us; but if a religion from God did not open our eyes to this beneficent working of the Creator, His whole work would appear to be aimless. It would be to find fault with His Design if we thought so; therefore it ought to be the chief function of Divine Revelation to make us aware of His Gifts. Some think that religion should not concern our mundane affairs. The "Kingdom of Christ is not of this world." Religion came only to show us how to worship and glorify God and give Him thanks, or to provide ourselves with means for our own salvation. I will speak of salvation subsequently, but the prayer of Jesus contradicts all such assertions. How could we pray for the Heavenly Kingdom to come on earth, if his own Kingdom had nothing to do with the things of that earth? We no

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doubt possess the worshipping instinct, but it has always found its gratification in directing our devotional feelings to some kind of deity even without any revelation prompting us to do so. From a stone to a son of woman, man has adorned various manifestations of Nature as his god, and he has been none the worse for it—seeing that he has been able to keep a certain moral order under any system of worship. The worship of idols has, at times, inspired him with noble and lofty feelings, like those which have been observed in the most worthy of the worshippers of God. Prayers addressed to images made by man's own hand have in their beauty, grandeur, and sincerity surpassed even the devotional utterances of the holiest monotheist while adoring the Most High.

Again, the circle of our gratefulness to our Creator would become inexpressibly widened with the increase of our knowledge of His Gifts to us. We cannot thank Him for His creating us a plaything in the hands of sin and evil. Did He create us for an incessant struggle against evil that would carry us day by day to perdition? It would be most ungrateful of us if we thought so. On the other hand, when millions of things come within our knowledge so pregnant with benefit to us, our mind becomes filled with gratitude. Every discovery of these valuable treasures, so essential to our happiness and comfort, intensifies our sense of thanksgiving. And if Divine Revelation really demands thanksgiving from us to the Lord, it has failed in its purpose if it does not prompt us to make discoveries in the universe. We are saddled with various needs, which are ever on the increase. This fact enhances our anxiety and stirs our activities to look for some means of satisfying these needs; but our thanks to the Lord would know no bounds if we found what is needful for us already in existence, created by the Beneficent

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Lord out of His own goodness, thousands of years before we came to the shores of light.

Similarly our glorification of our Creator would be at its worthiest if we found His Hand working wonders everywhere. Everything in the universe is a wonderful repository of unimaginable potentialities. They all move in the same groove for the completion of our happiness. Would not our knowledge of their service to us enhance our sense of gratitude to the Lord? If glorification were one of the essentials of religion, we should miss a great thing were revelation to remain silent concerning it. It would do an immense service to the sacred cause if it made science a worthy pursuit for humanity.

Undoubtedly we do need a moral code, and every religion gives us some rules of morality, but they are of no value to us. Even if we own but few things, it is to protect our earnings against usurpation and misappropriation that we do need some moral code for counteracting avarice and cupidity, and controlling the unbridled demands of passion and desire. These come into play when we see others possessed of things that we need, yet lack the energy to attain. In short, the promulgation of some moral code demands the pre-existence of the things which contribute to our comfort. But if our possessions are few, we do not need any evolved system of morality. A few rules, like those enunciated in the Ten Commandments, would be sufficient to maintain order in society. This will necessarily cause all the moral and spiritual forces in us to remain in abeyance, but the Great Designer did not intend such a state of things. If the working of the said forces is necessary to fulfil the object of our creation, how could the required condition be attained if we remained ignorant of the various resources of Nature? A religion without some suggestions to its

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followers as to how they may bring these gifts of God into human service cannot claim perfection for its teachings.

It may be said that those attainments were man's own business, that Providence became absolved from its duty when it created the things that we needed, and that it was our concern to find out how to use them. But the history of Modern Science contradicts such presumptions. The blessings of God remained unnoticed for thousands of years. Their benefits to us did not come into operation until the Last Word of God—the Qur-án—invited our attention to the task of developing Nature to our benefit. Nay, we adopted a contrary course for want of any true light on the subject. Instead of reducing Nature to our service, we placed many of its manifestations on the throne of Divinity. They continued in their ministry to us in the capacity of servants, but we ascribed it to their divine favour towards us, their abject worshippers—the handmaid became the master of the house, and the master a menial. Man, with all his inherent faculties for the attainment of the required knowledge, could not reverse this unnatural state of things and put them right until Al-Qur-án came and opened our eyes to it. All our gods, it proclaimed, were our ministers and slaves. They were our subjects, and we their rulers. The Book went farther. It declared that nothing in Creation was without its aim, and that the said aim was conducive to our benefit. This Gospel awakened the forces sleeping within us, and in a short time we saw an upheaval of culture not known before. Under the inspiration of the Qur-án, Muslims laid the foundations of the Modern Sciences, which are progressing day by day. Without the knowledge of these sciences the prayed-for Kingdom of the Nazarene cannot grace the earth in its full glory!

