

THE LIGHT.

EDITED BY MUSTAFA KHAN B. A.

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

NOTES.

The Institute of Paris :—

We are glad to learn that the French Government has a project in hand of starting a Moslem College and mosque as well as a hostel, with the purpose of providing a "home from home" for Moslems residing or passing through the capital, as a mark of her esteem and good fellowship. The idea, we are informed, was first launched in 1895 by a committee including Prince d'Arenberg, Messrs. Jules Cambon, Percher and others, but only materialized in August 1921 when the government passed a bill for 500,000 francs towards the project. The *Societe des Habous des Lieux Saints de l'Islam* has been appointed to carry out the project, under the direction of a strong committee, under the presidency of M. Herriot, Mayor of Lyon, Mr. Rober-Raynaud (ex-minister) Secretary. Messrs. Deville, Municipal Councillor, Lucien Hubert, Senator, Maurice Raynaud, Deputy, and Beaumarchais, Director of

the Foreign Office, were nominated vice presidents. Other names are also mentioned. Algeria, Tunis and Rabat have contributed largely to the support of this project, and the site chosen is that of old Hospital de Pitie, which, we are informed, is within the vicinity of the "quartier des Ecoles" in Paris. St. Kaddour ben Ghabbrit gives a long account of the aims and objects of the Institute, which promises to provide its library with the "most precious books of Islam as well as the masterpieces of occidental literature." To the artists of France she will offer the art of the Arabs, the Turks and the Persians in carpets, leather and brass work, and the wonderful furnishing of the mosque proposed, for which last purpose the committee intends to search among the treasures of Fez, Tunis, Damascus and Anatolia. With regard to the architecture he says: "Il representera, dans la pierre, l'edifice durable de l'amitie de la France pour l'Islam, et dira qu'au dela des religions differentes et trop longtemps opposees, le liberalisme francais a permis aux mahometans de l'Afrique comme a ceux de l'Orient, de venir librement prendre place au foyer protecteur. Et pour l'Islam il dira sa fidelite, son attachement."

The Bible in Persia.

We think most of the Muslims do not know that the Christian missionaries are working very hard in Muslim countries for the propagation of Christianity, and are winning their way by the distribution of literature. The following lines which we quote from the "Moslem World" will give the reader an idea as to how Christianity is progressing in Persia. "A young Persian made the following statements when our colporteur off red him our editions: 'I have the Gospel of St. Luke, which I have read several times, and it has so disturbed my mind that I have decided not to read it again. I am sure that if I continue to read it I shall leave my religion and become a Christian.' An elderly *sayid*, i. e. a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed, invited a colporteur into his shop, and after examining his books bought five portions of the Old and New Testaments. Another Moslem expressed surprise

that a *sayid* should buy Christian books; but the *sayid* reproved him, saying: "You know not what treasure the books contain. For a long time I have desired to get them, and I must not miss this chance." When the colporteur spoke to him of Christ, he gave an attentive ear. At Tehran, near to the Shah's palace, I offered my books to a man who was standing in front of a tea shop. For reply, I received a hard blow in the face. The people in the tea shop expected me to return the blow, but to their surprise they saw a smile on my face instead. Thereupon some of them came to me, and brought me into the tea shop to ask the reason of my unnatural behaviour. I said that it was an honour to be persecuted for my Master's sake, and I went on to tell them about the nature of our mission. They appeared impressed, and bought six copies of the Gospel.

Gross Ignorance.

It is simply amusing to read the following in the "Moslem world".

"The last of these eclectic movements in Islam that we have space to mention, is the modern Indian sect of the Ahmadiyyas, founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Khan in 1883, and now mainly championed by Khwajah Kamal-ad-Din, the leader of the Ahmadiyya Mission to England. The whole story of the movement has been written by the late H. A. Walter, we are only concerned here to point out how truly eclectic it is. It is obvious at the outset that the origin of the Ahmadiyya movement was in the need felt by intelligent Moslems, who had their minds opened to Western knowledge and felt the force of Western criticism of Islam, for some interpretation of Islam which should be more in accordance with modern knowledge, and provide a religious satisfaction which was not to be found in the Islam of the orthodox schools."

This is a typical illustration of the ignorance of the Christian missionaries. The Ahmadiyya movement did not originate with those who got the Western Education. The founder belonged to the old school; and did not introduce any new doctrines. As a matter of fact a Muslim does not believe that Islam requires any amendments. It is only for the formation of the Muslims and the defence of Islam against hostile critics that the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was raised and he did nothing beyond that.

Science & Islam.

Science and religion are generally thought to be at variance with one another. One is considered to be antagonistic to the other. To a superficial

eye it may seem so, but to a deep and thoughtful observer, the case will appear to be quite the opposite.

