

THE LIGHT.

Vol. I. No. 5.

FEBRUARY 16, 1922.

Annual subscription Re. 1.
For Students As. 8.
Foreign countries. 2s.

MANAGER of the Light Ahmadiya Buildings, Lahore, is responsible for the despatch of the paper twice a month, in the beginning and in the middle. All business correspondence and applications should be addressed to him. The paper is not sent per V. P. P. Subscriptions may kindly be remitted by M. O. or postage stamps.

The object of The Light is to disseminate Islamic doctrines and to repudiate charges against Islam but the expenses incurred in getting out the paper being very heavy and the subscription being only a nominal one, we respectfully appeal to our Muslim brethren to send donations to help the Ahmadian in making a free wide circulation.

Students who cannot afford to pay the subscription, may send their applications for free copies to the Manager.

A number is assigned to each receipt. In all communications please quote that number.

Receipts of the subscriptions are not sent to senders but they are acknowledged in the columns of The Light. Subscribers are requested to see that list and if the remittance of any subscriber is not acknowledged therein, he may kindly communicate with the Manager.

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

UNIQUE AMONG THE RELIGIONS.

The uniqueness of Islam among the religions of the world is too wide a subject to be dealt with in an article in a newspaper, but there are certain aspects of that uniqueness which have struck even the Western writers notwithstanding their strong prejudice against Islam. I would briefly refer here to three main points.

1. *The spread of Islam.* It is commonly believed in the West that the political ascendancy of Islam was the real cause of its vast and easy spread among the nations of the world. The bias on this point is so deep-rooted that the strongest of arguments fall only on deaf ears and the clearest facts are brushed easily aside. What material and strength was at the back of Islam in China and the islands of the Pacific where it can count to-day no less than 80 millions of followers? Why is it that with the single exception of Arabia, there is not one country in the world which notwithstanding its being subject to the political dominance of the Muslims during the last thirteen centuries

does not own to-day a non-Muslim population? And as against this, Europe which has been subject to Christian dominance during almost the same period does not show any vestige of the non-Christian religions which Christianity supplanted. The facts are just the opposite of what the Western world commonly believes them to be. There is no religion in the world which has been more dependent for its spread on material force than Christianity, and none whose inherent truth and spiritual force have stood in less need of material force than Islam. The truth of this is admitted by the latest Western writer on Islam in the clearest words. Thus opens Mr. Stoddard's work 'The New World of Islam:—

"The rise of Islam is perhaps the most amazing event in human history. Springing from a land and a people alike previously negligible, Islam spread within a century over half the earth, shattering great empires, overthrowing long established religions, remoulding the souls of races, and building up a whole new world—the world of Islam.

"The closer we examine this development the more extraordinary does it appear. The other great religions won their way slowly, by painful struggle, and finally triumphed with the aid of powerful monarchs converted to the new faith. Christianity had its Constantine, Buddhism its Asoka, and Zoroastrianism its Cyrus, each lending to his chosen cult the mighty force of secular authority. Not so Islam. Arising in a desert land sparsely inhabited by a nomad race previously undistinguished in human annals, Islam sallied forth on its great adventure with the slenderest human backing and against the heaviest material odds."

2. *The Qur'an.* The Book of Islam—the holy Qur'an, was introduced in the West when European mind was simply

poisoned against it. Christian Europe which had never been, and never could be friendly to a rival creed which strove for supremacy in the world, had been brought to the highest pitch of inimicality during the crusades, and it was after that feeling of hatred had been nursed for centuries that the Holy Book was translated into European languages by European writers. How it could be received in such a state of mind in a garb which had been put on it by no friendly hands can be easily guessed. Yet even in that state it won over the best minds of Europe. The picture of the hatred with which the Qur'an is handled and its sure conquest is nowhere better drawn than in that great German, Goethe:

"However often we turn to it, at first disgusting us each time afresh, it soon attracts, astounds, and in the end enforces our reverence".

Commenting on these words Dr. Steingass writes:—

"A work, then, which calls forth so powerful and seemingly incompatible are emotions, even in the distant reader—distant as to time and still more so as to mental development—a work which not only conquers the repugnance with which he may begin its perusal, but changes the adverse feeling into astonishment and admiration, such a work must be a wonderful production of the human mind indeed, and a problem of the highest interest to every thoughtful observer of the destinies of mankind..... We may well say the Qur'an is one of the grandest books ever written because it faithfully reflects the character and life of one of the greatest men that ever breathed".

3, *The Prophet*. And lastly among the darkest pictures that have been drawn of the founder of Islam in the West, the truth shines out as supreme that he was the "most successful of all prophets and religious personalities" (Encyclopedia Britannica 11th ed. Art—Koran).

Will not such a Religion, such a Book and such a Prophet win over the world when that strong prejudice has vanished, as vanish it must with the spread of true knowledge? Certainly, it will.