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Though this knowledge of Nature's secrets is indispensable, it is nevertheless liable to prove perilous to human peace and welfare if it is not controlled strictly by some moral and spiritual regime so evolved as to meet the requirements of an advanced material progress. That this is so is amply illustrated by modern progress in the West. All the blessings of God discovered in these days are employed by some to the destruction of others. The abundance of our riches has weakened our moral sense. Man prowls through life like a savage beast, devastating all the moral harvest as he goes. The Quranic Revelation foresaw this and provided a course. It kept our progress under a strict moral control. Wherever the Book invites us to bring the treasures of Nature to our service, it gives prominence to the cultivation of the moral aspects of our lives and characters as well. There is a very beautiful verse in the Holy Qur-án which has been, and will ever be, a true key to material progress. A humble recognition of the truth laid down in this verse would, if acted upon, carry us to the height of material civilization. The verse says that those who make researches in the realm of heaven and earth, and find out that there is nothing that is useless for us, and then bring each particular use as they discover it to the service of humanity, are men of true wisdom and understanding. But their wisdom and understanding will not become complete unless they keep God before their eyes in every moment of life—that is to say, unless all their words and deeds are after the mind of God. A person who would enter on the field of scientific researches, as the Qur-án desires that man should with this moral equipment, will really and in the true sense of the words bring the Kingdom of God on earth.

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The words of the prayer may not be appreciated by those who are reluctant to believe in the existence of the great Mover of Nature. Be that as it may ; to a man of wisdom the form of words is of no account, provided those words convey or suggest some truth. We all believe in the working of Nature on prescribed lines. We also may address her poetically in the very words of Jesus, investing her with the qualities of mind. It will appear, then, that in all our scientific activities we are only trying to see her will—Nature's will—established on earth ; we wish to learn more of her laws and willingly “walk in her ways.” We wish to imitate her especially in the matter of civilization, since she herself has evolved it in its most perfect form. She has brought all her components under complete control and has given to each and all of them laws which they follow implicitly, thereby producing for us countless benefits. Each of them has its own sphere of labour, where it works, in accordance with the law. None overlaps the province of another. The Holy Qur-án refers to these phenomena in the following words : “And the sun runs on to a term appointed for it ; that is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knowing. And (as for) the moon, We have ordained for it stages till it becomes again as an old dry palm branch. Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day ; and all float on in a sphere.” (XXXVI : 38-40.)

We are seeking a like control of Nature's elements. We are endeavouring to discover all laws by which they are governed. In short, it is our aim to do on our own account the selfsame thing which Nature is doing in the universe. We have, materially speaking, partially succeeded in our efforts, but with all our progress in this respect we have only contrived to

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increase human misery. A terrible conflict has arisen between man and man. Capital and labour are at war ; Communism would destroy Imperialism if it could. Subject races have become weary of the foreign yoke and strive for liberty. Nations rise against each other and there is no peace anywhere on earth. But in the realms of the dumb world, as I said before, every unit of it seems contented with its lot. Though the world is full of antitheses, yet its jarring elements work ever in harmony. They live and let others live, and to this rule man is the only exception. He is creating chaos in the cosmos. It would have been possible for us, too, to share this universal peace with the rest of Nature had we but shown something of her broadness of mind and liberality in our treatment of others. We ought, therefore, to follow Nature on the moral and ethical plane as we have tried to follow her on the material side if we wish to achieve real happiness. But Nature herself is admittedly an unconscious mass ; whereas the framing of the law and the precision with which it rules the lifeless world, together with the predominance throughout of moral order, lead us to believe in the existence of some Mind, inspiring and controlling. In the phraseology of Islam, " Rabb " is the name of that mind, Who creates everything in Nature and rules it with a perfect Law. If I substitute the word " Rabb " for Nature in the lines I have quoted, then let the workers in laboratories try to find out such of His ways as may enable man to officiate for Him on earth. We could succeed in this did we but adopt His moral and ethical methods on the same lines as we try to follow Him in our efforts towards material progress. We should, then, banish misery and unhappiness from the frontiers of humanity. This state of things would imply this Divine Viceregency by man on earth—such as is spoken of in the Qur-án. This is

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the only meaning that could rightly be given to the prayer of Jesus. He did not look for the day when he would come to earth again to sit in judgment. He longed rather for the time when man should represent his Creator, as ruler of the Universe. The accomplishment of this great object is conditional upon the following three things :

- (a) That we attain to complete knowledge of all natural phenomena and of the laws under which they work.
- (b) That we rise superior to our animal nature.
- (c) That we practise that lofty code of morality which is styled in the Qur-án, "The Morals of God."

The first four verses of Chapter 16 of the Holy Qur-án which came in response to the prayer of Jesus allude to these three things.*

First, it states that God created the heavens and earth with the truth, *i.e.*, they were not in vain; everything in them had been made for the use of man. In the subsequent verses the Book refers to the ways which may enable us to subdue Nature to our service.

Secondly, the Book says that man is "an open contender" by birth. There is a brute in him, and he has first to humanize the brute before he aspires to become God's lieutenant on earth.

Thirdly, the quotation lays special stress on our belief in the unity of God; seeing that in this belief lay the acquisition of everything necessary for establishing the Kingdom of God.

The lesson of pure monotheism was to be deeply imprinted upon the tablet of the human mind, in view

*1. Allah's commandment has come, therefore do not desire to hasten it; glory be to Him, and highly exalted be He above what they associate (with Him).

2. He sends down the angels with the inspiration by His commandment on whom He pleases of His servants, saying: Give the warning that there is no god but Me, therefore be careful (of your duty) to Me.

3. He created the heavens and the earth with the truth, highly exalted be He above what they associate (with Him).

4. He created man from a small life-germ, and lo! he is an open contender.

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of the fact that most of the things in the universe, destined to come under our rule, had been placed by man on pedestals of Divinity, prior to the advent of Islam. Such divinities must be dethroned, and for this the Qur-án said: "Highly exalted be He above what they associate with Him."