Here I am not concerned with all the religions of the world. What I mean to point out is that the close relation of Science and Islam and how the former testifies the truth of the latter, and thus to show that Islam is the true and natural religion of man-kind.

What is Science? Science embraces the sum total of human knowledge and it ranges over the whole nation of nature. Science aims at omniscience. It tacitly assumes that nature is a harmonious unity. Its aim is to discover laws by which to have control over the forces of nature—that is to make the natural forces subservient to our will and command.

Let us see how far Islam keeps us in our study of science. As regards the acquisition of knowledge in general, I need not go deep into the matter, but simply draw the attention of the readers to the saying of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him), namely, "acquisition of knowledge is incumbent upon every muslim man and woman". If to this saying a few historical facts be added, the matter will need no further comment. What the muslims did in Engineering, in medicine in philosophy, in mathematics, is clear from the pages of history.

Next, if science aims at omniscience, Islam aims at oneness with the Omniscient, the fountain head of all knowledge and wisdom. If science has got a unity of purpose, Islam has One Almighty God as its goal. If science aims to command over the forces of nature, Islam has already made all these forces subservient to man, (Holy Quran 45: 12-13, 14: 32-34) thus giving an impetus to the discovery of these laws. Again it says, "Our Lord! Thou hast not created this (universe) in vain". (3: 190), thus creating firm belief, that every atom of the Universe is directly or indirectly useful to us, and nothing is in vain. This gives us a doubly assurance of our success in our new attempts and researches.

Now a word or two, as regards the scientific truthfulness of Islam. Islam said thirteen centuries before, what science has discovered and proved very recently. To be concrete, Islam asserted that, "We have made of water, every thing living (Quran 21: 30), that is, water is the source of all life, a truth which has been established by science very recently. Again the verse "And of everything we have created pairs.....(51: 49) stands a living miracle for its scientific truthfulness.

Science will testify the truthfulness of Islam, as it has done in the past. The more it advances, the more it will reveal the truth of Islam.

Hence true science and true religion are never antagonistic.

The Muslim Prayer or the Salat.

There exists a great misunderstanding with respect to the nature of the prayer enjoined by the Muslim Law. The prayer of a Muslim is a prayer in the truest sense of the term, a devout supplication to Almighty God and a reverential expression of the soul's sincerest desires before its Maker. But on account of the great ignorance that prevails among the people, prayer is looked upon as a burdensome duty. Does Almighty God stand in need of imposing tax upon His creatures? Certainly not; for He is above all needs. Almighty God has commanded men to pray to Him and utter His praise, not because He stands in need of it, but for their own good, for only thus can they attain the great object for which man has been created. It grieves me to see that men have no love for piety, righteousness and the worship of God. The true devotion of the heart has degenerated into a lifeless ceremonial. The love of God is on the wane and the heavenly enjoyment in His worship is nowhere felt. There is taste and flavour in every thing and most of all in prayers and in the worship of the Divine Being. But as the sweetest thing would excite a bitter taste in the mouth of one whose organs of taste are morbid, similarly prayers and worship do not afford any pleasure or enjoyment to those who are spiritually sick. The object of man's life has been described in the Holy Quran to be the worship of God, and it is impossible that man should have been so created as to feel a pleasure in every thing except in that which was the aim of his life. Nay, it is here that he should experience the highest bliss and if he does not, he should clearly understand that some morbidity affects his spiritual conditions and he ought to seek for the proper remedy.

We see it in our every-day experience that the things that have been created for the benefit of man possess a certain attraction for him. Are not delicious articles of food and drink pleasant to the taste, beautiful objects and sights and charming scenes pleasing to the eye, and sweet-sounds and soft and melodious tones pleasing to the ear? What other argument is needed to show that the observance of religious duties must afford pleasure and enjoyment to a man? Again, man and woman were created as helpmates to each other, and the one was co-ordinated with the other

not by compulsion but by means of attraction placed in each for the other. The coupling of the man and the woman with the object of procreation has thus been brought about by the pleasure which each finds in the union, and the purpose could hardly have been accomplished without it. The enjoyment which is found in the sexual connection and which is the incentive to men to propagate their kind, has such a powerful attraction that ignorant men have taken it to be the object of the sexual connection and have lost sight of the real object *viz.*, procreation. The object with which the close connection between man and woman was brought about was no doubt the propagation of their kind, and the enjoyment found in the connection was only a step to the attainment of that object.

