

FEBRUARY 1916

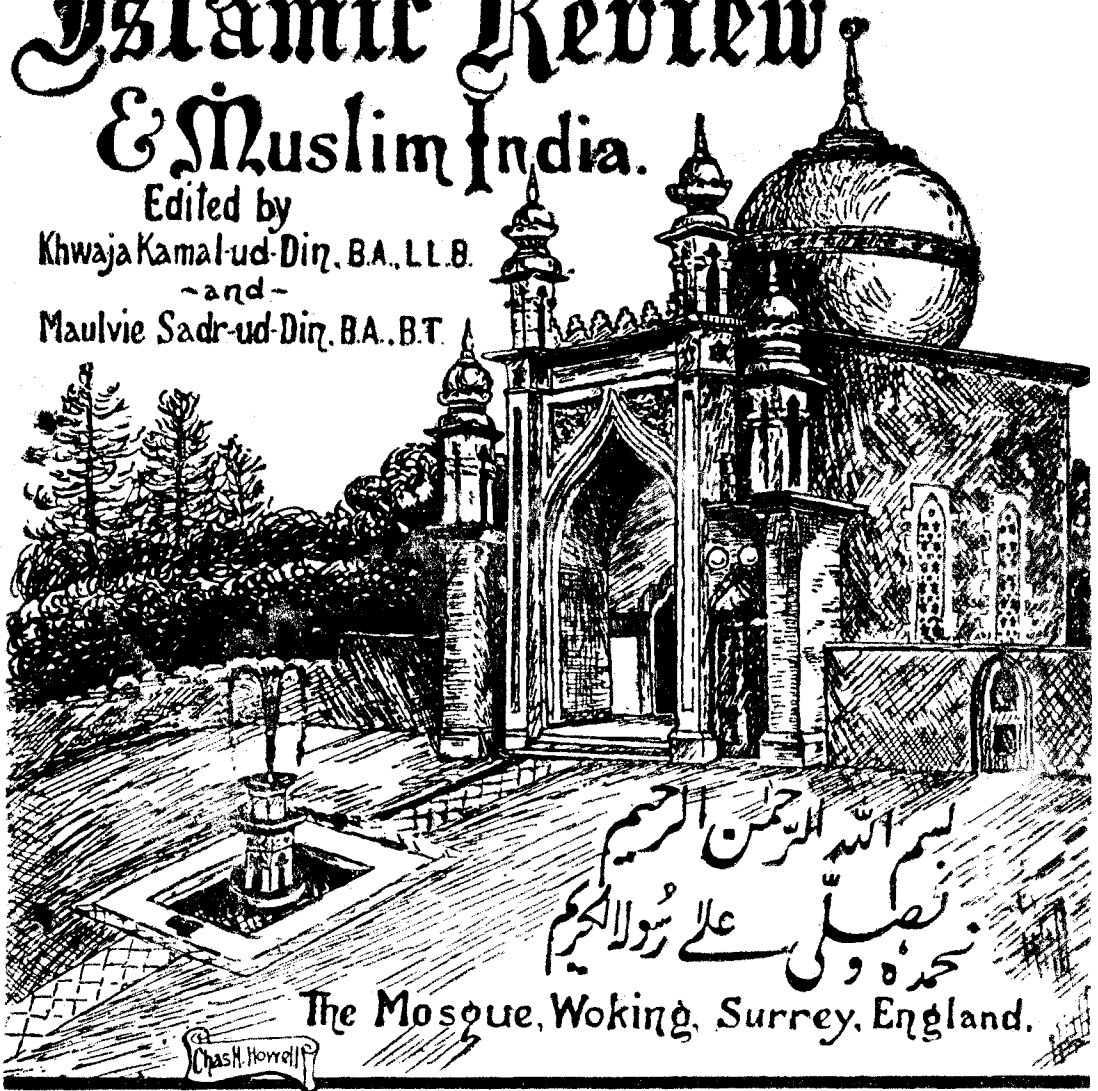
# Islamic Review & Muslim India.

Edited by

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, B.A., LL.B.

-and-

Maulvie Sadr-ud-Din, B.A., B.T.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
نُصَلِّ عَلَى رَسُولِ الْكَرِيمِ  
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُحِبُّهُ

The Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
A Plain Warner. By MAULVI MUHAMMAD ALI, M.A., LL.B.	49	Universal Brotherhood	77
A Muslim's Obligations to his Kinsmen. From the Pen of an INDIAN RULER	51	An Anglo-Saxon King proclaims the Unity of Allah and that Muhammad is His Prophet.	
The Mercy for the Worlds. AL-QIDWAI	55	Offa's Coin (Illustrated). By PROFESSOR LÉON	80
The Debt of Civilization to the Arabs. By S. H. LEEDER	62	God and Science. By DUSK MOHAMED	90
Nature's Problems. No. 2. By PROF. STEPHEN	70	The Philosophy of the Ages. By A. NEVILLE J. WHYMANT	95

PRICE SIXPENCE.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ  
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِہِ الْکَرِیْمِ

# ISLAMIC REVIEW

AND

## MUSLIM INDIA

---

[VOL. IV]

FEBRUARY 1916

[No. 2

---

### A PLAIN WARNER

By MAULVI MUHAMMAD ALI, M.A., L.L.B.

Say : I do not say to you I have with me the treasures of Allah, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel : I do not follow aught save that which is revealed to me. Say : Are the blind and the seeing one alike? Do you not then reflect? (Al-Quran vi. 50.)

SUCH are the words in which the greatest of the prophets, the greatest benefactor of humanity, talked to a superstitious people like the Arabians, for whom every gust of wind, every tree, nay, the unhewn stone itself, was gifted with Divine power. A man with the great qualities and the wonderful personality of Muhammad—may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him!—could easily make such a superstitious people take him for a god. The whole of Arabia already paid homage to him by recognizing him as *Al-amin*, that is, as *one who could be trusted in all matters*, a title never bestowed upon any one else in the whole history of mankind. His people had for centuries been idol-worshippers, and thus they had become very superstitious. Had the Prophet so wished he could have claimed any supernatural powers, and the people would have willingly accepted him. But he was, above all things, a plain speaker, and the temptation to be recognized as a great man which has

often proved a stumbling-stone for many *great* men, never made him swerve from the plainest truth by a hair's-breadth.

The death of his only son Abraham was followed by a total eclipse of the sun. Was it that the sun ceased to give light out of sorrow for the Prophet's son? Some of the sorrowful companions thought so and their whispers reached the ear of the Prophet. Had he remained silent, the belief would have gained ground, and would no doubt have added to his dignity. He was an affectionate father and the grief had brought tears to his eyes. But he owed a greater duty to humanity, before which all grief and sorrow melted away. He ascended the pulpit and thus addressed his faithful followers: *Know that the sun and the moon are two signs of Allah: they do not darken for the life or death of any mortal.*

Thus did he guard against all superstition. He never said that he was more than a mortal, "Muhammad is the apostle of Allah" was the faith of every Muslim, but he would be plainer still and tell his companions to say, *His servant and His apostle.* Never a prophet talked to his people in plainer language. Everything proceeded direct from a heart free from all affectation and appealed to the heart. He did not desire to lure his people by offering them great promises. He was but a man; *he had no treasures with him.* Thus would he say to his people, although he made them masters of the treasures of the whole world. He would not draw them to himself by saying that he would make them sit on thrones. Instead of that they were told to be ready for trials and tribulations: "And most certainly we would try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits, and give good news to the patient." Yet he did actually make them masters of great empires and rulers of countries. Nor did he lay claim to know the secrets of the unseen, although his prophecies were as clear as daylight. No man could do what he had done—and his purity and nobility was above anything that humanity had witnessed—yet he would tell his followers that he was not an angel.

What was all this meant for? That people should accept and follow truth for the sake of truth, practise virtue for the sake of virtue, and do good for the sake of good. No mean consideration, no low motive should be theirs even in the acceptance of truth. If anything distinguished him from the rest of mankind, it was that Allah had revealed His will to him and he

faithfully followed and translated into practice everything that he received from on high. And as he himself was, so he wanted others to be. It was not his *object* to make his followers possessors of treasures or knowers of the secrets of the future, but *men* first and last, men true to themselves, true to their Maker, true to fellow-men, and true followers of the high principles of life which had been revealed to him. These sublime yet plain sentiments are the best that human nature could desire. And it is for this plain speaking of his that he is frequently called in the holy Quran a *plain warner*.

## A MUSLIM'S OBLIGATIONS TO HIS KINSMEN

### “HADYA-TUZ-ZAUZAIN”

(A PRESENT TO THE MARRIED COUPLE)

FROM THE PEN OF AN INDIAN RULER

HADYÁ-TUZ-ZAUZAIN, the first part of the book intended to deal with Muslim home life, comes from the able pen of Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal, India, whose illustrious name is not unknown to these pages. The book, as the name shows, is very interesting, and opportune to the needs of the day. It is full of instruction to the married couple as to their *inter se* rights and obligations. It is really gratifying to note that Her Highness, with all the onerous duties on her shoulders of administrating a big State in India, finds some time for her literary activities, and does not fail to enrich Indian literature by her quota every now and then; but the present one is the most valuable production. It can be read with great advantage by every one who wants to acquaint himself with “Muslim domestics.” The book is in Hindustani, but its English version would be most welcome to Her Highness's sisters in the West who have offered their adhesion to Islam.

The following we take from the concluding chapter of this book, which deals with one's obligations to his kinsfolk under Islam, for the enlightenment of our readers in the West. Islam, of course, does not stand to see “Mothers in penury and sons in luxury” going together, as we do find sometimes elsewhere. A Muslim's obligations, in fact, go beyond

the four walls of his family in the Western sense of the word. Our kin in need must be looked after even at the expense of our own ease. The subject has been so lucidly dealt with by the illustrious author under its various aspects, that it hardly needs any further comment from us.

“The word ‘family’ in the Muslim sense is not confined to relation of man and wife merely, but it also includes those who are of kin and whose care and good treatment are alike binding upon both man and wife.

“A child is a joint asset of both man and wife, who naturally cherish deep-seated affection for it. The duties the parents owe to the child are so clear that they need hardly be stated here; but in some families there are stepsons and step-daughters who have to be brought up. If the husband has such a child from a former wife, the present wife may not have natural love for it, but in view of its rights as a creature of the same God, and to please the husband too, it is her duty to treat it with love; for the generous God has made it to share in the wealth and prosperity of its father. Similarly, if the wife has a child by a former husband, which has to be brought up, though it is by no means entitled to the wealth and income of the present husband, but as an act of goodness, as well as for his best regards for the wife, it is incumbent upon the husband to bring it up. The wife, besides, is perfectly within her rights if she brings up the child by expending upon it out of her dowry as also by allowing it to share in the maintenance she receives from her husband.

“There are many such instances in the history of Islam to show that the Holy Prophet and his noble companions reared up such children with the same love and affection which one feels for his own children. Every act of the Holy Prophet is a *sunnat* (an example) for the Mussalmans to follow, and every deed of his noble companions a noble guide.

“Just consider how strongly such a treatment of each other’s children in a family is calculated to bring happiness into a home and to increase the love of man and wife towards each other.

