

# THE LIGHT.

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## SOME POINTS TO NOTE.

The Manager, Almadyya Buildings, Lahore. All business correspondence should be addressed to the manager. He is responsible for the despatch of the paper twice a month, in the beginning and in the middle. The yearly subscription is Re. 1 postage included, students will be charged 8/6. The price being nominal, **Donations** will be thankfully accepted by him, with a view to disseminating Islamic doctrines, and repudiating charges against Islam.

**Correspondence** of literary nature may kindly be addressed to the editor. Short articles, letters, and questions will all be welcome. Non-Muslims are also invited to send in questions to be answered.

## THE KHILAFAT AND ENGLAND.

*The Khilafat and England* is a short treatise by Syed Mahmud, Ph. D., with a foreword by an English publicist and Khilafatist, who came under the banner of Islam at Woking, and who is known as Marmaduke Pickthal, the late editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*. The book is on sale at railway book-stalls, being priced at Re. 1-8-0. The treatment presents an interesting and learned historical aspect of the question, and thus recommends itself not only to the Muslim readers, but also to Englishmen. Its perusal will disillusion the latter with regard to the false notion recently being given currency that "recognition by the Indian Muslims of the Sultan of Turkey as their Khalifa is a new thing," resulting from "the growth of a Political Pan-Islamic movement," and that "there is no historical basis for the claim that the Khilafat implies any temporal allegiance on the part of the Indian Muslims to the Sultan of Turkey." The Indian Muslims are thoroughly alive to the motives, which have led to the manufacture of such childish and wild statements; and Dr. Mahmud has succeeded in representing Indian sentiments

and in exposing the new creation of the bureaucratic minds. The treatise maintains that it was not only the Moghal monarchs who acknowledged the Sultan of Turkey as their Supreme Head and Khalifa, but it was also the British Government in India itself that recognised it and advantageously availed itself of its influence on the Indians. "There is a correspondence between Tipu Sultan and the Governor-General, Lord Mornington which is published under the title of *A Review of the Origin, Progress and result of the decisive war with the late Tipu Sultan.*" From a perusal of this most interesting document it is obvious that the British Government, at a critical moment in the history of the expansion of the British Empire in the East, did not hesitate to appeal to the Sultan of Turkey as the "acknowledged Head of the Muhammadan Church," and his territories "as the repository of the most sacred monument of the Mohammedan faith." The Governor-General, Lord Mornington, wrote to Tipu, forwarding him the letter of the Khalifa: "I now forward it to Your Highness. You will read and consider it with *respectful attention which it demands.*" The English Government wanted that Tipu should have nothing to do with the French and to gain this object they had obtained a letter from the Sultan of Turkey. And "the friendly admonition" of the Sultan had its effect on Tipu, who wrote back to the Khalifa in these terms:

"As the French nation are estranged from, and are become the opponent of the Sublime Porte, they may be said to have rendered themselves the enemy of all the followers of the Faith, all Mussalmans should renounce friendship with them." Now with what face can an English Government deny to-day the authority of Turkish Khilafat after having accepted, acknowledged, and taken advantage of that authority? How can an English Government say with self respect "that they cannot acquiesce that the Khilafat implies any temporal allegiance on the part of the Indian Muslims to the Sultan of Turkey."

The reader will agree with us that the line of argument adopted by Dr. Mahmud is convincing, and absolutely unassailable.

Below is reproduced a very useful portion of its treatment:—

“The Title of the house of Ottoman to the Khilafat is based on the following claims—

1. *Nomination*:—Mutawakkel, a descendant of the house of Abbas, nominated Salim as Khalif. This is an undisputed historical fact. The Sunni School accepted it as legal and found a precedent in the nomination of Omar by Abu-Bakr on his death-bed as his successor to the Khilafat. Mutawakkel being the last surviving descendant of the Abbaside Khalif and also as one who was undisputedly acknowledged in Egypt, India and some other Muslim countries, had full legal right to abdicate in favour of the Muslim sovereign.