The true and eternal union which affords the highest bliss is the union of man with God. It gives a pleasure which is far above every pleasure of the senses. But the unfortunate man who does not find any pleasure in this union and who regards the worship of God as a tax, has not his spiritual faculties sound and in a regular order,
M. I.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The authenticity of the Bible

To The Editor of the Light.

Dear Sir,

The historical parts of the New Testament, dealing with the life of Jesus Christ, pertain to a very short space of time, less than two years, and are related to one and the same spot, yet there are some glaring contradictions in them which are sufficient to discredit the claim that Bible is a divine Book.

The history of Jesus Christ is contained in the four Gospels ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The first chapter of Matthew begins with a genealogy of Jesus Christ, which we also find in the third chapter of Luke. Do these two tally? No, they differ with each other *in every particular*. If Matthew is right Luke must be wrong and *vice versa* there is no reason to give precedence to one over the other. The reader is bound to discredit both of them. Truth is always one and the same. Therefore revealed Books cannot be contradictory to each other.

The book of Matthew gives in C. 1—V. 6. a genealogy from David, to Jesus Christ, and makes *Twenty Eight* generations. Luke gives also a genealogy from Jesus Christ, to David, and makes *Forty three* generations. Besides, the names also differ. Below I give the two genealogical tables side by side for the sake of comparison.

According to Matthew Christ	According to Luke Christ
2 Joseph	2 Joseph
3 Jacob	3 Heli
4 Matthan	4 Matthew
5 Eleazar	5 Levi
6 Eliud	6 Melchior
7 Achim	7 Jona
8 Sadoc	8 Joseph
9 Azor	9 Matthan
10 Eliakim	10 Amos
11 Abihud	11 Nume
12 Zorobabel	12 Abi
13 Salathiel	13 Nagee
14 Jechonias	14 Bath
15 Josias	15 Matthan
16 Amon	16 Semel
17 Manasses	17 Jona
18 Ezekias	18 Jada
19 Ahas	19 Jona
20 Joatham	20 Reher
21 Ozias	21 Zorobabel
22 Joram	22 Salathiel
23 Josaphat	23 Jona
24 Asa	24 Melchior
25 Abia	25 Adab
26 Roboam	26 Cosim
27 Soloman	27 Elmodan
28 David	28 Eli
	29 Jona
	30 Elezer
	31 Jona
	32 Matthan
	33 Ley
	34 Simon
	35 Juda
	36 Joseph
	37 Jona
	38 Eliaze
	39 Melchior
	40 Menan
	41 Matthan
	42 Nathan
	43 David

The reader can see for himself the great difference between these two; which is very significant. It certainly discredits the authenticity of the Bible. Can we believe it to be the word of God? At least it is a riddle to me and I shall be obliged if any of christian readers will kindly enlighten me on the point.

M. A. J.

Questions and Answers.

Sardar Khan :—Q. 1 :—

Do you think the Qadiani party, a Muslim party?

A. Yes.

Q. 2 :—Is it lawful for a Muslim to say prayer under the Imamat of a member of Qadiani party.

A. There does not appear any harm in it.

Q. 3 :—What is Sin?

A. The intentional disobedience to commandment of Allah is a sin.

Q. 4 :—Can prophets commit a sin, if not why? If God saves prophets from committing sin how can they be perfect exemplar for others.

A. No; because they are sent by God to purify men. They set examples of sinlessness, and not of sinfulness.

Q. 5 :—Can a man other than prophets be sinless.

A. Yes, potentially, he can be.

Q. 6 :—Is it lawful for a Muslim to serve as a clerk in Co-operation department Societies and Banks which take interest?

A. In India such things are to some extent obligatory. One should try as far as possible to avoid such a service; but in unavoidable circumstances, one is pardonable. It is also our duty to keep the soul and body together.

Q. 7 :—Is it permissible in the Islamic law to borrow money to start a business or under any other circumstances.

A. To take and to give interest are both prohibited.

Q. 8 :—Why does the Quran prohibit Muslims from taking interest?

A. Because it undermines the national growth
Fazal Karim Khan :—

Q. 1 :—What is the difference between religion and morality?

A. As I explained in a previous issue, religion is necessarily associated with a revealed book or a Prophet. Morality is simply based upon experience and intellectual advancement. The safest course is religion.

Q. 2 :—Why cannot a Muslim insure his life or marriage?

A. Don't you see it is a sort of gambling?

Q. 3 :—If a man is serving humanity but does not believe in a religion is he a sinner?

A. He is not a sinner so far he does good deeds; but in other respects he may be.

Q. 4 :—Please name historical books which prove that Islam was not spread by sword.

A. For the present I should like to recommend the spirit of Islam by Amir Ali. I wrote a series of articles, the Prophet in war time, in the Islamic Review on this subject. You may read them as well.