“To have regard for parents and other kindred, to help them and to render them services when needed, are also

included among our duties to our relations. Parents who rear up their children after undergoing such hardships have a right to the services of their children also ; and as they spend the greater part of their wealth and earnings towards the bringing up of their children, they are certainly entitled to avail themselves of their children's earnings and wealth."

"It is reported by Amar, son of Shu'aib, that a man came to the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace!) and said, 'I have wealth but my father needs it.' The Prophet said, 'Thou and thy wealth are a possession of thy father.' Your children are a part of your good earnings, so eat of the earnings of your children."

"Obedience to parents and kindly treatment and love of one's kin are frequently enjoined in the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet.

"It may also be remarked in this connection that goodness to parents is considered so very important in Islam that it has been inculcated along with the worship of God in the Quran, as the Book says :—

*"And serve God and join not anything with Him, and be good to parents and to those who are of kin and to orphans and the poor and the neighbour who is of kin and the neighbour who is a stranger and the companion (who stands) by your side and the wayfarer and what your right hands have possessed. Verily God loves not him who is an arrogant boaster." (Quran, chap. iv. 36.)*

*"And we have enjoined upon man concerning his parents, . . . but if they strive with thee that thou shouldst join with Me what thou hast no knowledge of, then obey not them. (Chap. xxxi. 14, 15.)*

*"And good to his parents, and he was not a rebellious tyrant." (Chap. xix. 14.)*

*"And has enjoined me prayer and purity as long as I live, and to be good to my mother, and He has not made me a wicked tyrant." (Ibid. 31, 32.)*

"Not only is goodness to parents inculcated, but respect and tenderness towards them is also enjoined, especially in their old age.

*"And thy Lord has ordained that ye serve none but Him ; and goodness to parents show ye, when the one of them or both of them attain old age with thee, and say not to them even "aye," and never to reproach them, but speak to them generous words." (Chap. xvii. 23.)*

“The following Quranic verses teach us to behave with humility to our parents and to pray to God to obtain pardon for them and mercy.

“*And drop the wing of humility to them out of compassion, and say, My Lord have compassion on them both, even as they nursed me when I was little.*” (Ibid. 24.)

“There is no need of specifying the other nearer relations here. They come after parents. The following tradition from the Holy Prophet is also noteworthy:—

“Abû-Hurairah reports that a man said: ‘O Prophet of God, who is most worthy to do good to?’ The Prophet said, ‘Thy mother.’ He said, ‘And after her?’ He said, ‘Thy mother.’ The man said, ‘Then after her?’ The Prophet said, ‘Thy mother.’ The man said, ‘Then again after her?’ The Prophet said, ‘Thy father.’

“In another tradition the Prophet is reported to have said, ‘Thy mother, Thy mother, Thy mother; then after her thy father; then after him those who are nearer of kin to thee.’

“In the same strain there is another tradition recorded in the Tirmizi.

“The Holy Prophet thrice ordained the duty of doing good to mother, then to father, and then to those who are nearer of kin.

“A man came to the Holy Prophet and said: “O Prophet of God, I have committed a great sin. Will my repentance avail me?’ The Prophet said, ‘Is thy mother alive?’ He said, ‘No.’ The Prophet said, ‘Is the sister of thy mother alive?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ ‘Then do good to her,’ said the Prophet.

“It is to be inferred from this tradition that the sister of the mother may pray to God to obtain pardon for the man, and goodness to her who is as a mother to him may atone for his sin.

“Unfortunately some people do lack many of these virtues, and so is exactly the case with regard to the duties of relationship among them. If a brother is in affluent conditions and the other brothers are poor, in the first place the man cares little for them; secondly, if his wife happens to be an ill-tempered woman, or is ill-disposed to the people of her husband, the lives of those whose rights to the good offices

of the richer have been so clearly defined in the Quran are reduced to a helpless and miserable existence. But the latter, man or wife as the case may be, feels no shame, and fears not the hereafter in regard to the punishment that is threatened to be inflicted upon them in the life to come.

“Thus goodness, love and affection to parents and to those of kin are the duties enjoined by God upon children and other relations. Though there be no provision in the temporal law to enforce these duties, yet those who believe in the resurrection and the day of judgment know for certain that there is a punishment for them in the hereafter, notwithstanding the absence of any provision in the temporal law. If it be under pressure of the wife that the husband cannot fulfil his duties, both shall be held responsible for their conduct to God. If, however, the wife is willing to fulfil her duties to her people out of her own possessions and property, and is only prevented by her husband, she shall not be responsible for the non-fulfilment of her duties, inasmuch as of all the duties of a wife the most imperative are those towards her husband; but the husband will be charged with the sin.

“In social life, therefore, the happiness and blessings of home and the mercy of God upon the inmates largely depend upon the kind treatment of the parents and other relatives.

“THESE ARE THE BOUNDS OF GOD, SO DO NOT TRANSGRESS THEM; AND WHOSO TRANSGRESSES THE BOUNDS OF GOD;—THESE, THEY ARE THE WRONG-DOERS.” (Quran, chap. iv. 229.)

## THE MERCY FOR THE WORLDS

*Wa ma arsalnaka illa Rahmatanlilalamin.*

“And We never sent thee (O Muhammad), but as the Mercy for the Worlds.”—AL-QURAN.

IN 1906, when I had the honour of visiting for the first time the sacred seat of the *Khilafat*, I was most heartily welcomed by my co-religionist brothers, and was received by men of highest positions in the State. Naturally, I went to pay my respects to the Shaikh-ul-Islam and also to the Qazi Asker.

His Excellency Mahmood Offindi was the then Qazi Asker. I hear now that he is dead. He was a very learned man, and although I saw him in a flowing Arab dress with a

turban on his saintly head, I found him well acquainted with the European world of our day, and ready to criticize certain military doctrines of Napoleon as well. His white long beard, his handsome features, and his healthy physique in spite of his advancing age, well suited the position he was occupying. But he lived, as all great Muslim religious leaders and learned men do live, a very simple life. His house was immaculately clean, and so was his sitting-room. But it was furnished most simply. On a clean straw mattress there were neatly put a couple of sofas. The walls were undecorated, except for one picture frame. And what was in that solitary picture frame that decorated the whole room—I should say the whole house? An illuminated writing of the same verse from the holy Quran which I have given above, i.e.

*“ Wa ma arsalnaka illa Rahmatanlilalamin.”*

Can there be a greater compliment to any mortal than the title of “Rahmatanlilalamin,” the MERCY for the Worlds? Can there be a higher and nobler duty assigned to a man than to command him to make it the object of his life to prove himself “the MERCY for the Worlds”?

The all-knowing and loving Allah bestowed that title upon Muhammad (may peace be upon him!). He assigned to him the duty of proving himself the MERCY, not only of this world, but of all the worlds.

The love which all Muslims have for Muhammad, whom they call the Beloved of God, the Seal of Prophets, is unparalleled. More than thirteen centuries have gone by since his advent in this world. The world has seen innumerable vicissitudes, evolutions and revolutions. Men, great men, have come and gone since his time, as great men had come and gone before he was born. His devoted handful of followers who gave up their property for him and his cause when he was persecuted from all sides, who sacrificed their lives to protect him, who loved him more than they loved their children and their country, they are all gone. While the followers of Moses told him to do all the fighting himself, while the followers and disciples of Jesus actually betrayed him and sold his life for a few pieces of silver, the followers of Muhammad remained faithful to him from the first day they believed in him to the very last. On that memorable occasion of the flight from which the

Muslim era is counted, when Muhammad with one solitary companion, the devoted Abu Bakr, had to leave his home in secret as the whole people of Mecca had made up their minds to kill him and had already sent their agents to do so, Ali, one of the faithful followers of Muhammad, got himself into the Prophet's bed after the latter's departure, covered himself up with the Prophet's sheet, ready to receive that thrust from the sharp and revengeful swords of the murderers in his own body which they had meant to be for the beloved body of Muhammad.

Now Ali is no more, and Abu Bakr is no more, and all the hundreds and thousands of Alis and Abu Bakrs who actually received the arrows and daggers of the enemies in their own body to protect Muhammad are all gone. Islam is no more confined to the desert of Arabia. About one-fourth of the whole human race are now believers in Muhammad—the Last Prophet. The world has been much enlarged in area since the time of Muhammad. Now we have a new world as well as the old. Scientific development has been remarkable since the days of Muhammad. Our standards of living and thinking have been raised. Yet does there live a single Mussalman who does not feel himself to-day as much in love with that Holy Prophet as did those Muslims who lived with him in his own age, as did those Muslims who immediately followed him? There can be found no such Muslim, whether we search for him in China or Australia, in Europe or Asia, in the new world or the old. Lord Headley loves him as Harun-Rashid loved him; Harun Rashid loved him as Muhammad's own companion Omar loved him. Time does not make any change in the love Muslims have for the Last Prophet. Country does not make any change either. Like Jesus and Moses, Muhammad was an Oriental. The East and the West are supposed never to meet. But as far as love for Muhammad is concerned, a Muslim of the West loves him as the Muslim of the East. But why this unchangeable consistency and faithfulness, this unequalled intensity and zeal in love for Muhammad? Because he did prove himself as the Mercy for the whole world. History tells us that almost all the prophets and great men have been respected more by the people who came after them than by their own contemporaries. The history of Jesus is a remarkable proof of this. The nearer the people were to his age, the less they loved or respected

him. He had himself to bewail that a prophet is never without honour save in his own country and in his own house. He was persecuted by his people to the end. His own disciples, those who knew him most, not only were averse to suffer any troubles for him, but actually betrayed him. Even St. Peter denied him. It was only long after the death of Jesus, when a mystery was spun round his simple and good life, when pagan beliefs were borrowed to create a sort of mystic fascination, that Jesus, the man Jesus who had failed to arouse the sentiment of any great love in the people, the Prophet Jesus who could not complete his mission and had to leave room for the coming "Comforter" to guide humanity to the "Kingdom of Heaven," was idolized and cherished as the "Son of God." Jesus himself, like Moses, was an Israelite prophet with a limited mission. It was afterwards that Christianity was universalized. But how ill it was adapted to be a universal faith has been proved by history. As long as people tried to live by that human-invented faith they remained in a degraded position—morally, socially, politically and even intellectually. The foundation of their faith itself was immoral and irrational. They believed that sin was in the nature of man; that woman was a bold culprit; that three are one and one is three; that God begets child, and so forth. The social basis of the religion was not very elevated either. It encouraged celibacy and monasticism. It lowered the status of mother and father. It dulled the intellect, discouraged scientific research, propounded superstitions, based the Prophetship of Jesus on wonder-working and miracles, and so forth. The whole of Christendom remained in a dark and dismal condition, and at a very low stage of civilization, as long as it was under the control of the Church. The age of reason only dawned when the star of the Church had sunk. To-day Europe and Christendom are proud of their civilization. From an Oriental point of view it was never a very high sort of civilization, and the present war with all its horrors and savageries has wrecked altogether the little prestige that that civilization had. Yet even the culture upon which that civilization was based was secured only after long struggles with the Church, and to-day it is only the ignorant or credulous women and children who have any faith in the mystery-enveloped faith of Christianity. Even the present-day military

powers of Christendom through which it rules over countries and continents is not because of, but rather in defiance of, the tenets of Christianity.