Moreover, true monotheism demands that we dissociate ourselves completely from all such ways and methods as are not those of the Most High and in steeping ourselves in His colours. Then the image of God, lifeless as it is, will become vitalized and bring forth His spirit, and the Kingdom of God will come on earth.

We should not lose our sense of judgment or indulge in ridicule simply because a truth is clothed in words which we do not like. We ought rather to see the reality behind those words; and in this connection I ask again, if even a so-called "Freethinker" could reasonably take exception to it, if we attain such a state of felicity. Whatever may be our creed, we are all striving for the same ends, the conquest of Nature and the attainment of moral perfection. They are our highest ideals; they represent the zenith of our civilization. Nevertheless, history tells us that man cannot hope to achieve any such results without guidance from Above. Humanity continued to grope in the dark until the Qur-án flashed the light of Truth before it. If Revelation came for this object only, as the Qur-án says, it rendered man the greatest service possible. Then, why ridicule religion? Religion in the form of Islam has set man on the right path to his good. All that makes man averse to religion has no place in Islam. It is true that most of the pre-Islamic religions in their present form, especially in the form they assumed after their first promulgation, have tended to retard human progress by the teaching of unwholesome tenets and unnatural theology. Such had no place in the Divine Revelation, and had nothing at all to do with the Word of God. But let us take

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things as they are, and sift the matter for ourselves, as seekers after truth. Leaving Religion out of the question altogether for the moment, let us study the history of Culture and Civilization. Can we point to any stage of their development when the truth that gave a new impetus to our progress dawned upon the human mind, independently of Religion? On the contrary: that truth was revealed in the pages of the Qur-án. It has altered the whole trend of human thought and has caused a tremendous revolution even in religious ideas. It has, too, enlarged the borders of Religion immeasurably. Religion had till then been taken as an institution designed solely for our future salvation, but the Qur-án made it the best means for achieving universal world reform.

So I go further, and make bold to ask if even a semblance of the truth had ever entered into the human breast before the coming of Islam. The pre-Islamic world had seen the rise and fall of civilization after civilization in one race after another; but with all their culture those races exhibited the very worst type of polytheism. Almost all the elements of Nature—which are, properly speaking, our slaves and servants—were then our gods, but the Voice thundering from Above awoke the mind of man from its stupor. If the following words were not from God, how could an illiterate person like the Holy Prophet, wrapped as he was in an atmosphere of complete ignorance, have raised up a nation sunk deep in that stupor for centuries and read the secret that changed the whole course of humanity for the future? He announced in the clearest terms:

“Allah is He who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water from the clouds, then brought forth with it fruits as a sustenance for you, and He has made the ships subservient to you, that they might run their course in the sea by His command, and He

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has made the rivers subservient to you. And He has made subservient to you the sun and the moon pursuing their courses, and He has made subservient to you the night and the day. And He gives you of all that you ask Him : and if you count Allah's favours, you will not be able to number them ; most surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful " (Qur-án, xiv, 32, 33, 34). " And He has made subservient for you the night and the day and the sun and the moon, and the stars are made subservient by His commandment ; most surely there are signs in this for a people who ponder ; And what He has created in the earth of varied hues ; most surely there is a sign in this for a people who are mindful. And He it is Who has made the sea subservient that you may eat fresh flesh from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear, and you see the ships cleaving through it, and that you might seek of His bounty and that you may give thanks. And He has cast great mountains in the earth lest it might be convulsed with you, and rivers and roads that you may go aright, And landmarks ; and by the stars they find the right way. Is He then Who creates like him who does not create ? Do you not then mind ? " (Qur-án, xvi, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17).

These verses omit no single thing in Nature that is of any service to us. Everything we need has been spoken of here. Our requirements are on the increase and will be ; they have been so ever since the Holy Prophet proclaimed his message, but we have here the key wherewith we may open this treasure-house and discover things to meet our needs. The verses, however, command us to cultivate every branch of science, including astronomy and the art of navigation. It is noteworthy, too, that all these verses and others like them in the Holy Book—conclude with words like these :

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“There is a sign in it for a people who reflect”; “who ponder;” “who are mindful;” “who are men of understanding” and use their intellect. But these faculties cannot develop without our eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. This was announced in the first Revelation in the Cave of Hira, in the following words :

“Read and your Lord is most honourable : Who taught with the pen ; Taught man what he knew not ” (Holy Qur-án, xevi, 33—5). The Book, when speaking of the angels’ ministry to men, based man’s lordship over them upon his knowledge of the things in the Universe.

For this reason Muhammad gave the following injunctions :

“He dieth not who takes to learning. Whoever reveres the learned reveres me. To obtain education is incumbent on every Muslim, male and female. Seek after knowledge though it be available in China. To listen to the words of the learned and to instil into others the lessons of science is better than religious exercise. The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr. He who leaves home in search of knowledge walks in the path of Allah. Acquire knowledge. It enables the possessor to distinguish right from wrong ; it lights the way to heaven ; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when friendless ; it guides us to happiness ; it sustains us in misery ; it is an ornament among friends and an armour against enemies.”

NOTICE

As this issue completes the 31st Volume of “The Islamic Review,” the next (January 1944) number of the journal will be sent per V.-P.P. for Rs. 7-8-0 to those subscribers who do not remit their next year’s subscription before January, 1944.

MANAGER.

DIVORCE IN ISLAM

BY MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI, M.A., LL.B.

Author of "An English Translation of the Holy Qur-an with Commentary."