2. *Election*:—The claim of the house of Salim is not only based on the nomination of Mutawakkel, but his nomination was approved by the Muslim world. He obtained the sanction of a legal Body of Elders. It was argued that as *Ahl-el-Aqde* (the Body of Elders) had been removed from Medina to Damascus, and from Damascus to Baghdad, and from Baghdad to Cairo, so it had been once more legally removed from Cairo to Constantinople. Salim held a meeting of the Ulema from Alazhar in Cairo and of the Turkish Ulema in the mosque of Ayyub, who elected him as Khalif. A form of election is to the present day observed in Constantinople. Each Sultan on his accession has to receive the sanction of the Ulema and the sacred sword of Ali from the hands of the Sheikhul-Islam in the mosque of Ayyub to complete his title to the Khilafat.

3. *The guardianship of the Holy Shrines*:—Mecca, Medina, Korbela, Jerusalem and other places. In early times many a war was fought to protect the *Bait-Allah* (Ka'ba). The Sultan of Turkey was the only Mussalman sovereign in recent times who was a power strong enough to protect *Baita-Allah*. He is called *Khadim Harmain Sharifain* (servant of the Holy Shrines).

4. *Independent Muslim State*:—This is an essential feature of the Khilafat. The Muslim law is insistent on it, and no one who is not an independent sovereign can have a good and valid title to the dignity of Khilafat.

5. *Possession of the sacred relics*:—This plea exercises such a powerful influence at the present day over the general body of the Mussalmans that it cannot be ignored.

These relics consist of the cloak of the Prophet, the sword and the flag of Ali, and several other things. It is universally accepted by the Muslims that after the sack of Baghdad, in 1258 A. D., these relics were saved and brought to Cairo and thence to Constantinople.

6. *The Consent of the Muslim population*:—*Ijmaul Ummat*:—This is the most important condition. If even a Mussalman seizes the Holy Shrines, he cannot be regarded as Khalif unless and until he is accepted as such by the Mussalmans at large, as it happened in the case of Karamathians in the tenth century and the Wahabites in the Eighteenth century. So it is quite misconception to suppose that the Sultan of Turkey is the Khalif only because he is the servant of, and till recently was the protector of, the Holy Shrines. It is for this reason that the Sharif of Mecca himself recognizes the Sultan as legal and rightful Khalif up to this day.

7. *The right of the sword*:—That is to say, the *de facto* possession of the sovereign title. It was argued that the Khilafat being a necessity it was also necessary that the *de facto* holder of the title should be recognised as the legal Khalif, until a claimant with a better title should appear. No one since the time Salim seized the sceptre of the Khilafat had seriously disputed his title. No rival had been found and the last descendant of Abbaside had waived his rights. In support of this proposition they cited the examples of Moawiyah, and of Abu-el-Abbas. Fact is hundredfold stronger than all theories and the fact is that for centuries the Turks have fought the battles of Islam and had been the pride of Mussalmans; without the Turkish arms Islam could never have existed. Whilst the rest of the Islamic world were either indifferent or too weak to resist the Western encroachment, it was Turkey, and Turkey alone which erected the barrier with its bones against such encroachment. Through the dynasty of the Ottoman Turks, Islam once more became the break-water against Christendom, both for its own self and for the other civilizations of Asia. The old dream of the conquest of Constantinople, and the complete destruction of the Roman Empire, had been realized through them. The fighting for Allah's cause is the most enviable occupation for a Muslim. Quran says, “They who are killed in God's service will have a great reward,” and the Turks understood how to die in God's service. They have been therefore looked upon as the servants of God and their king as the chief of the Faithful all the world over. Faith has this view and reason cannot doubt it,

for who can, even from the modern non-religious point of view, deny that the Turk has been the saviour of Islam and something larger—the Asiatic spiritual civilizations in general—from the ever aggressive materialistic ambition of Europe. We have thus seen that the institution of the Khilafat is as old as Islam itself and it always carried with it a religious sanctity. It has been inter-woven with the very history of Islam and as such cannot be separated from it. It must therefore remain in the nostrils of Islamic life as long as it persists”

SADR-UD-DIN.