Europe to-day may be proud of her progress, culture (with a "C" or "K"), and civilization. She may be proud of being in a position to dominate other continents. But she has nothing to be thankful for to the so-called Christianity.

But the history of Islam proves that the more the Muslims followed Muhammad, the more prosperous they were from every point of view—moral, social, political, and intellectual. Their downfall never began until they left Islam. They were at one time the most civilized and cultured nation in the world. They were the only torch-bearers in the Middle Ages when Europe could feel the darkness surrounding it. The more they cherished Islam, the more they were civilized; so much so, that during the last days of Muhammad the whole of Arabia became populated by men who were almost perfect. Muhammad actually brought "the Kingdom of Heaven" on earth. How? By setting a personal example which was absolutely perfect to all the people of his time, and by leaving bold footsteps and landmarks behind for those who were to follow him. The secret of the success of Muslims as long as they remained Muslims, was nothing but that Muhammad was an excellent example.

While the sages of Europe have been shouting out and are still crying out that the progress of this world depends upon cutting off the fetters and shackles that Christianity has put upon human intellect, the sages of Muslims even to-day urge upon their co-religionists to go back to the days of Muhammad. Why? Because Muhammad proved himself to be the "Mercy for the Worlds."

There has been no man in the world in the past, and there is no man in the world to-day, whose even minutest details and the most private and domestic aspects of life have been before the full gaze of the public—millions upon millions of people in different ages, climes, and countries—and yet who has remained to be a pattern for humanity like Muhammad. The traditions revealed by 'Aysha, the beloved wife of Muhammad, who was the most learned jurist of her day, deal with the different phases of the private life of Muhammad, and all and each enhance our respect for the man Muhammad as they do for the

Prophet Muhammad. He was in the real sense of the word the *Mercy* for the Worlds.

Almost all religions—the followers of the “All-wise” Buddha, as those of Jesus, “the one of the three”—have deified their Prophets. But Muhammad has always said, “*In nama ana basharum mislakum*” (“I am only a man like you”), yet where is there a person who has won greater love from mankind than this mere man? Why? Because that mere man proved himself to be “the Mercy for the Worlds.”

Then, while other prophets based their claims of Prophethood on working miracles—even certain of Muhammad’s followers have shown wonderful feats of spiritual power—Muhammad himself boldly announced that his claim of being a prophet depended not upon wonder-working, but upon the merits of his teachings. Yet who is there from the hundreds of wonder-workers who can claim to have won such a deep respect and love from humanity as Muhammad did? Why? Because his teachings had in themselves a merit, and because Muhammad in his person was “the Mercy for the Worlds.” While people laugh at wonder-workers to-day, while even the miracles of Moses and Jesus are considered as fantastic myths by sceptics, the miracle performed by Muhammad in Arabia—the transformation by him of the whole Peninsula in a very short period into something quite unique—cannot be denied even by the greatest sceptic. A well-known bigoted Christian writer, Sir William Muir, has acknowledged the revolution worked by Muhammad thus:—

“From time beyond memory Mecca and the whole Peninsula had been steeped in spiritual torpor. The slight and transient influences of Judaism, Christianity, or philosophical inquiry upon the Arab mind had been but as the ruffling here and there of the surface of a quiet lake; all remained still and motionless below. The people were sunk in superstition, cruelty and vice. It was a common practice for the eldest son to take to wife his father’s widows, inherited as property with the rest of the estate. Pride and poverty had introduced among them (as they have among the Hindus) the crime of female infanticide. Their religion was a gross idolatry and their faith rather the dark superstitious dread of unseen beings, whose goodwill they sought to propitiate and whose displeasure to avert, than the belief in an overruling Providence. The life to come and

retribution of good and evil were, as motives of actions, practically unknown.

“Thirteen years before the Hijra, Mecca lay lifeless in this debased state. What a change had those thirteen years now produced. A band of several hundred persons had rejected idolatry, adopted the worship of one God and surrendered themselves implicitly to the guidance of what they believed as revelation from Him, praying to the Almighty with frequency and fervour, looking for pardon to His mercy and striving to follow after good works, almsgiving, chastity, and justice. They now lived under a constant sense of the omnipotent power of God and of His providential care over the minutest of their concerns. In all the gifts of nature, in every relation of life, at each turn of their affairs individual or public, they saw His hand. And above all, the new existence in which they exulted was regarded as the mark of special grace, while the unbelief of their blinded fellow-citizens was the hardening stamp of reprobation. Muhammad was the minister of life to them, the source under God of their new-born hopes, and to him they yielded an implicit submission.”

Not Arabia alone but the whole world has been influenced by the teachings and character of Muhammad. He has left an everlasting impression upon the life of mankind as a whole—upon people of every country—upon their every walk of life. He has given rights to women which they never had before and have not yet got in European and Christian countries. He absolved them from the blame of having been the cause of human sin. He established the respect for parents. He raised the status of slaves, workmen, and labourers to a height unknown even to-day in so-called democratic countries of Europe. He linked the whole humanity, men and women of different races, colours, and creeds inhabiting different parts of the world by one cord—the Cord of Allah, and thus aimed at establishing universal brotherhood.

While even to-day so-called democratic Christian America has a lynch-law for its “coloured” races, while even to-day so-called democratic Christian England, which has far more non-European citizens of its world-wide Empire than Euro-

pean, has differentiating laws, privileges, and treatments for European and non-European people, and has put colour-bars even to its educational portals, while the whole of Christendom still restricts salvation to those who believe in the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus, Muhammad thirteen centuries ago conferred upon the people of every race and country, coloured and discoloured, not only equal political and social rights, but also vouchsafed universal salvation to all, irrespective of their creed, thus :—

“ Whether Believers (Muslims), Jews, Christians, or Sabeans, he who believes in God, the Last Day, and *acts aright*, his reward will be with his Cherisher, neither grief shall overtake him nor sorrow ” (Quran).

May all the Blessings of Allah be showered upon Muhammad—the Mercy for the Worlds—the *Rahmatanlilalamin*.

AL-QIDWAI.

[NOTE.—This year, this English month corresponds with the Arabic *Rabi-ul-awal* when the Holy Prophet was born. Therefore I have written this article for this month. In my next I will, *Insha allah*, deal with the subject in a wider sense, as I find people now doubting the Mercy of God when they see with their own eyes the present-day horrible and savage cataclysm in which almost the whole of Christendom is involved. I will continue also “The Philosophy of Muslim Prayers.”

AL-QIDWAI.]

## THE DEBT OF CIVILIZATION TO THE ARABS

By S. H. LEEDER, Author of “The Desert Gateway,”  
“Veiled Mysteries of Egypt,” etc.

IN venturing to speak to the Orient Literary Circle on the subject of the Debt of Civilization to the Arabs, I am somewhat in a quandary from the fact that I know my audience to consist of representatives of the people both of the Eastern and the Western world. I shall have to ask the indulgence of both. In going over certain historical facts I shall, I fear, seem to the Oriental student to be dealing with the obvious ; I know enough of the Eastern love of history, especially when it deals with Islam, to be sure that I can have little that is new to

present to those who belong to that faith. But from the deep interest and sympathy I have in the aspirations of my Oriental friends, especially those from North Africa and Egypt, what I may be allowed to do, perhaps, is to suggest certain reflections of a Western mind on how a glorious past might well affect the Oriental outlook of the present day.

On the other hand, to some English hearers it is possible that what I have to say may awaken almost forgotten, and very unflattering memories of historical facts which Western complacency has too readily pushed aside.

I am afraid I have little or no consideration for the vanity which is apt to consider itself injured by the suggestion that the West can possibly owe anything to the people whom they know in a very vague way as the Arabs. But still I will beg you to believe that my position is, as I trust, not one of bias in one direction or the other. East and West both need the historic truth, and, moreover, they both need what each can give the other. The better understanding many of us long for will only begin when the West is willing to allow that the East has treasures which it can contribute to the common store as great as their own.

I am going to remind you to-night of the days when the East held up the torch of civilization, while the West was groping in the Dark Ages. To the students from Egypt, both Moslem and Copt, who are here, the story is especially thrilling. For if the Arabs brought new impulses to the world, and stimulated the countries they conquered, it was part of their genius to cherish learning and the arts and industries wherever they found them. In Persia this was particularly the case. In Egypt we find many traces of the contribution made by the ancient Coptic people to that brilliant advance in civilization which grew up under the robust Arab rule. If I do not refer to India it is because I have not yet any personal knowledge of that deeply interesting country.

You are most of you so well instructed in early Arab history that I need not trouble you with anything but a passing reference to that marvellous uprising of power which, with the advent of the Prophet Muhammad, in a hundred years made itself master of the world from Delhi in India to Granada in Spain; which built up an Empire more powerful than the Romans had made in eight hundred years.

Let me give you briefly an Englishman's view of the circumstances under which what I call the torch of civilization, which the Arabs had taken from the enfeebled hands of the Greeks, flashed upon Europe in its dark ages. In the life of our Lord Jesus, whose name we all, whether Moslem or Christian, mention with profound veneration, a great Light had shone upon the world. Unfortunately as the years went on the foolish wranglings of men upon unimportant points of doctrine and conduct had obscured the light. The Unity of God was forgotten while men were disputing violently about it. They were occupied with every question about Jesus except those which would have led them to imitate his noble life.

It was into this enfeebled and corrupt world that a robust race from the deserts of Arabia almost suddenly burst. An obscure people, little before known, urged by an overpowering inspiration, leapt into sudden greatness from a corner of Asia. Facts only to be explained, I think, by allowing that these men possessed powers of hardihood and mental energy almost primæval in their strength.

Of the conquests of the sword I have, as I told you, little to say, except to remark that the alarming revolution seemed to many people in the West like the annihilation of knowledge and the establishment of savage ignorance in the government of the world. And I am bound to admit that through ignorance and misrepresentation many people in the West still regard those conquests in this light. This is unjust. But *ignorance* is generally unjust, whether we find it East or West.

What I want briefly to trace are the *intellectual* and *moral* benefits which have had a durable effect on the wider world and which civilization undoubtedly owes to that period of Arab predominance.

In the first rush of victory this new force swept away the Magian fire worship of Persia, which the Parthian Empire had been upholding and might have established throughout the East. Then it obliterated the wild ascetic superstitions of dreamy Egypt, and in some parts of India; and it scattered the contentious theology of the Greeks who were Christian only in name while they were worse than Pagans in conduct. And, later on, before the forceful Arab march, the debased manners, the wretched polity, and the imbecile administration of the Court of Constantinople expired.

By the testimony even of their adversaries these hardy zealots of Arabia combined with their warrior fierceness qualities which rejuvenated the world. Some of the virtues which they brought with them had become lost or almost obsolete in the nations which they conquered. We may well reflect on the *temperance, frugality, simplicity of life* practised by noble caliphs of the early days, which riches and honours never lessened; the *constancy*, that no difficulties could repress or diminish; *liberality*, scarcely credible to modern minds; the *piety*, reverential and fervent; and an *activity of practical mind*, so effective and irresistible, that their triumphs seemed half miraculous from their rapidity and repetition.

Indeed, when the Arabians emerged from the seclusion of their almost unknown country, they seemed to combine the very qualities then wanted for the awakening and improvement if not the salvation of the world.