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Though marriage, according to Islam, is only a civil contract, yet the rights and responsibilities consequent upon it are of such importance to the welfare of humanity that a high degree of sanctity is attached to it. But in spite of the sacredness of the character of the marriage-tie, Islam recognizes the necessity, in exceptional circumstances, of keeping the way open for its dissolution. With the exception, perhaps, of the Hindu law, the necessity of divorce has been recognized by all people. The right of divorce according to the Jewish law belongs to the husband who can exercise it at his will. The Christian law recognizes the right of divorce only when there is faithlessness on the part of either of the parties, but the divorced parties are precluded from marrying again. According to Hindu law marriage once performed can never be dissolved. Islam effected several reforms in divorce. It restricted the husband's right to divorce while recognizing the wife's right to it.

DIVORCE IS PERMITTED UNDER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Arabic word for divorce is *talaq* which carries the literal significance of freeing or the undoing of a knot (R.). In the terminology of the jurists, the *talaq* is called a *khul* (meaning literally the putting off or taking off of a thing), when it is claimed by the wife. Both from the Holy Qur-án and the Hadith it appears that, though divorce was permitted, yet the right could be exercised only under exceptional circumstances. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "Never did Allah allow anything more hateful to Him than divorce." (Abu Dāwūd 13 : 3). According to a report of

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Ibn 'Umar, he said : " With Allah the most detestable of all things permitted is divorce " (Ibid.). The Holy Qur-án also approves of the Holy Prophet insisting that Zaid should not divorce his wife, notwithstanding a dissension of a sufficiently long standing. The incident is thus spoken of : " And when thou didst say to him to whom Allah had shown favour and to whom thou hadst shown a favour, keep thy wife (*i.e.*, do not divorce her) and be careful of thy duty to Allah " (33 : 37). Refraining from divorce is spoken of here as *tagwa* or righteousness. Elsewhere divorce is thus discouraged : " If you hate them (*i.e.*, your wives), it may be that you dislike a thing while Allah has placed abundant good in it " (4 : 19). Remedies are also suggested to avoid divorce so long as possible : " And if you fear a breach between the two (*i.e.*, the husband and the wife), then appoint a judge from his people and a judge from her people ; if they both desire agreement, Allah will effect harmony between them " (4 : 35). It was due to such teachings of the Holy Qur-án that the Holy Prophet declared divorce to be the most hateful of all things permitted. And it is due to this that in spite of the facility with which it may be effected, divorce takes place only rarely among the Muslims, compared with the large number of divorces in Christian countries. The mentality of the Muslim is to face the difficulties of the married life along with its comforts, and to avoid disturbing the disruption of the family relations as long as possible, turning to divorce only as a last resort.

PRINCIPLE OF DIVORCE

From what has been said above, it is clear that not only must there be a good cause for divorce, but that all means to effect reconciliation must have been exhausted before resort is had to this extreme measure. The impression that a Muslim husband may put away

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his wife at his mere caprice, is a grave distortion of the Islamic institution of divorce. But though the Holy Qur-án refers to several causes when divorce may become necessary, it does not enumerate all of them, nor does it strictly limit them to specified cases. In fact, if the different nations of Europe and America, who profess the same religion, are at the same level of civilization and the same stage of advancement, and have an affinity of feeling on most social and moral questions, cannot agree as to the proper causes of divorce, how could a universal religion like Islam, which was meant for all ages and all countries, for people in the lowest grade of civilization as well as those at the top, limit those causes which must vary with changing conditions of humanity and society ?

The principle of divorce spoken of in the Holy Qur-án and which in fact includes to a greater or less extent all causes, is the decision no longer to live together as husband and wife. In fact, marriage itself is nothing but an agreement to live together as husband and wife, and when either of the parties finds him or herself unable to agree to such a life, divorce must follow. It is not, of course, meant that every disagreement between them would lead to divorce ; it is only the disagreement to live any more as husband and wife. In the Holy Qur-án such disagreement is called *shiqaq* (from *shaqq* meaning breaking into two). But not even the *shiqaq* entitles either party to a divorce, unless all possibilities of agreement have been exhausted. The principle of divorce is, therefore, thus described in the Holy Qur-án : “ And if you fear a breach (*shiqaq*) between the two (*i.e.*, the husband and the wife), then appoint a judge from his people and a judge from her people ; if they both desire agreement, Allah will effect harmony between them : surely Allah is Knowing, Aware ” (4 : 35). And further on it is

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added: "And if they separate, Allah will render them both free from want out of His amplexness, and Allah is Ample-giving, Wise" (4 : 130).

This verse gives us not only the principle of divorce, which is *shiqaq* or a disagreement to live together as husband and wife, but also the process to be adopted when a rupture of marital relations is feared. The two sexes are here placed on a level of perfect equality. A "breach between the two" would imply that either the husband or the wife wants to break off the marriage agreement, and hence either may claim a divorce when the parties can no longer pull on in agreement. In the process to be adopted, both husband and wife are to be represented on a status of equality; a judge has to be appointed from his people and another from her people. The two are told to try to remove the differences and reconcile the parties to each other. If agreement cannot be brought about, a divorce will follow.