#### THERE SHALL BE NO COMPULSION IN RELIGION.

The Quranic declaration that “there shall be no compulsion in religion,” made over thirteen hundred years back, was lived up to by the Holy Prophet as a mighty monarch, and by those who succeeded him to the Khilafat. The Jews and the Christians enjoyed full liberty of conscience under Islam. Their Synagogues and Churches were shown every consideration; and their lives and property were protected. This was indeed unique toleration. But the question remains whether there was any distinction made in their treatment. This is an important aspect of the question. A distinctive treatment of a humiliating nature would decide whether there was any worth in the declaration granting liberty. The Prophet of Islam being alive to the spirit of his declaration, acted too carefully to make any distinction in treatment between a believer and a non-believer. It was pointed out to the Muslims that it would be unlawful to misappropriate another man’s property because of his professing a different religion (Holy Quran iii-69). A Jew made a complaint to the Prophet that he was robbed of his coat-of-mail and that he suspected a Muslim soldier of the offence. The Prophet summoned the other party, and on hearing both sides, it was decided that the Muslim soldier should be brought to book, and the coat-of-mail restored to the Jew. On another occasion, a funeral procession carrying the bier of a Jew passed by him. The Prophet rose to his feet as a mark of consideration. On being told by one of his companions that it was a Jew to whom respect had been shown, the Prophet remarked “Does he not possess a soul?”—a question which was at once a mild reproach and a manifestation of his attitude towards non-believers. In the Court of the Great Khalifa Omar, no less a personality than Ali, the illustrious and

revered cousin of the Prophet himself, was made to stand side by side with a Jew, who had brought a case against him. Prestige stood as little in the way of justice itself as in that of outward treatment. The case was decided in favour of the Jew and not that of Ali. Such was the Islamic treatment extended to non-believers, and such was the measure of justice meted out to them. While on his death-bed, the Over-Lord of Arabia was visited by one of his subjects, a Jew, who appeared there to demand a small sum that the Prophet owed him;—the Prophet was content to live on a very small pittance, and would not draw on public treasury in cases of emergency. Free access was given by the mighty monarch to the Jew, who was well-aware of the equality of rights that was being enjoyed by his race. Freedom of speech emboldened him to speak his mind. In so doing he overstepped the limits of propriety, and couched his demand in insolent words. Such a behaviour on the part of the Jew extremely offended those who were around the Prophet, but they were told to exercise forbearance. The small sum was paid to him, and his deepening anxiety that the Prophet might die and the debt remain unpaid was removed.

Such examples can advantageously be held up in these days of so-called civilization and culture, when declarations prove absolutely sham; when solemn pledges remain unredeemed; when exploitation keeps coloured races under an iron heel; when subject-races are humiliated and disgraced; and when justice is sacrificed at the the altar of Prestige.

Religions that preceeded Islam made unbearable distinction in treatment between a believer and a non-believer. The distinctions between the Arya and the Maleecha, the Brahman and the Sudra, the Jew and the Gentile are painful and outragions illustrations in point.

Jesus did little to put an end to this evil. On the contrary, he promoted the distinction between Jew and Gentile. His attitude towards the Gentiles is preserved in Mathew’s Gospel, xv, 22 ff:—

“And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered him not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying send her away; for she crieth after us. But

he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: Yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

Jesus maintained that only the Jews, who were the children of God and His elect, were entitled to his ministrations; and the woman, being a gentile and consequently no better than a dog, had no claim upon his generosity.

In the light of this Gospel narrative, lacking as it does in chivalry and toleration, it will be a vain boast for a Christian to say that Christianity teaches either respect for women, or equal treatment for a believer and a non-believer.

SADR-UD-DIN.

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