Let us look for a moment at the *principles* that must be supposed to have actuated these people when they passed from the conquest of a nation to the settlement and development of it. It is only necessary to go to the Quran and to some of the sayings of Muhammad. "He who has been gifted with wisdom and philosophy has received very great good," says the Quran. "Glory," said Muhammad, "consists not in wealth, but in knowledge." A widely known saying is, "The ink of the learned is as precious as the blood of the martyrs."

"One learned man," said the Prophet, "is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant believers." It was thought that no amount of *worship* raised a man above the merit of *knowledge*. "A learned man is as superior to a worshipper as the full moon to the stars." "Seek for science," Muhammad said, "even though it be in China."

Surely nothing proves the truth of our Western proverb, 'The pen is mightier than the sword,' so clearly as the history of the Arabian dominance. While their political power has declined, nothing has been able to deprive the world of the benefit of its *intellectual contribution* to the advancement of the world.

Take the subject of *literature*. Letters, which originally came to Europe from the East, were brought to Europe a second time by the genius of the Arabs, who were the link between ancient and modern literature. In the West,

literature had become almost extinct, and rude barbarism reigned. While the Empire of the Arabians prospered the Latin Church was ignorant of all good letters. Whatever proficiency was made later on by Latin writers, whether in philosophy, medicine, or mathematics, after their ignorance had been reproved by the industry of the Arabians, they owed entirely to them. They were not masters of a single Greek author, except in Latin versions rendered from the Arabic. It was through the medium of the Arabic that Ptolemy first became accessible to us in a Latin translation. Euclid, so long our chief preceptor in mathematical science, came into our hands through the same means. Scholars believe that many Greek works still exist in Arabic versions, the original having been long since lost.

In two branches of literature a special debt is due to the Arabs—*poetry* and *romance*. The genius of the Saracens for poetry goes back long before Islamic times, and it may be claimed that the *romance* style of writing had its birth in Arabia and was communicated to Europe by the Arabs. The "Romance of Antar," which precedes all European specimens of the romance now extant, is the only specimen of that style existing in the world, before the tenth century, complete in the form and characters proper to the romance. There are many traces in English literature of the inspiration kindled by the genius of Arabia in our poets and writers, from Chaucer to Milton.

Let us now turn to *science* and *philosophy*. As Europe emerged from the barbarism and ignorance which had been coincident with the period of Arabian learning, three rich mines of intellectual wealth were opened, principally in the fields of Arabian scholarship. One of these mines was that of *scholastic philosophy*, which revived the activity of mind which Grecian vanity had so much abused and the gross habits of the Romans had so long paralysed. The other subjects were *mathematical sciences* and *natural and experimental knowledge*, which neither Greeks nor Romans had ever much or permanently valued or pursued.

Many of the advanced students in Oriental countries know a great deal of the work of that great Englishman Lord Bacon, whose inquiries in *natural philosophy* have added so much to the resources of culture in the West. I was always interested to find that Lord Bacon was appreciated highly by the young

men of Egypt. I am not surprised at this, however, for in tracing the chief sources from which Bacon drew many of the ideas which he enlarged and developed, one has to go back to the thirteenth century. Roger Bacon, who was born in 1214, was a man deeply learned in Oriental languages, learned in the Universities of Moorish Spain, and as familiar with the Arabian authors of that time as with the Greek and Latin classics. It was from this scholar that Lord Bacon in the seventeenth century imbibed and borrowed the first principles of his famous experimental system; a fact which indisputably establishes the derivation of the Baconian philosophy from the Arabs.

The Arab philosophers were men who combined, with an acuteness and activity of mind that has never been surpassed, all the knowledge which industry could then attain. What they knew they knew thoroughly, and there is a clearness and a penetration about their reasoning which spread a lustre over every subject they handled. Their work highly exalted the intellect of Europe.

The great national improvement that soon became discernible in England after the twelfth century arose from the combined operation of the scholastic vigour and penetration of thought, of the sublime deductions and unerring reasoning of the *mathematical sciences*, and of the stream of knowledge, perpetually enlarging, that began to pour into the world from natural and *experimental philosophy*.

In the matter of *science*, too, it must in justice be said that while Europe in the tenth century was slumbering in the intellectual torpidity which followed the downfall of the Latin rhetorical literature, the Arabs were following with ardour those scientific pursuits which were to give a new spirit of life and knowledge to the Western world. To Moorish schools in Spain went a constant stream of students from England, France, Germany, and Italy, to explore the intellectual riches they possessed, so that Europe might share in their treasures.

The Arab universities in Spain were the founts of learning to which Christian ignorance went for its early education. Among other celebrated Western pupils of Arab teachers were Peter the Venerable, and Pope Sylvester II. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that up to the end of the fifteenth century there was scarcely a man of eminence or learning in the schools of England, France, and Italy whose biography does not

acknowledge the debt which he owed directly or indirectly to Arab learning.

In the history of *chemistry* the Arabs assume the undisputed rank of inventors. This important science, the primitive source of the experimental philosophy, was the genuine product of Arabian genius. Nothing could show more powerfully than this does how great was the intellectual vigour of the time. The vivid imagination of the East led them in their first essays in chemistry to a romantic quest after the philosopher's stone, and the elixir of life, which was to avert death, and alchemy, those incessant researches to discover the process of transmuting the baser metals into gold. But their experimental intellect delivered them from these delusions; the practical nature of their researches soon corrected the errors of their imagination. They successfully analysed the various substances of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms; made experiments on air, fire, earth, and water, ascertained the opposite and kindred properties of alkalies and acids; invented, together with the alembic, various kinds of distillation and sublimation; discovered the volatile oils, and the medicinal qualities of mercury, and the changing of certain poisonous minerals into salutary medicines.

The West took all these discoveries, both from the Arabs of Asia as well as of Spain, and by their more sober temperament brought the art of chemistry under fixed principles and rules and raised it to a science. The subsequent history of chemistry is linked with the whole intellectual progress of modern Europe.

Arising from these early studies of chemistry, great advances were made towards *medicine* and *pharmacy*. The highest medical authorities unite in acknowledging the debt of Europe to the Arabs for the recovery and improvement of the art of medicine. The Saracens applied themselves with great diligence to the study of medical science, mastering whatever had been known to the Greeks. It was here that their knowledge of chemistry enabled them to eclipse all forerunners.

In *pharmacy*, or the art of preparing medicines, they enormously enlarged the list of remedies for disease. Among other important additions to the vegetable medicines, they first introduced rhubarb, tamarinds, cassia, senna, and camphor. They first cultivated sugar, bringing an agreeable element

into food which to the great masses of the people had been up to that time almost unknown—for honey, the only sweet thing known, was very scarce and expensive.

Out of all this grew the greatest skill of the physician. The study of the symptoms of disease was the favourite and successful study of the Arabs. By zeal and penetration they were enabled to solve many obscure problems, tracing many diseases from their effects to their causes, and to apply effective remedies. In the cure of skin diseases they were particularly successful. To the Saracen physicians belongs the merit of having first investigated and described the deadly disease of small-pox. They were also the first to understand the nature of measles. Various abscesses, specially that of the pericardium and its adherence to the heart, the relaxation and other affections of the throat, are classed by the admission of modern students of medicine as amongst the discoveries of the medical skill of the Arabians. Indeed, when that Orientalist and physician, Sprengel, a few years since, came to study this subject, he said that medical science, even in its present advanced state, might derive important accessions from the study of the old Arabian authors.

When Europe began to emerge from darkness, the medical schools of Africa, Spain, and Sicily gave their light to the schools that were started. Gibbon says the first medical school that arose in the darkness of Europe was at Salerno. The man whose genius established this new centre of European learning was the monk Constantine. He spent thirty-nine years of his life on a scientific pilgrimage in the East, returning from Bagdad. To the writings and teachings of this man may be justly ascribed the subsequent progress of medicine, not only in the school at Salerno, but in all those schools which branched out from it into all the countries of Catholic Europe.

The art of healing led to the establishment of hospitals and asylums for the good of the sick and the insane. We have the description of Bagdad written by the Jewish Rabbi Benjamin of Tuleda. He says: "The Caliph is a pious and benevolent man, and has erected buildings on the other side of the river. These buildings include many large houses, streets, and *hostelries for the sick poor*, who resort thither in order to be cured. There are about sixty medical warehouses here, all well provided from the Caliph's Stores with spices

and other necessities ; and every patient who claims assistance is fed at the King's expense until his cure is completed. There is, further, the large building called the abode of the insane."

In the year 1304 a very important lunatic asylum was founded in Cairo, and it was not till *more than a century afterwards* that we hear of any institutions of the kind in Europe. Even then it was from Spain that they spread over Europe.

(*To be continued.*)

## NATURE'S PROBLEMS. NO. II

### THE IMMUTABLE LAW OF CHANGE

By Professor N. STEPHEN

"This Life, 'tis but a changing scene—  
To-day it is, To-morrow it has been."

IN the first paper of this little series of Nature Problems<sup>1</sup> I made use incidentally of the phrase which is the title of this paper, and it has been suggested to me that the phrase is in itself contradictory, or it is in itself an exception, such as to preclude the use of the word "immutable," which allows of no exception.

In reply I wish to say—(1) A law is but the expression, in so many words or phrases, of some ascertained fact or rule of life ; (2) I use the word "immutable" in connection with the great "Law of Change," because I know of no exception to its action in this world or in this life ; in nature or in humanity.

All who live must die ; all that is must pass away into the has been. The processes of decay and renewal go on uninterruptedly, and no thing and no person can escape from, or prevent the effects of, this great law of Nature. I admit that in some ways science has been able to delay its action, or in some cases to vary it, for a time by the use of preservatives, or works of engineering skill ; but note this—*it is only to DELAY*, never to overcome, Nature's processes ; and, further, the delaying cause once removed, Nature exerts her powers with increased force, and change and decay set in with redoubled speed, as if she were determined to avenge the delay.

There is no exception, for in matters small and great its

<sup>1</sup> "Problem of Life," see ISLAMIC REVIEW, January 1916.

action is universal, and varies only in the matter of time ; in some cases the interval between creation and decay being measured in hours, in some days, in some years, and in others even by centuries ; the process apparently being so slow that the change is quite imperceptible to any given generation of men, or I might even say to many generations : but all things ever moving on to a certain end in obedience to this great law. Nature to-day, as ever, building up, pulling down, and rebuilding. The old order passing away and giving place to the new ; not as a matter of caprice or chance, but in obedience to, and in accord with, the immutable law of Nature, change following change in never-ending circle, even as night followeth day, and as surely as day followeth night.

In short papers such as these long arguments would be out of place. I can only state certain things which *I believe to be facts*, and draw certain lessons from them ; and you, dear reader, must agree with, or differ from, me just as you see fit, or as your knowledge prompts you, knowing I am ready to grant to you the same freedom of thought as I claim for myself.