It will be seen that the principle advanced here in the matter of divorce is an all-inclusive one. All causes of divorce are subject to the condition that one of the parties cannot pull on with the other. For instance, the husband is impotent, or one of the parties has a disease which makes him or her unfit for sexual relations. In such cases justice would demand a divorce, but only when the party entitled to it, wants it. If both are willing to live in marital agreement, in spite of the defects in one of them, no power on earth can effect a divorce; but if the aggrieved party finds that she or he is unable to live in marital agreement with the other, it would be a case of *shiqaq* or breach of the marriage agreement. Similarly, if the husband is imprisoned for life, or for a long period, or if he is absent and no news can be had of him, or if he is maimed for life and is unable to provide maintenance for his wife, it will be a case of *shiqaq* if the wife wants a divorce, but if

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she does not, the marriage will remain. In case the husband is aggrieved in a similar manner, he has the option of taking another wife.

The *shiqaq* or breach of the marriage agreement may also arise from the conduct of either party ; for instance, if either of them misconducts himself or herself, or either of them is consistently cruel to the other, or, as may sometimes happen, there is incompatibility of temperament to such an extent that they cannot live together in marital agreement. The *shiqaq* in these cases is more express, but still it will depend upon the parties whether they can pull on or not. Divorce must always follow when one of the parties finds it impossible to continue the marriage agreement and is compelled to break it off. At first sight it may look like giving too much latitude to the parties to allow them to end the marriage contract thus, even if there is no reason except incompatibility of temperament, but this much is certain that if there is such disagreement that the husband and the wife cannot pull together, it is better for themselves, for their offspring and for society in general that they should be separated than that they should be compelled to live together. No home is worth the name where instead of peace there is wrangling ; and marriage is meaningless if there is no spark of love left between the husband and the wife. It is an error to suppose that such latitude tends to destroy the stability of marriage, because marriage is entered into as a permanent and sacred relation based on love between a man and a woman, and divorce is only a remedy when marriage fails to fulfil its object.

WIFE'S RIGHT OF DIVORCE

It will have been seen that the Holy Qur-án places the two parties on a perfect level of equality in the matter of divorce. Hadith makes it clearer still. The

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Holy Prophet is related to have married a woman called Umaima or Ibnat al-Jaun, and when he went in to her, she said that she sought refuge in God from him, that is to say, wanted a divorce ; and he granted her a divorce, and sent her off with some presents (Bukhari 68 : 3). Another case is that of Thabit ibn Qais whose wife is reported to have come to the Holy Prophet and said : “ O Messenger of Allah ! I do not find fault in Thabit ibn Qais regarding his morals or faith but I cannot pull on with him.” The Holy Prophet said : “ Wilt thou return to him his orchard (which he had settled upon her as a dowry) ?” On receiving a reply in the affirmative, the Holy Prophet sent for Thabit and ordered him to take back his orchard and divorce his wife (Ibid. 68 : 11). These two examples are sufficient to show that the wife had the right to claim divorce on those very grounds on which the husband could divorce his wife.

The right of the wife to claim a divorce is not only recognized by the Holy Qur-án and Hadith but also in Fiqh. The technical term for the wife's right to divorce by returning her dowry is called *Khul'*, and it is based on the hadith already quoted, and the following verse of the Holy Qur-án : “ Divorce may be pronounced twice ; then keep them in good fellowship or let them go with kindness ; and it is not lawful for you to take any part of what you have given them unless both fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allah ; then if you fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allah, there is no blame on them for what she gives up to become free thereby ” (2 : 229). By keeping “ within the limits of Allah ” here is clearly meant the fulfilment of the object of marriage or performance of the duties imposed by conjugal relationship. The dowry is thus a check on the party who wants the divorce ; if the husband wants to divorce the wife, the

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wife shall have the dowry ; if the wife wants the divorce, the husband is entitled to the dowry. But it is the judges spoken of in v. 4 : 35, and referred to here in the words " if you fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allah," that shall decide whether the husband or the wife is responsible for the breach and which of them is entitled to the dowry."

The wife is also entitled to a divorce if the husband is missing, or *mafqud al-khabar*, which means that he has disappeared and cannot be communicated with, because though there is no *shiqaq* in this case, yet the husband is unable to fulfil his marital obligations. There is no definite statement in the Holy Qur-án, or Hadith to show how long the wife should wait in such a case. The Hanafi law on this point is very unreasonable, requiring the wife to wait for 120 or 100 years, according to the opinions of Imam Abu Hanifa and Abu Yusuf respectively (Hidaya I, pp. 598, 599). The Sháfi'i law required seven years' waiting, while according to Imam Malik she should wait for four years (Hidaya I, p. 597). The view of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal and the Shī'a view agree with Malik. This is a more reasonable view. Bukhari has a chapter on the *mafqud* (Bukhari 68 : 21), in which there is no hadith of the Holy Prophet relating to the subject proper, but the view of Ibn al-Musayyab is quoted, according to which when a person becomes *mafqud* in the course of fighting, his wife shall wait for a year ; and a report is added relating to Ibn Mas'ud who searched for the husband of a maid-servant of his for one year and then treated him as *mafqud*, and this was not the case of a man lost in fighting. Under present conditions when communication is so easy, one year would be a sufficient period of waiting for the *mafqud*.