MUHAMMAD ALI.

NEW ISLAMIC CONQUESTS,

Islam is losing everywhere politically and the conquests of Islam may sound

strange to all ears. Yet the fact is that Islam is gaining ground exactly where a religion should gain ground. Christianity with all the wealth at its command and with the legions of missionaries working in all the Muslim countries has not been able to win over to its ranks men of the learning and ability of the English converts which a single Muslim mission at Woking has won over to Islam. The latest addition to the ranks of Islam there are Mr. Ahmad Felix Valyi, the editor of a leading Paris Journal, *La Revue Politique Internationale*, who is recognised as one of the famous literary men of Europe, Mr. Bashir Pickard, a graduate of Cambridge, Mr. Bloodworth, President Spiritual Society, and Mrs. Hameeda Williams, President Theosophical Circle. The conquests of Islam shall continue until it is made triumphant over all the religions of the world in accordance with the Divine promise.

ISLAM AND FATALISM.

A seeker after truth writes:—

We, the Mussalmans are called Fatalists by the Non-Muslims especially by the Christian writers. Some of them do not hesitate to say that the Religion of Islam is a Religion of Fatalism which makes the Mussalmans depend upon their fate and thereby the followers of Islam are going to be idle..... Please explain the Islamic Doctrine about it.

It is well-known that the Christian writers are very glib in making unfounded charges against Islam. But the pity, is they do not think seriously over the dogmas of their own religion. Take for instance the present question of Fatalism. It will perhaps be readily admitted that the whole superstructure of Christianity is raised upon the assumption that man is bound to commit sin. He has got a sinful nature. He has inherited sin from Adam and therefore cannot possibly avoid it. These are the catch words of every Christian. Is it not Fatalism? God has made human nature incapable of obeying the law, and therefore the old dispensation of Law was done away with by Jesus who came with a new dispensation of Atonement. This is the fundamental principle of Christianity, and to every thinking man it is fatalism pure and simple. Nay the case of our Christian friends is rather worse. If the Mussalmans "are gradually going to be idle" because "they depend upon their fate;" If it is cruel on the part of merciful God to predestine the "fate" of every man, and thus to make him "idle"; it is still more horrible to think that the all-knowing God, knowing perfectly

well that He has *made* man *sinful* and in capable of observing law, has been sending his messengers with some sort of Law. It is indeed fatalism plus mockery.

As regards the Islamic doctrine it may be noted that Islam has nothing to do with the erroneous notion of "Fatalism" which signifies that the "fate" of every man is prescribed and therefore he should sit still and wait. On the contrary there is an explicit verse of the Holy Quran to the effect that one cannot get anything unless one strives for it. According to Islam "man is created in the best of make". He has been gifted with enormous capacities and capabilities and his progress both physical and spiritual depends upon the cultivation of the various faculties with which he is endowed.

The idea of predestination or more properly pre-measurement in the Islamic literature is with regard to the forces or elements of nature. The sun and the moon for instance are the most well known luminaries of our solar system and according to the Quran their courses are pre-measured by the Providence. Similarly there are other laws of nature, which are unchangeable. As a matter of fact our scientific discoveries, our material progress and our worldly prosperity entirely depend upon these Divine laws, which are predetermined.

MUSTAFA KHAN.

DOES CHRISTIANITY ANSWER THE REQUIREMENTS OF MAN'S NATURE ?

It is one of the fundamental principles of Islam to have faith in the Divine mission of all the prophets, whenever and wherever raised, whether in the person of Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius or Muhammad. We hold they came from the same source, with the same light for the regeneration of a fallen humanity. Islam, which means nothing more nor less than *willing submission to the laws of the Creator*, was the common religion each one of the noble band followed and preached. Hence in denouncing the religion of the Church as unsuited to humanity, I must not be misunderstood to mean an insinuation at the religion of Jesus, which according to us was no other than Islam.

So far as the personality of Jesus is concerned, a Muslim is bound in faith to love and venerate him. The Holy Quran has cleared him at great length, in the most forcible terms, of all the Jewish calumnies heaped on his noble self and his virtuous mother.

To begin with, a religion for man, must obviously be in keeping with the nature of man. For, otherwise, it would fail to do him any good. Everything in the universe, in order to achieve its *summum bonum*, has to obey a particular set of laws. The laws governing the growth and development of a plant, for instance, must be in due accord with the inherent potentialities of the plant, or it will wither and perish in no time. Man too, who is a part and parcel of the same universe, must have a code of laws in strict consonance with the requirements of his nature. Now, let us apply the test to Christianity, to see if it comes up to this criterion.