Here is a common expression often made use of—"As fixed as the unchanging hills" ; but, like many common and poetic expressions, it is a common inaccuracy, for there is no such thing on earth as "the unchanging hills" or even mountains. Science, as seen in geology, has shown us that even the mighty Himalayas were not always as they are, but are the result of the action of this very law ; while, to quote Professor Huxley, "There was a time when the Alps and Pyrenees had no existence, as is proved by the fact that we find, raised up on the flanks of these mountains, elevated by the forces of upheaval which have given rise to them, masses of *Cretaceous rock*, which formed *the bottom of the seas* before these mountains existed" (the italics are mine) ; or, to quote another authority, S. Laing says, "The more we study geology, the more we are impressed by the fact that the normal state of the earth is, and has always been, one of incessant change." How many ages or generations have passed away since these changes began it profits us little to inquire, for we have no certain means of knowing, and no advantage to gain from such knowledge ; but the great truth is there—a visible proof of the immutability of this great law of Nature, and that there is no exception to it so far as this world of ours is concerned.

Laing<sup>1</sup> gives us another fact which at first sight is startling, but is none the less true. He says, "We are apt to consider the earth as the stable, and the sea as the unstable, element; but in reality it is exactly the reverse. Land has been perpetually rising and falling, while the level of the sea has remained the same." Note here, however, it is *the level only* which is referred to; in other respects the sea is just as subject to the law of change as the land is.

Now I know well, visible proof is always of more weight than mere deductive argument, and to see a process at work is more convincing than any mere reading; and this is possible to-day, and every day, for we have it before us in the constant changes, slow but sure, of sea and land—the mighty ocean leaving here and encroaching there, swallowing up (as it were) an island here, or heaving up a new one there; this river or coast-line silting up, and a new estuary or river-bed opening out at another place.

The means employed are not many; in fact for all purposes we may say there are but two—(1) Erosion and deposition by water in the form of rain, river, or ocean; and (2) Upheaval by volcanic eruption. The first slow, sure, and continuous; the latter intermittent and violent.

It is only very few persons that are so placed as to see the latter at work; but almost every one may, with very little trouble, see the first-named. The Rhone,<sup>2</sup> for instance, enters the Lake of Geneva a dull, turbid stream, but flows out from it clear as crystal, having deposited all its earthy matter at the bottom of the lake; and this, in effect, is equally true of the Ganges, or any great river in the world; and in ages to come the lake becomes dry land, and the river seeks another bed.

May I be excused if I quote a purely local instance? I do so, because I am so familiar with it, having spent many a long summer-day reading, or trying to read, in its visible signs, the history of a past, but not too long past age.

Here (in Liverpool) we have at our very doors, plainly to be seen, these changes in course of making, in the case of the rivers Mersey and Dee. Walk with me along the shore from New Brighton to Hoylake, and read the story as we

<sup>1</sup> S. Laing, "Modern Science," chap. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

go. Passing many lesser signs, we come near Meols (Cheshire), and between that place and Hoylake, to the remains of a great forest, extending far below low-water mark, and probably right across to the opposite shore at Formby; here you may see the roots and trunks of mighty trees, some many feet in circumference, and standing on one of them, try to reconstruct the scene when, where the great Atlantic liners and the mightiest Dreadnoughts now sail in safety, was at a (comparatively) recent time dry land, covered with trees of great size, and dense vegetation, all of our own period: here the sea has encroached. Then pass up the other side of the peninsula (Wirral) by Dee side. Note Parkgate, now an insignificant village of one street, but once the place of departure for the mail boats to Ireland and other places; now only the smallest craft can reach it, and those only at high tides: here the water has receded. Then, if time permit, pass on to ancient Chester and read the equally clear evidences there; stand on its walls and handle those old mooring rings, and recall that kings stepped from the royal barges direct on to the walls; then you will be able to realize some little of the action of this great law, and the changes it has brought about.

It may be argued that even these are mere grains of sand, hardly worth quoting; but I am writing for you not as trained scientists, but as persons of ordinary intelligence and moderate education, and my experience is, that these little instances, which you can at any time inspect for yourself, appeal to such much more effectively than some great cataclysm of Nature which only the specialist can grasp, while they are quite as conclusive as proofs and illustrations of the fact that we live in a world of change where nothing stands still, but everything is moving on in a never-ending journey, in strict accord with, and obedience to, the Immutable Law of Change.

So much as to the (so-called) solid earth on which we dwell. Let us next consider briefly, (1) The life we find on it; (2) The more personal question: The life we live on it.

There are some problems so far beyond our reach, that neither science nor experience is able to solve them, because we have no data to go upon, no foundation on which to

build: "The Problem of Life"<sup>1</sup> is one of these. But if life itself remains an unsolved riddle, its changes are an open book for those who care to read. For life on this earth partakes of the nature of earth, in its instability and change.

I cannot here go into all the arguments of biologists, evolutionists, natural selectionists, survival of the fittest, *ad hoc genus homo*, but they all have much in common under different names, however much they finally diverge in conclusions. I have to note only the evidence of this great law of change as we may see it in records of undoubted genuineness, and also from personal observation.

It requires no very special training or knowledge to recognize in the remains of animal or vegetable life, as seen in the various strata of the earth, that great changes have taken place. Any one can see for themselves, even in the more recent coal measures, remains of animal and especially of plant life very different from any we now possess, though resembling it in many features; and the farther we trace back the ages, the greater the changes. In animal life, rather the more difficult task to the person not specially trained to biological research, but equally evident to those who can read the story, though the periods of time, be they what they may, are much greater. In vegetable life with much greater ease, because they are more accessible, and perhaps I may say not so extreme in their types, the old retaining more the leading, or at least more general, characters underlying the new; the root, the stem, the leaf, in varying forms being found even in the oldest examples.

Of course there are many changes, more brief and recurrent; I shall deal with them later in another paper. For the present I have only to show the universality and immutability of the law of change, how it *has been* in force from the beginning, and *it will be* to the end.

What do we find, then, as it relates to humanity? to our own life on the earth?

There is no room for doubt that, so far as human life in general is concerned, we have cause to rejoice that we live in the twentieth century, for the path of change has long been an upward one. Taking the largest view possible,

<sup>1</sup> See ISLAMIC REVIEW, January 1916.

we must see that the world is growing better, and life is more worth living, "The good old times" proving a good old fiction, except for oratorical effects. If you look around you with unbiased mind you must see that there never was a time when man, as a whole, stood so closely together as to-day; though we may hope when this sad war is over, the nations may be more united still, and may have learned much of good, that so out of this present evil good may arise, and man be the better and the happier that the evil days are past.

That there are still rich and poor, alas we know; that there is still suffering and sorrow, alas we know: but if we look back at the old ideas of earlier civilization we shall see that the condition of vast numbers of mankind was lower and worse than anything we know of to-day, for, fortunately, the changes have nearly always—always, if we take a wide enough view—been in the line of progress.

Life is longer. In Shakespeare's time a man was old at fifty, or even forty-five; he himself died, after a period of rest and retirement, at the age of fifty-two, and some of his contemporaries speak of this as "a ripe old age." In these times a man in fair health may reasonably hope to remain in the full vigour of his intellect to seventy or even more. Then people, in civilized lands, are better housed, better fed, better taught, and better cared for in all ways than they ever were before.

Our knowledge of Nature's laws is greater, and we have realized that if these laws are broken we cannot escape the penalty; that if any class of society suffer, society as a whole must suffer and pay the penalty: so in most countries the State has taken upon itself in some measure the burden, and, for the good of humanity as a whole, enforces the laws of health, sanitation, and general social observances and requirements—the result being a better, a cleaner, a happier, and a longer life to mankind in general.

We cannot escape—the law is in very truth immutable: new days, new ways, new men, new manners.

"New times demand new measures and new men;  
The world advances and in time outgrows  
The laws that in our fathers' days were best;  
And doubtless, after us, some purer scheme  
Will be shaped, by wiser men than we,  
Made wiser by the steady growth of truth."—J. R. LOWELL.

There is no standing still ; we must either go on or go back—move upward to a higher and brighter life ; or fall behind, and down to a life that is but a death to all that is good, or noble, or godlike in man.

So far, life at large. How then does it affect the individual ? That is a great question to be so briefly dealt with ; but there again the great "Law of Change" is at work from the cradle to the grave. A Russian writer has said, "Man's life is three stages : Born—living—dying ; our entry into the world, our journey through the world, our departure from the world." Of these the first is quite outside our influence ; the second is our own to make the most of ; the third may be sad and terrible, or great and glorious, just according to whether we do ill or well. There are some who doubt this, but to me no truth seems clearer or more certain than this. "The deeds we do, whether good or evil, return to us again to give us our reward ; they may tarry long on the journey, as tarry the great caravans in the desert, and we may say to ourselves they will never come ; but surely there cometh a day when they do stand before us, and in their hands they bear the gift, Life for the good, Death for the evil."

Think over it, try to crystallize the thought ; or rather here it is, as it rises in my memory, crystallized for us by one whose name I cannot recall—

"If thou do ill, the Joy fades,  
Not the Pains ;  
If well, the Pain doth fade,  
The Joy remains."

Remember, you cannot stay the action of this law ; it commences work with us even before our birth, and goes on unceasingly ; we cannot turn back the hands of time and walk over again the path of life. Yesterday has gone ; to-day is ; to-morrow may never be ! The pendulum swings to and fro, ticking up seconds and minutes from the period allotted to each of us, and we cannot stop it or put back the hands of the clock ; it is for us so to live that some of our fellows may be the better, and none the worse, because we have lived.

"The world goes up, and the world goes down,  
And sunshine follows the rain ;  
But yesterday's sneer, and yesterday's frown,  
Can never come over again."

ANON.

If there were only less thoughtless ones and more thinkers, how many sorrows, how many regrets, how many unkind acts or words we should be spared! But such things cannot be recalled, nor their effects cancelled by regret or sorrow; but they may often be prevented by a little thought. Many people think the case is met by a curt, "Sorry, I'm sure," but—

"'Tis not enough to say, 'I'm sorry' and repent,  
And then go on just as you always went."

ANON.

We cannot avoid mistakes, we cannot always keep our temper, but we can learn the lesson these slips should teach us, and so avoid them in the future.

Does it seem a hard thing when we look around and feel, or say, "Change and decay in all around I see," nothing stable, nothing lasting? To humanity unsupported by Faith the thought must be full of sorrow, but to those who believe in God and hope for the resurrection of the dead it is not so, for they know, and see, that if there were no decay there would be no resurrection; no death, no immortality. To the unbeliever, death is verily a river of darkness which must overwhelm him for ever; to the believer death is but the Gate of Life, a life where this great law of change is no longer a power, where all is constant and sure, and change and decay are unknown. But, after all, is it true to say "nothing is lasting"? I think not. *God* is lasting, and *Truth* can never die; it may be hidden for a time, but only to rise again the brighter for its eclipse, for—

"Truth is eternal, but her effluence,  
With endless change, is fitted to the hour;  
Her mirror is turned forward, to reflect  
The promise of the future, not the past."

J. R. LOWELL.

## UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

IN commemoration of the Birth of the Holy Prophet the Islamic Society gave a *conversazione* at the Hotel Cecil, London, on 20th January. The programme was as follows:

Recitation from the Holy Quran . . . ISMAIL TEWFIK BEY.  
Recitation of Persian Verses in praise of the Prophet

MR. S. S. HUSSAN.

Darood and Recitation of Arabic Verses in praise of the Prophet

SYED ABDUL MUHI ARAB.