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HUSBAND'S RIGHT OF PRONOUNCEMENT OF DIVORCE

Though the Holy Qur-án speaks of the divorce being pronounced by the husband, yet a limitation is placed upon the exercise of this right. The following procedure is laid down in clear words: "And if you fear a breach between the two, then appoint a judge from his people and a judge from her people; if they desire agreement, Allah will effect harmony between them" (4 : 35). "And if they separate, Allah will render them both free from want out of His amplexness" (4 : 130). It will be seen that in all disputes between the husband and the wife, which it is feared will lead to a breach, two judges are to be appointed from the respective people of the two parties. These judges are required first to try to reconcile the parties to each other, failing which divorce is to be effected. Therefore, though it is the husband who pronounces the divorce, he is as much bound by the decision of the judges as is the wife. This shows that the husband cannot repudiate the marriage at will. The case must first be referred to two judges and their decision is binding. The Caliph 'Ali is reported to have told a husband, who thought he had the sole right to divorce, that he would have to abide by the judgment of the judges appointed under this verse (Al-Tafsir by Rāzī III, p. 320). The Holy Prophet is reported to have interfered and disallowed a divorce pronounced by a husband, restoring the marital relations (Bukhari. 68 : 1, 2). It was no doubt a matter of procedure, but it shows that the authority constituted by law has the right to interfere in matters of divorce. The only question is as to the procedure to be adopted when the Muslims are living under non-Muslim rule. In such a case, if no *Qāzī* has been appointed by the authorities, the appointment of the judges shall be

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in the hands of the Muslim community, and it may exercise that right in any way it likes. Failing even such arrangements, the parties may come to an agreement between themselves. If, therefore, a Muslim government or the Muslim community makes any rules laying down the procedure of divorce and placing such limitations upon the husband in matters of divorce as are not inconsistent with the principles laid down by the Holy Qur-án, it would be quite Islamic.

DIVORCE DURING MENSTRUATION

The menstrual discharge is looked upon as pollution in many religions, and the woman who has her courses on is segregated, as among the Hindus and the Jews. In the Holy Qur-án, the subject of menstruation is dealt with as a preliminary to that of divorce, and sexual intercourse is prohibited when the courses are on, as it is said to be "harmful" (2 : 222). It is owing to this temporary cessation of the amorous relations between the husband and the wife, that divorce is prohibited during the period when the menstrual discharge is on. It was brought to the notice of the Holy Prophet that Ibn 'Umar had divorced his wife while she was menstruating. The divorce was declared to be illegal by the Holy Prophet, and Ibn 'Umar was asked to take back his wife (Bukhari 68 : 1). Thus divorce is only permitted in the state of *tuhr* (when the woman is clear from the menstrual discharge), there being the further condition that the husband and the wife should not have copulated during that *tuhr*. Evidently this is meant as a sort of check upon the freedom of divorce.

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THE ABOLITION OF PERSONAL OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

BY THE LATE SHAIKH MUSHIR HUSSAIN KIDWAI,
BAR-AT-LAW.

The question of the abolition of Personal Ownership of any property is not only the most contentious of Bolshevik reforms but also considered to be the most novel and revolutionary, so much so that all the Muslim writers, though sympathetic otherwise towards Bolshevism, consider the abolition of private ownership to be un-Islamic. Even learned Muslim Alims have done so.

The abolition of private property is not quite new. It is a historic fact, as has been mentioned before, that centuries upon centuries ago a king named Muzdak in Iran abolished all personal property. Because Muzdak was before the time when the Emancipator of women was born, woman was also considered to be the private property of man—if unmarried, that of her father or guardian, when married, that of her husband.

Fortunately this kind of degradation of women and exaggeration of the abolition of private property was never repeated. But efforts were made from time to time to bring into practice the extreme form of Socialism in the colony of “New Harmony” and other places by persons who were called “faddists.”

Never before, however, was it given a trial so forcefully and extensively as it is being experimented in Russia since 1917.

As a matter of principle, Islam, over thirteen centuries ago, anticipated this advanced social revolution also. It abolished personal ownership of property in theory as well as in practice. But it did this in its own way. The sanction behind all its Reforms and Revolutions was moral not physical—not of the Red Army, nor of Cheka, nor of O. G. P. U.

PERSONAL OWNERSHIP

In his *Roads to Freedom* Mr. Bertrand Russell has said: "The ultimate goal of any reformer who aims at liberty can only be reached through persuasion." Bolsheviks are finding how difficult this reform can be even by the use of force.

Every man has a natural love for property. The very idea that such and such thing is one's own gives special satisfaction to the heart. Bolsheviks can become callous to this human instinct. They can use force. Muhammad was a Prophet. He was a Moral Teacher. He could not be callous or violent. For this reason his effort was to get rid of the evil and the wrong and the totally selfish use of property even if under certain circumstances it could not be abolished altogether. But he basically aimed at the total abolition. In theory the very root of all personal ownership was cut by vesting the ownership of everything, big or small, in Allah.

The Qur-án repeatedly says:—

"To Him belongs all what is in heaven and all what is in the earth." (II : 255). So all what a man possessed or could possess was owned by Allah.

"Owned by Allah" in the vocabulary or ideology of Islam means "owned collectively by the whole of mankind." With this definite investment of all possible property in Allah it seems strange that even those learned writers have expressed their approval of Bolshevism—have said that in the matter of property Bolshevism is as disagreeable to Islam as to other religions and systems.