- I. The conception of Godhead. Three equal to one and *vice versa* is jarring to the plainest arithmetical sense of man with an unsophisticated mind. It is moreover unscientific, the tendency of science being towards Unity i. e., reducing the diverse multiplicity of natural phenomena to one ultimate cause.
- II. The Crucifixion of Jesus for the sins of others is irreconcilable to human sense of justice. Is it not like the old adage of robbing Peter and paying Paul?
- III. The Dogma of Atonement is a death-blow to all morality. The very idea that Jesus' blood has washed off the sins of all who have faith in it, is an impetus to the lower cravings of human nature to run riot—a license to self-indulgence. As a testimony notice the distress of the recent Church Congress at the sex-immorality in Christendom.
- IV. The doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus takes away his utility to man as a source of inspiration, which he can only derive from his fellow-man. The swiftness of a deer, for instance will not

prompt him to emulate the animal. The mere thought that Jesus was not a man like me, but Divine by nature, is enough to damp all the aspirations of my heart to follow in his footsteps.

V. Granting Jesus was human even then we cannot take him for an exemplar; for what we know of him is too meagre and absolutely unreliable. It is through his deeds as met with in his authenticated life-record that a guide can be of light and inspiration to us. But unfortunately, in the case of Jesus, his very existence has been called into question.

VI. The Gospels are not a faithful record of what Jesus thought. It is believed only five verses out of the whole lot, are Jesus' own, all the rest being unreliable. They, therefore, fail to carry any conviction to man and hence lack the necessary driving force.

VII. The Gospel code of life, taking it for all it is worth, is lacking in the all-important element of practicability.

MUHAMMAD YAKUB KHAN,
(London).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Shadi Lal, Allahabad. 1. Can I attain salvation without being a Muhammadan?

Answer.—Salvation is really attained in this very life and it means freedom from sins. The man who is blind here shall be blind hereafter and he who achieves the light here carries that light to the next life. Such is the plain teaching of the Holy Quran and this simple teaching appeals to human reason. Now every prophet of God whether he appeared in Palestine, India or elsewhere, taught certain doctrines, in other words, gave certain rules and regulations, by which men could get out of the darkness and come into light, but these pure teachings were in the course of time mixed up with untruth. Islam not only restored the light in all its purity but also brought it to perfection. Hence the truth which is now only partially met with in other religions is taught by Islam in its perfection.

Becoming a Muslim only means accepting the whole truth and casting out of the dim light into perfect light.

2. Who created sin? If God, why?

Answer.—This question is based on a misconception of the word *Sin*. In order to attain perfection man has been endowed with certain powers and faculties. It is the neglecting of these faculties and the misuse of these powers that is sin. For instance one man is placed in authority over others. He can either use that authority for the benefit of those others or abuse it and do evil to them. In the latter case it becomes a sin.

Md. Asgar Ali, Netrakona. 1. Should we, the Muhammadans, not obey Jesus Christ as one of the prophets sent by God?

Answer.—We believe in Jesus Christ as a prophet sent by God but his teachings have lost their purity. We therefore only obey the holy prophet Muhammad who gave us the truth in all its purity.

2. Did Jesus say himself that he was the son of God?

Answer.—From the Gospels it appears that he used the words son of God about himself exactly in the sense in which all men are sons of God. "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt 5: 9). He also said that he called himself the son of God in a metaphorical sense, exactly in the same sense in which the great Israelite prophets were called *gods*.

3. Is Christianity a true religion?

Answer.—As preached by Christ, it was true. In its present form, its fundamental principles are false and opposed to the truth preached by all prophets of God.

4. What is the meaning of *Ruhulla*?

Answer.—The word *ruh* means spirit, and Jesus Christ is called a spirit from God to show that Jewish calumnies against him and his mother were false. The Jews said that he came from the Devil; the Qur'an says that he came from God as do all righteous men.

ACKNOWLEDGED WITH THANKS.

Subscriptions from the following till 15th February.

No's 12, 68, 71, 73, 101, 119, 126, 150, 202, 209, 250 to 253, 255 to 257, 259 to 262, 308, 317, 324, 328, 330, 334, 338 to 351, 356, 359, 362, 369, 370, 375, 382, 394, 398, 400, 406 to 408, 412 to 418, 427 to 432, 434 to 439, 445 to 458, 461 to 469, 471, 473 to 498, 501, 503, 504, 512 to 518, 532, 534, 538 to 545, 548 to 552, 554, 559, 584 to 586, 593, 599 to 612.

DONATIONS FROM.

(1) Dr. Jalal Din, of Gajra Rs. 5. (2) Sh. Abdur Rahman, Munsif, Delhi Rs. 5. (3) B. Abdur Rahman, Sulovercer, Lahore Rs. 5. (4) Abdur Karim, Agiaon Rs. 9. (5) Muhammad Yasin, Rs. 5-6-0. (6) Dr. Tufail Hussain, Lahore Re. 1. (7) Abulvi Abdur Sattar, Lahore Re. 1. (8) M. Muhd. Yasin Nagpur As. 5.