Recitation in English in praise of the Prophet . . .	Dr. J. POLLEN.
Eastern Music . . . . .	KHOURSHED KHANAM
with the RENOWNED MUSICIANS OF HINDUSTAN.	
Address in English . . . . .	MR. YUSUF ALI.
(The Rt. Hon. LORD HEADLEY in the Chair.)	
Arabic Recitation . . . . .	SYED EHSAN EL BAKRY BEY.
Western Music . . . . .	MISS SAFIA RODMAN.
"Salam" . . . . .	KHOURSHED KHANAM
with the RENOWNED MUSICIANS OF HINDUSTAN.	

The gathering was very large and the guests were received by the Hon. Secretary. Almost all the prominent religions were represented. Islam was naturally in its full force, and was represented by many prominent men like Maulvi Sadr-ud-Din, headed by the veteran learned champion of Islam in the West, the Rt. Hon. Syed Amir Ali, P.C. The British Muslim Society was represented by Lord Headley, Mrs. Howell, and others. The Jewish faith was represented by Mr. Jaakoff Prelooker, Madam de Masquita, and Miss Marcus; the Parsi faith by Sir Munchargi Bhawnagri and Mr. and Mrs. Saklatvala. The Japanese poet Komai, with his friends, represented Buddhism and Confucianism. The representative of Old Catholicism was Mr. O'Donnell of O'Donnell; and of Brahma Samajism, Sir Krishna Gupta. There were several representatives of Hinduism and Christianity as well. There was at least one representative of "Materialism"—Mr. Arthur Field, one of the staunchest friends of Turkey and of Muslims.

Then, different ranks in society were also represented. Besides members of the British and Indian aristocracy there were the Prince and Princess Ourousoff, Baroness Mayer de Nourenburg, Count Borch, and others. The veteran officer Major-General Dickson and the young military cadet Afsur Yar Jung represented the military. Mr. Humayon Mirza of the Persian Legation, Mr. Mirza Abbas Ali Beg of the India Office, with his zealous Begum Saheba, His Excellency Barada Bey of the Egyptian Mission, and Sir Ali Imam, the ex-Vice-President of the Executive Council of the Viceroy of India, were also present. Professor Leon, Dr. Arnold, Dr. Pollen, and Mr. Shahid Suhrawardy represented Literature, Mr. Dusé Mohamed the Press. As to countries, Turkey was represented by Misses Ata Ullah, Persia by Mr. Isphani and his Begum; Spain, Russia, Italy, and several other countries, besides Arabia, India, and Egypt, were represented.

Lord Headley, in his opening address, ably refuted the charges brought against Islam by prejudiced and bigoted people, and described how Islam had raised the status of women. The lecture by Mr. Yusuf Ali was one of his most brilliant orations. It dealt with the different periods of the Prophet's life from his boyhood, when he was called *alamin*—the Trusty to his death, when he proved himself *Rahmatallilalamin*—the Mercy for the Worlds. The learned lecturer briefly dealt with the Muslim influence, which was really Muhammad's own influence, upon the whole world. He traced the present Western progress back to its Muslim origin, and gave out the names of some great Muslim scientists and chemists, etc.

A very pleasant evening was closed by a suitable speech from the President of the Society, Prince Abdul Karim, thanking all those who had come to join in fraternal sympathy to celebrate the birth of the Holy Prophet.

In her past history the Islamic Society has often successfully demonstrated the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, but this conversazione in celebration of the birth of the Holy Prophet was the most effective. There could not be a more befitting occasion chosen to demonstrate it than the celebration of the Prophet who has been most appropriately called the Mercy for the Worlds, who extended his recognition to all the Prophets of every country, who vouchsafed salvation to all good people, and who taught the world to worship One God Who is the Cherisher of all the Worlds, all the nations irrespective of their race, creed, or country. An opportunity was given to people of different countries, different races, different ranks, and different creeds to meet with brotherly affection at a social gathering, and the more such meetings are held the better will it be for humanity. The nation best suited to bring about Universal Brotherhood is the "intermediate nation"—the Muslim nation, and the best organization is that of the Central Islamic Society situated at the world-metropolis—London.

AL-QIDWAI.

---

## AN ANGLO-SAXON KING PROCLAIMS THE UNITY OF ALLAH AND THAT MUHAMMAD IS HIS PROPHET

By Professor H. M. LÉON, M.A., D.C.L., F.S.P., etc.

IN the Numismatical department of the British Museum there is preserved a curious and interesting gold coin, over twelve hundred and thirty years old, on which is inscribed in unmistakable Arabic characters the declaration that "There is no Deity but Allah, The One, Without Equal, and Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah," and the further declaration, engraved around the margin of the coin, "Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah, Who sent him (Muhammad) with the doctrine and the true faith to prevail over every other religion."

This coin was engraved, struck, and issued by Offa, King of Mercia, or "Middle England" (an ancient Anglo-Saxon kingdom, which extended on both sides of the River Trent from the North Sea to Wales), from 757 to 796. The name, originally restricted to the district around Tamworth and Lichfield and the Upper Trent valley, refers to a "march," a moorland, or frontier, which had to be defended against hostile neighbours; in this case such "alien enemies" being the Welsh, the "Ancient Britons," who for centuries contended with the Anglo-Saxon invaders for supremacy in that region.

A number of smaller states were gradually incorporated with Mercia, the first settlements being probably made during the second half of the sixth century of the Christian era. The kingdom was, however, of but little importance until the accession of Penda in 626 (C.D.), who rapidly, by his vigorous policy and equitable rule, attained a supremacy over the other kingdoms, particularly after his victory at Hatfield (or Heathfield) over Edwin, the powerful Deiran king, in 633. In 655, however, Penda was defeated and slain at Winwaed by Oswin, king of Northumbria,<sup>1</sup> and for the time being Mercian supremacy was terminated. Wulfhere, the nephew of Penda (659-675),

<sup>1</sup> This was the period when England was divided into what was termed the Heptarchy, or seven kingdoms. These were: Mercia, Kent, East Anglia, Northumbria, Wessex, Sussex, and Essex. So far as is known, only the first five kingdoms named above struck coins.

pushed back the Northumbrians, and extended the boundary of the kingdom southward to the Thames. Wulfhere was the first monarch of this kingdom to renounce paganism and embrace Christianity. One of his successors, Ethelbald (716-757), further spread the boundaries of Mercia, by making large encroachments upon the territories of adjoining states. But the mightiest kings of Mercia were Offa (757-796) and Cenwulf (706-819). After the death of the latter monarch the kingdom rapidly declined, and in 828 it was merged in the realm of Egbert, king of Wessex.

King Offa, in whose reign the interesting coin we have under consideration was struck, succeeded to the throne of Mercia in 757, he being the ninth monarch of that kingdom in succession from Wybba, the father of Penda (to whom allusion has previously been made). He found the kingdom much weakened, and probably the early years of his reign were occupied by him in restoring rule and order within his territory. In 771 he began a career of conquest: he defeated the army of the King of Kent in 775, and fought successfully against the West Saxons (779) and the Welsh. As a protection against these latter marauders he constructed a great earthwork which extended along the whole border between England and Wales, from the north coast of Flintshire, on the estuary of the Dee, through Denbigh, Montgomery, Salop, Radnor and Hereford, into Gloucestershire, where its southern termination is near the mouth of the Wye. Portions of this rampart still stand to a considerable height, though much of it has been almost obliterated by the ravages of time, the elements, and human beings. A vast amount of labour must have been expended to construct this work. Nearly parallel with it, some two miles to the eastern or English side, is an inferior rampart termed Watt's Dyke, which was also constructed by Offa and completed about 765 (C.D.). It is conjectured that the space between the two dykes may have been a species of neutral zone for trading purposes.

Offa had cordial relations with the Roman See. Two Legates, George and Theophylact, visited Mercia, and were received by the king at a court held at Lichfield in the year 786. The report which these ecclesiastics made to Pope Adrian I, attributed to 787, is printed in Birch's *Cart. Sax.*, No. 250. In this document there is direct reference to the

vow made by King Offa to Pope Adrian I. through the Legates to send 365 mancuses to the "Apostle of God" (i.e. the Pope), "as many as there are days in the year, as alms for the poor, and for the manufacture of lights for the church."

This donation by Offa appears to have been the origin of what has ever since been known as "Peter's Pence," and won from the Pope the grant of a Mercian archbishopric.

The importance of this grant by Offa will be hereafter seen, when we come to more particularly discuss the origin of the interesting coin we have now under consideration.

The coinage of the kingdom of Mercia appears to have been the most important of all the coin-striking kingdoms of the Heptarchy. The earliest Mercian coins are those which belong to the *sceat* class. These were usually of silver,<sup>1</sup> and weighed from eight to twenty grains.

These early Mercian *sceattæ* bear the names of Penda and Ethelred. The coins of the former are of purely Roman types, but those of the latter show a mixture of Roman and native design, thus pointing to a somewhat later date. The inscriptions on Penda's coins are in Roman and Runic characters, but those of Ethelred are in Runes (the ancient alphabet of the heathen Northmen) only.<sup>2</sup> The name of the king in each instance is given on the "reverse" side of the coin.

From the death of Ethelred (704) to the reign of Offa (757-796), a period of over half a century, there are no numismatic records of Mercia.

Offa did not strike any *sceattæ*, and his coins mainly consist of the "penny" class. They were of silver and weighed from eighteen to twenty grains. It is believed that Offa was the first monarch to introduce the "penny" into England.

<sup>1</sup> There are specimens of gold *sceattæ* in the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> The origin of the Runic writing has been a matter of prolonged controversy. The runes were formerly supposed to have originated out of the Phœnician or the Latin letters, but it is now generally agreed that they must have been derived, about the sixth century B.C., from an early form of the Greek alphabet which was employed by the Milesian traders and colonists of Olbia and other towns on the northern shores of the Black Sea. The Runic alphabet (the oldest of which contained 24 runes, divided into 3 families, each of 8 runes) is called the Futhorc, from the first six letters thereof, *f, u, th, o, r, c*. The old Norse word *run* originally meant "secret" or magical. The oldest extant Runic records probably date from the first century of the Christian era, the latest from the fifteenth to the sixteenth century; the greater number are older than the eleventh century, when, after the conversion of the Scandinavians to Christianity, the Futhorc was superseded by the Latin alphabet.