In the early days of Islam also Abuzar Gaffari was almost alone in his views in respect of *Kanz* (wealth and property). And this in spite of the fact that even one who knows the A B C of Islam knows that it has laid down as its fundamental law that everything belongs to God; that He indeed is the real owner of

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each and everything in this Universe. Those Muslims who are very orthodox will not waste even water in their ablutions because they believe that they will have to give an account of that extravagance on the " Day of Judgment " as the water they use is not theirs. It was only in trust with them for its proper uses. One's house or land or clothes are not really his or hers. They are God's. The person possessing anything is only holding it in trust from God. He must not spend it wrongly. If he does he will be held responsible by one Who sees everything, Who knows everything. Man will have to give an account of everything in his charge for the time being. Everybody knows how very great is the responsibility of a trustee in making use of any trust property. The same care should be taken in using anything in possession of anybody. The best use of everything given in trust is to use it for the person giving it in trust. That is, every property possessed by any person for the time being should be spent, as far as possible, in " the way of Allah ", *i.e.*, for the good of humanity—for the public good. Thus Islam has gone ahead of even Bolshevism in abolishing personal ownership or in making all people share in the property. And how beautifully this has been done! Private property is a trust and can only be used for the good of the people, in social service.

Well has the Sovereign of Hyderabad said that all he possesses is trust for others except his Faith.

The rule has been laid down :

" O you who believe do not devour your property among you falsely." (IV : 29.)

The most difficult task before the Prophet was to take out from the minds of his nation the natural love for property so that every person may really be able

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of his own free will to use the property which he possessed as if it were a trust property from God Himself given in his custody. So Muslims were warned:—

“Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world, and ever abiding works are better with the Lord in reward and better in expectations” (The Holy Quran 18 : 36).

And they were frankly told :

“The love and desire of wives and sons and hoarded treasures of gold and silver, and well-bred horses and cattle and tith is made to seem fair to men, this is the provision of this world, and God is He with Whom is the good goal of life.” (*Ibid* 62 : 9.)

And again :

“If your father and your sons, and your brothers, and your mates, and your kinsfolk, and the trade, the dullness of which you fear, and the dwellings which please you, are dearer to you than Allah and His Apostle and fighting in His way, then wait till Allah brings out His Command, and God does not guide the transgressing people (*Ibid* 9 : 24.).

The result of such peaceful preaching and persuasion was the same which Bolshevism has achieved in Russia only after the use of much force and after having caused much unhappiness and misery.

Among the early Muslims all property and wealth lost its charm—their attachment to private property was gone. Wealth gave neither power nor prestige nor even much comfort, as all lived a simple strenuous life. In the Prophet's own lifetime there was a group of Muslims in Madina which was absolutely propertyless. The members of the group, called As-hab Suffa, used to be engaged in teaching or in some other work. They were the highly honoured guests of other Muslims turn by turn who fed them and sheltered them as they had really nothing of their own. Yet

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the richest and proudest men in the land respected and honoured each one of them.

In Muslim Society wealth, even nowadays, does not count very much. Professor Vambery told me himself that for years and years he had lived in Muslim Lands without a penny in his pocket yet he was honoured and respected and his wants were supplied to him as if he was the richest man in the country.

Among Muslims the possession or hoarding of wealth and property gave no advantage, no honour, no position, no privilege. On the contrary they were told :—

“ Those who spend their property, night and day, secretly and openly, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (The Holy Qur-ān 2 : 174).

All those who possessed any property were commanded :

“ And give away your property for the love of Him (*i.e.*, for the public good without any selfish ends) to the near of kin and the orphan, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and those who have to ask for it, and for the emancipation of captives.” (*Ibid* 2 : 179.)

Such teachings of the Prophet were not in vain. They went to the heart of his disciples who tried to live by his injunctions and advices and to follow them both in letter and in spirit.

His disciple, cousin and son-in-law—Ali, gave away all his property for the benefit of the public, and a few others, half of all they possessed, including one shoe of the pair.

Few indeed were men in those days who would not feel ashamed if they possessed much wealth while their fellow citizens needed it for their necessities of life. Wealth and property increased responsibility and burden.

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The Qur-án vehemently denounced those “ who amass wealth and then lock it up.” (20 : 18.) It blessed “ those of whose properties a due portion is for him who asketh, for him who is propertyless (*mahroom*)”. (70 : 24 and 25.)

The Prophet saw to it always that he himself and all his nearest and dearest relatives were the first to act up to what he preached. Whatever orders he had to promulgate he informed his family members first.

He himself used to give away in the evening anything he possessed in the day to the extent that there was hardly anything left even for the evening meal.

In Islam there was no question of “ Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s and unto God the things that are God’s.” Nothing belonged to Cæsar. All, all, all belonged to God.

The most remarkable point in this connection is that Islam did not only theoretically abolish private and personal ownership but did also put almost exactly the same limit to private property which the Bolsheviks have put now and which has raised such a hue and cry in all European countries.

Over thirteen centuries ago the unique Reformer laid it down that :

“ The son of man has no right than that he should have a house wherein he may live, and a piece of cloth whereby he may hide his nakedness, and a chip of bread and some water.” (Through Osman in Tirmizi).

The rule laid down by the Prophet regarding the distribution of property is as follows :

“ He who has with him an excess of carrying animals let him give it to him who has none, and he who has an excess of provision, let him give to him who has not.” “ The Prophet made mention of several other things so that we (who were present) realized that none of us had a right to anything we had

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in excess.” (Through Abu-Said in Muslim and Abú Dáwúd.) What was meant by “excess” has been made clear by the Saying quoted before which limits private or personal property to a house to live in, some clothes to wear, and something for daily meals. Thus was ownership of property abolished not only in theory but also in practice. In Islam a lesser scope for individual property was put than what the Bolsheviks have. Even the Bolsheviks could not refuse that much to individuals.