The form of this coin, but not the type, was derived from the *denier* of Charlemagne.<sup>1</sup>

Offa's coins of the "Penny series" are remarkable for their artistic excellence both in execution and design, and in this respect far surpass the issues of many succeeding rulers. The types are not only numerous but varied. They can be classified into two series: those bearing the bust of the king, and those in which the bust is absent. The bust, when present, is original in character, and exhibits undoubted attempts at portraiture. The designs on the reverse of the coins are decidedly ornamental, and comprise for the most part elaborately formed crosses or floral patterns. The busts upon the coins are well formed, and the head bears a life-like expression, the hair being usually arranged in close curls or plaits, but in some of the specimens it is loose and flowing. The inscriptions are generally in Roman characters, but here and there traces of Runes survive. There are no indications of mint-names, but we may conclude that the principal Mercian mint was in London. The coins themselves, however, prove that after the defeat of the King of Kent and his army in 775, at Otford (about three miles north of Sevenoaks and eight-and-a-half miles north-north-west of Tunbridge, Kent), when

<sup>1</sup> The letters £ s. d., which are used as abbreviations for pounds, shillings, and pence, owe their origin to certain Latin words used to denote coins. Thus £ signifies *libra*, a pound sterling; s signifies *solidus*. The Romans divided their coinage thus: one *libra* equalled 20 *solidi*, each *solidus* being equal to 12 *denarii* (the denarius thus being, as the modern English penny is to-day, the 240th part of the *libra* or pound); d signifies *denarius*, a penny, a word derived from the Latin *deni*, ten each, from *decem*, ten. The denarius was the principal silver coin of ancient Rome. The earliest money of Rome was of bronze, and the standard was the *as*. In 269 B.C. the *as* was fixed by law at a low valuation, and a silver coin was introduced, with the *denarius* = to 10 *asses*, and the *quinarus* = to 5 *asses*. The penny (Anglo-Saxon, *penig*; German, *Pfenning*, *Pfennig*) probably derives its name from the Middle Latin word *panna*, itself derived from the Latin, *patina*, a shallow bowl. After the sceattæ the penny is the most ancient of the English coins, and was the only one current among the Anglo-Saxons. It is first mentioned in the laws of Ina, King of the West Saxons, about the close of the seventh century of the Christian era. It was at that time a silver coin, and weighed about 22½ troy grains. Halfpence and farthings were not coined in England until the reign of Edward I., but the practice previously prevailed of so deeply indenting the penny with a cross mark that the coin could be easily broken into two or four parts as was required. In 1672 an authorized copper coinage was established in England and halfpence and farthings were struck in copper. The penny was not introduced until 1797, and at the same period the coinage of two-penny pieces was begun; but these latter being found unsuitable were withdrawn. The penny of the present bronze coinage is of only half the value of the old copper coin.

Kent became a fief of Mercia, Offa made use of the Canterbury mint.<sup>1</sup>

The remarkable gold coin of Offa bearing the Arabic inscription has furnished much food for reflection amongst the students of numismatics, and it is generally conceded that it is one of the rarest and most remarkable coins in the world.

Many treatises and papers have been written upon the coin and its origin, and numerous theories propounded with regard to the same.

So far back as November 25, 1841, a paper by Monsieur Adrian de Longperier, of Paris, was read before the Numismatic Society of London<sup>2</sup> upon this very coin. Mr. J. Y. Akerman, in a paper read before the same society on March 24, 1842, and printed in the *Numismatic Chronicle*, vol. v. pp. 122-124, also considers the *raison d'être* of this coin being struck. It is referred to by Mr. Herbert A. Grueber, F.S.A., in his *Handbook of the Coins of Great Britain and Ireland in the British Museum* (published 1899).<sup>3</sup> The coin is fully described in Kenyon's *Gold Coins of England*, 1884, pp. 11, 12, and is illustrated in the frontispiece to that work, Fig. 13. It was made the subject of an exhaustive and extremely interesting article by Mr. P. W. P. Carlyon-Britton, F.S.A., President of the British Numismatic Society,<sup>4</sup> and as recently as 1914 was the subject of an excellent paper by Mr. J. Allan, M.A. (British Museum Staff, Coin Department).<sup>5</sup>

The theories put forward by the above learned gentlemen, all of them well versed in numismatical lore, and by some other individuals, whose names are not so well known to fame, may be classified under the following heads:—

1. That Offa had become a convert to Islam, and took this means of declaring his acceptance of that Faith by stamping the *Kalima*, or Islamic Confession of Faith, upon his coins.

2. That, without knowing the meaning of the Arabic words

<sup>1</sup> In Anglo-Saxon times mints for the coinage of money existed at London, Canterbury, and Malmesbury, and coins are extant bearing the names *Dorovernis* (Canterbury), *Londuni* (London), and *Mealdenus* (Malmesbury), showing the place where they were struck.

<sup>2</sup> Vide the *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1st series, vol. iv. (1841), pp. 232-234.

<sup>3</sup> Introduction, p. xiii.

<sup>4</sup> *British Numismatic Journal*, 1st series, vol. v. (1909), pp. 55-72.

<sup>5</sup> "Offa's imitation of an Arab dinar." The *Numismatic Chronicle*, 4th series, vol. xiv. (1914), pp. 77-89.

upon the coin, possibly merely regarding them as so much ornamentation, Offa had the coin struck off, merely adding, in order to identify himself with the same, the words "Offa Rex" stamped also thereupon.

3. That, as many pilgrims proceeded from England to the "Holy Land" of Palestine, then under the dominion of the Muslims, this coin was struck, bearing this Arabic inscription in order that it might be the more readily accepted by the Muslims, and thus facilitate the journey of the pilgrims and assist them in trading (which many of them did) in those lands.

4. That the piece was not a coin intended for general circulation, but was struck specially as a *mancus* and as one of the quota of 365 gold pieces which Offa had vowed to pay annually to the Pope of Rome.

Undoubtedly something can be said in support of each of these theories, but in these matters one must carefully consider all the circumstances of the time and weigh the *pros* and *cons* upon the subject. The first theory, namely that Offa had accepted Islam, appears to me to be absolutely untenable. At that time Islam was naught more to the Western world than the absolutely living embodiment of "Anti-Christ." Its tenets were not only not understood, but were wickedly misrepresented, and it was this wilful misrepresentation of "The Faith Most Excellent," and the colossal ignorance and superstition of the mob, that made the series of crusades possible. Even to-day, twelve centuries after the passing away of Offa, the most profound ignorance exists among the masses as to Islamic doctrines and ethics. Is it then at all probable that Offa, who had petitioned the Pope to grant him an Archbishop for his kingdom, and had voluntarily vowed to pay 365 golden pieces each year to that pontiff (and we know from authentic documents and records that up to his death such tribute was regularly paid by Offa), and had received with open arms and the greatest honour the legates from Rome, should become a Muslim? At that period in the world's history for Offa to have so done would have meant for him, not merely the loss of his throne, but probably his life also.

Most of his other coins are stamped with a cross and bear his bust! That is not very Islamic.

True that the cross may have been placed upon the coins, and deeply indented therein, so as to enable the same to have

been the more easily divided into halves or quarters ; but the cross is there, and we cannot conceive any " True-Believer " placing such an emblem upon any coin issued by him.

Furthermore, after the conquest of Kent by Offa in 775, and the adding of that territory to his kingdom, we find the Archbishops of Canterbury acknowledging Offa (and subsequently his successor Coenwulf) as their overlord. This is amply proved by the coins struck by the Archbishops of Canterbury (who possessed the right of minting money) at that period.

Jaenberht (766-790) is the first Archbishop of Canterbury of whom coins are known. During his episcopate Offa conquered Kent, and as Jaenberht's coins were struck under his supremacy, they always bear that ruler's name on the reverse. The obverse types are a star, a *cross* potent or *pommée*, or the name of the archbishop in three lines only. The reverse is always the same with one exception, namely, with Offa's name at the end of a *cruciform* object.

The next archbishop was Æthelheard (793-805); he was elected to that office in 791, but did not receive the *pallium* until 793. During this interval he appears to have struck coins with the title of *Pontifex* instead of *Archiepiscopus*. His early coins bear the name of Offa ; but those struck after 796 that of Coenwulf. Those with the name of Offa have for obverse and reverse types :—a star, a *cross*, the *Christian monogram*, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Is it likely that these archbishops, whose territory had been conquered by Offa, who had set up a rival archbishop to them in his own dominions, would have put the name of Offa on their coins if he had accepted Islam? Rather would we not have seen them denouncing him as "an infidel," and rousing the populace in revolt against him and his rule?

The first theory therefore appears to be absolutely untenable.

Let us now consider the theory that without knowing the meaning of the Arabic words upon the coin, and possibly regarding them as pure ornamentation, Offa had the coin struck, adding the words "Offa Rex" to the original superscription.

Mons. Adrian de Longperier inclines to this view. He says :—

"However strange this piece may appear, it is yet susceptible of explanation. The faults of orthography to be traced in the legend, which

<sup>1</sup> Grueber, *Handbook of the Coins of Great Britain and Ireland*, p. 9.

is reversed in its position with the words OFFA REX, shows that it is a copy of a Mussulman *dinar*, by a workman unacquainted with the Arabic language, and indeed ignorant of the fact of these characters belonging to any language whatever. Examples of a similar description of coin were put in circulation by the French bishops of Agde and Montpellier in the thirteenth century. In the present case, we cannot see an *intentional* adoption of a foreign language, as on the coins of Russia, Spain, Sicily, Georgia, and even Germany. On the moneys of Vassili Dimitrivitch, of Dmitri Imamvicht, on that of the Norman princes William and Roger, and the Mozarabic *dinar* of Alfonsus, we find Arabic legends appropriated to the very princes by whose commands they were struck. One silver piece of Henry IV, Emperor of Germany, bears on the reverse the name of the Khalif Moktader Billah-ben-Muhammad; but this is merely the result of an association between those princes.”<sup>1</sup>

In support of the views of Mons. A. de Longperier, it is worth noticing that in later times there were issued by Christian princes coins having inscriptions partly in Roman and partly in Arabic characters, and some were issued by Crusaders with entirely Arabic inscriptions.

In Mr. Carlyon-Britton's paper upon this coin<sup>2</sup> he quotes five specimens of this description of coin, namely:—

(1) A gold coin of Alfonzo VIII, of Castile (1158-1214, Christian date), the Arabic inscription on the obverse side whereof reads thus: *El Imam el bay'ata el mesiahyata el Baba, ALF. Bismiel ab Walibu wa errooh el kaddūs Allahoo wahido mam aman wa' tamada yekdon salminan*. The translation whereof is: “The pontiff of the church of the Messiah, the Pope. ALF. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

The reverse side of the coin bears an inscription in Arabic of which the following is a translation: “Prince of the Catholics (*Amir el Katolikin*), Alfonzo, son of Sancho. May God help and protect him.” Around the margin of the coin we find this legend also in Arabic characters: “This *dinar* was struck in the city of Toledo, 1235 of (the era of) Assafar.”

The era of Assafar dates from 30 B.C., that being the date of the submission of Spain to the Romans, consequently the coin in question dates from the year 1197 of the Christian era.

The other coins exhibited by Mr. Carlyon-Britton are:

<sup>1</sup> Adrian de Longperier, “A Remarkable Gold Coin of Offa,” the *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1st series, vol. iv. (April 1841 to January 1842), pp. 232-234.

<sup>2</sup> P. W. P. Carlyon-Britton, F.S.A., President of the British Numismatic Society: “The Gold Mancus of Offa, King of Mercia,” *British Numismatic Journal*, 1st series, vol. v. (1909).

(2) Silver "staurat" drachma struck at St. Jean d'Acre about 1251 under Louis IX (1251-1259).

(3) Gold besant struck by Crusaders at St. Jean d'Acre in 1251.

(4) Early imitation by Crusaders of dinars of El Amir (Fatimite Khaliph from 1101 to 1130 C.D. = 494 to 524 Hegira), and attributed to the regency of Bohemund I of Antioch under Tancred.

(5) Imitation of a dinar of about the time of Hisham II (Hegira 400-403), independent Amawu Caliph in Spain. Found in Spain.