Besides limiting the possession of property, Islam has by its miraculously just and judicious laws of inheritance not only made large dukedoms or a line of multi-millionaires impossible, but it has also made a very sound distribution of property among the people of the same family. Another quite novel law of inheritance which is peculiar to Islam is *Wakf alal awlád*. By this means a check can be put on inheritance even by one's children. The children may thus be deprived of the full ownership of the property left for public good or charity by their parents, though enough may be left to them so that they may not find themselves in trouble or in destitution. They can hold it only as trustees for the public benefit and must not waste it in personal luxuries if it is given to them under *Wakf alal awlád*.

Thus check upon check has been devised upon the absolute ownership of any property under Islam.

The question was raised when Abuzar Gaffari interpreted certain Quranic verses as indicating the abolition of private wealth and property, and it is being raised by the Ulama to-day also, that if Islam meant the abolition of property, why then did it lay down the laws of inheritance and Zakat—and other anti-Capitalist regulations and rules?

PERSONAL OWNERSHIP

The question is not difficult to answer for those who know the mind and the methods of the Unique Reformer.

His object was to remove all the religious, moral and social evils for all times, and for every place, for every Society in whatever stage of development it might be. He was sent as Rahmat-ul-lilalamin (The Mercy for the Worlds). He meant to be so in actual practice. His desire was to take all the possible good out which was put by Nature in every individual to be used for the benefit of Society at large.

We know that Nature in her scheme of this world when she evolved man put the love for bodily comfort, wealth, property and procreation in him. Thus a comfortable life with wealth and property became a great incentive for men to work and labour. Nature has also designed the procreation of mankind by putting in both men and women a love for their offsprings. Even among animals we see kindness shown to young ones not only by their parents but even by strangers. In this respect also, however, man's sentiments and emotions are distinct from those of other creatures. With other animals, love and affection for even their own young ones ceases to exist when they grow up, in fact they forget the very existence of their young ones and cannot recognise them after a certain period, man cherishes an affection for his progeny all his life—nay, he desires to make all possible arrangement for their comfort, even when he is not there to see it—when he is dead and gone.

No, while Bolsheviks want to outrage human instincts and natural emotions and do not mind if they kill those incentives for voluntary work by force and violence and substitute in the place of those natural incentives the dread of Society and State, of Cheka and O. G. P. U., the Great Humanitarian Prophet

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adopted such methods as would not violently kill those natural incentives on the one hand and would protect Society and State from the evils of those instincts on the other.

THE PROPHET ON THE SANCTITY OF COVENANTS

“*Sulaim-ibn-‘Amir* reported that there was a treaty between Mu‘awiyah and the Romans. He used to travel towards their lands till, when the covenant was broken, he attacked them. A man came riding on an Arab horse, or Turkish horse, and said: Allah is greatest, Allah is greatest, fidelity and no treachery. They reconnoitred when lo! he was ‘Amr-ibn-Abasah. Mu‘awiyah asked him about that. He said: I heard the Messenger of Allah say: Whoso has got a treaty between him and a people must neither unloosen the treaty, nor make it tight till its term expires or he is thrown to them on an equal footing. He said: Then Mu‘awiyah returned with the people”—*Tirmizi, Abu Dawud.*

“*Abu Rāfi* reported: The Quraish sent me to the Apostle of Allah. As soon as I saw the Prophet, Islam was thrown in my heart. Then I said: O Messenger of Allah, by Allah, I shall certainly never return to them. He said: Verily I do neither break a treaty, nor do I make an ambassador prisoner. Therefore return. If there remains in your heart what is now in your heart, come back. He said: Then I went and came to the Prophet and accepted Islam.—*Abu Dawud.*

“*‘Amr-ibn Shu‘aib* reported from his father who from his grandfather heard that the Messenger of Allah said in his sermon: Fulfil your covenants of the Days of ignorance, because it, meaning Islam, does not add to it but firmness, and do not renew a covenant in Islam.”—*Tirmizi.*

WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its technique. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.]

ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word Islam literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission, as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code, whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, *i.e.* the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's Prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR-AN.—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number: Belief in (1) Allah; (2) Angels; (3) Books from God; (4) Messengers from God; (5) the Hereafter; (6) the Premeasurement of good and evil; (7) Resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life.

The sixth article of Faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Pre-measurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number: (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) Prayer; (3) Fasting; (4) Almsgiving; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Makka.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of

ISLAMIC REVIEW

All the worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

FAITH AND ACTION.—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

ETHICS OF ISLAM.—"Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His Attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine Attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels, and leading him to the border of Divinity.

THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.—Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments. Islam places man and woman under the like obligations, the one to the other.

EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

PERSONAL JUDGMENT.—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the saying of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

KNOWLEDGE.—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

SANCTITY OF LABOUR.—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

CHARITY.—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.

RESPONSE TO OUR APPEAL

Sometime back an appeal was issued by us to the well-wishers of the Mission for special contributions to enable the management to tide over the difficulties created by the war. Praise be to Allah, our patrons have risen equal to the occasion and have in some cases responded with a zeal reminiscent of the early days of Islam. Needless to say, this response has been greatly encouraging to us of the management. We thank each and every one of such helpers, particularly those who, besides unloosening their own purse-strings, have further persuaded others to take part in this sacred effort.

We pray to Him, whose imperfect and frail instruments we are, to bless them with felicity in this life as well as in the hereafter and increase the light of faith in their hearts as their efforts continue.

“Surely the party of Allah are the successful ones.”—*The Holy Qur-an*, 58 : 22.

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