Of the above five coins, three of them (1 to 3) contain Christian inscriptions written in Arabic language and character; the latter two (4 and 5) are written in corrupted Arabic. No. 4 has a small Maltese cross in the centre of the reverse side.

The third suggestion, namely that the coin was coined by Offa for the use of such of his subjects as made the pilgrimage to the "Holy Land," does not seem very probable. The number of such pilgrims, of necessity, would be limited to a comparative few, and the monarchs of those days, even if they were as pious as King Offa is stated to have been, were not distinguished for any particular solicitude for the comfort of their subjects. The majority of these rulers would rather grind out from their subjects the uttermost farthing they could extort, rather than go to the expense and trouble of providing special coins for their use while on a pilgrimage.

There remains, therefore, but the fourth proposition to consider, and here we find ourselves on much surer ground. We have already seen that Offa had made a vow that he would pay 365 gold pieces every year to the Pope, and that probably, in consideration of the faithful fulfilment of that vow, the occupant of the pontifical throne had bestowed an Archbishop upon Mercia. The exact date of Offa's vow we do not know, but it may fairly be presumed that he made it to the two papal legates, George and Theophylact, who visited him in 786.

The date upon Offa's coin now becomes extremely important.

The coin bears the date Hegira 157, equivalent to 774 of the Christian era. This date does not, however, prove that Offa's coin was struck in that year (twelve years prior to the visit of the legates); but as the piece is manifestly a copy of an

Arabic *dinar* of that year (Hegira 157), made by a person who did not understand Arabic (otherwise, why did he place the words OFFA REX in an inverted position to the Arabic characters), all that the date, 157 Hegira, demonstrates is that Offa's coin was struck in, or, what is more probable, subsequently to the year 774 of the Christian era.

What appears to us to be the most probable origin of this coin is that when Offa made his vow, the question arose as to what was to be the size and weight of each of the 365 "gold pieces." In reply to such a query on the part of the king, who would naturally desire to know the exact extent of his liability, what would be more natural than for one of the legates to hand Offa a coin, and say, "365 gold pieces like *this*?"

Arabic coins were well known at Rome. Countless pilgrims from the Holy Land passed through the Eternal City on their return from Palestine, many of whom laid offerings at the foot of the papal throne. It is fair to presume that amongst such offerings so made, that Arabic gold coins, then in free circulation in Syria, would be included, and high ecclesiastics, such as the legates, would easily become possessed of the same, and might preserve them as curiosities; or it may have been that, seeing that the Arab *dinar* was of a known weight and quality of gold, one of those coins was especially brought to England to fix thereby the standard and quality of "the gold pieces" to be paid as tribute by Offa.

If such was the case, and Offa so received a sample coin, the Mercian king, according to the almost slavish superstitions of that period, would naturally desire to scrupulously perform his vow to the very letter, and to accomplish this object he would have the sample coin faithfully imitated and struck in his own mint, and stamped in addition with his own name and title, "OFFA REX," in order that no question could thereafter arise as to the exact fulfilment of his vow in regard to the species of coin promised, or as to the identity of the sender of the contribution. That Offa did keep his promise is certain, for in the papal letter sent in 798 by Pope Leo III to Offa's successor, King Coenwulf, requesting that monarch to continue the donation, it is distinctly so stated.<sup>1</sup> It may, therefore, be reasonably presumed that Offa's coin was struck about 787,

<sup>1</sup> This letter is quoted in full in *Cart. Sav.*, No. 288. The exact words are *quod et fecit*.

and was one of the 365 gold pieces sent to Rome in pursuance of his vow.

It is significant to know that this particular coin—so far as we know, the only one now extant—was purchased by a certain Duke de Blacas, an enthusiastic numismatist, *in Rome*, about a century ago.

No similar coin has been found in England. All this goes to show that the coin was not struck to be put into circulation in England, but was coined for a special purpose, such probably being the payment by Offa of the promised tribute to Rome.

If such be the case, then what bitter irony, unconsciously, accompanied the gift! One of the claims of the Head of the Catholic Christian is that he is the "Apostle of God," and the "Vice-regent of Christ upon the earth." Yet, here to his teeth his faithful servitor, Offa, sends as a tribute 365 golden coins, on each of which is plainly stated: There is but One Allah, the Only God, the True, and Muhammad is His Prophet!

Well might Cowper write the lines:

"God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform"!

## GOD AND SCIENCE

By DUSÉ MOHAMED

"There is nothing new under the sun."—SOLOMON.

I POINTED out, and I hope I produced proof, in my previous article that thought is not original.

I shall endeavour to prove on this occasion that even as thought is not original, everything emanating from the brain of man is obtained from the Godhead, and that our so-called discoveries are no more than an improvement in some cases on pre-existing things, and that the credit we take to ourselves for scientific research is only brain receptivity of pre-existing thought or inspiration—very often misapplied. That we are no more capable of producing anything on earth from our own brain, any more than we are capable of producing or inventing man, other than by the Will and laws laid down by the Creator.

Men produce, for the most part, the things that really do

not matter, and this production is limited and regulated by an All-wise Creator. Man matters, but man cannot reproduce man, only in accordance with Divine Will. For instance: **Man** may change the sex of trees and plants by scientific methods, but he cannot control the birth-rate nor alter the sex of humanity, neither can he change the laws of God, which some call Nature.

Population, procreation, and multiplication of animals or plants are controlled by a Higher Power. Were men capable of creating or multiplying animate or inanimate creation, there would no longer remain a belief in the Architect of the Universe. There would be no necessity for such a Supreme Will.

A clever gardener will graft a portion of the bearing female plant upon the trunk of a male tree; it may bear fruit and it may not. If it bears fruit, men applaud the horticulturist and boast about man's achievement. Should the process fail in its object, we attribute the failure to lack of skill. No man can succeed in changing the face of nature unless God wills, and these failures go to prove the limitations of man. For, were man's efforts unlimited there could be no such thing as failure. Here again the wisdom of the Creator is manifested. Were we always successful there would be no need for effort. Success being a foregone conclusion, constituted as we are we would become stagnant and bored to death by the infallibility of our achievements. The only thing that we really achieve is the grave, and even that may be denied us until God wills. I once knew a man who thrice unsuccessfully attempted suicide, and I have no doubt the reader is acquainted with similar human phenomena. The laws of God and the laws of nature are fixed and immovable. All mundane things are in a state of flux, but there is no such thing as accident, chance, or coincidence. Science is a sham and an invention, a delusion and a snare. Science has relieved human suffering, but has also—unconsciously, perhaps—created new diseases.

Inventions, invariably operated in the interests of capital, whilst conserving labour, have increased pauperism by the automatic production of an over-stocked labour market.

I am convinced that war is inevitable for the levelling up of populations, even as in "pre-scientific" days epidemics were inevitable. The Creator never intended that man should

inhabit the earth without means of subsistence. Populations have increased to an alarming extent, and science having introduced machinery, making subsistence difficult among the majority of the peoples of the earth dwelling within, what might be termed, the scientific zone, science having also reduced epidemic mortality, the engines of death and destruction produced by scientific means are being used to decimate the populations fostered and preserved by a non-epidemic science.

According to human understanding this may seem an unkind fate charged with super-malignancy on the part of the Creator. But it must always be borne in mind, God's ways are not our ways, nor are His Thoughts our thoughts. We humans have no right to question the Divine Will. It is by His Will that we live, move, and have our being, and the manner of our exit is also known to Him and is devised by Himself alone. We puny drivelling mortals crush the inoffensive worm or insect under our feet without one thought of remorse. We cut off animal life in the prime of its existence, to satisfy the lust of the palate and the gratification of our stomachs, without compunction; yet we whine, prate of cruel fate and rend the heavens with our lamentations, when the All-Merciful sees fit to remove our baser selves from this mundane sphere. And why? Because science has deluded us into the belief that we are very gods. We have tried to fit the Illimitable Divinity of God within the narrow compass of a limited human science which has taught us to substitute self for the Creator, to boast of our grand achievements and then to end our magnificent triumph of mundane ineptitude how, when or where, we know not. Yet God knows; and He in His Divine Love has mercifully withheld that knowledge which stamps the hall-mark on our human limitations, thereby manifesting our littleness and enhancing His Greatness.

We are always discovering "something new," we say. But we discover nothing, nor is there anything new. We continue to discover and invent and we credit ourselves with having said "the last word," and God sends another brain along to upset all our previous calculations, and we begin all over again to reconstruct and re-invent, and we return to the dust from whence we came without realizing our aspirations.

Take printing, for instance. Who will say that the printed

page is eternal? The thoughts expressed on the printed page are eternal, but the page perishes, and in these matters the ancients had reached the highest stage of transmitting thought, and our present efforts must return to the standard they set up before we can hope to reach the pinnacle of human endeavour; and this applies not only to printing but to all of the so-called sciences. Man's endeavour on this planet is ever moving in a circle—the place from whence he starts is the place of his return. Invention succeeds invention, one displaces the other, until we arrive at a stage in our earthly effort when past achievements are forgotten; we concentrate our minds on the present until some cataclysm removes it from our ken and we start all over again with the old things which we call new; and so it goes on *ad infinitum*.

There is no doubt that the so-called primitive age of writing on stone and potsherd was the highest form of enduring calligraphy. I have no hesitation in saying that paper, papyrus, and parchment had all been tried and found to be perishable, so that gradually writing on clay and stone was adopted to perpetuate the thoughts and ideas that were worth while. The library at Alexandria was said to contain all the lore of the ancients. The library was burnt by Cyrillus, Christian Bishop of Alexandria, in the fifth century, the books destroyed, and there only remains the stray references of Greek and Latin writers from whom we obtain a glimpse of its vanished glories. This proves the futility of thought preservation on perishable material. The mysteries of hieroglyphic Egypt, the six-thousand-year-old Cunic character of Assyria would have remained a hidden mystery but for the discovery of the Daria's inscription and Rosetta Stone, and this together with the Egyptian monuments help to prove that stone records are the most enduring and the ancients understood more about these matters than is to be found in our "advanced," and very greatly overrated, civilization.

It may be contended that stone or clay records, because they are weighty and cumbersome, requiring considerable storage space, would limit the perpetuation of human thought. This is for the most part true, but it were better that many of the printed pages stored in the British Museum and the Vatican Library had never been written. Humanity is tortured by too many books—wise and otherwise. There is a great difference

between book-makers and literary men. The book-makers are legion; the literary men with a real message are after the manner of the visitations of angels.

It is also very questionable whether a smattering of education is really beneficial to the mass. The so-called modern diffusion of learning not infrequently tends to unsettle the conditions of life by creating false intellectual values; honest labour is despised and the hereditary scullerymaid or the inestimable milkmaid becomes a bad typist or shopgirl, and the descendant of a long line of efficient farmers blossoms forth into a fully fledged "counter-jumper" or company promoter of doubtful reputation. This does not mean that education should be discouraged. It should certainly be limited. Those whom God has selected will rise to the condition which they are mentally fitted to occupy in spite of the most drastic educational trammels.

All that we discover, as previously stated, was already known. Airships are said to have been accurately described in the Books of the Vedas some 3,000 years ago. All ideas being from the beginning, we may naturally deduce the fact that steam engines, electricity and wireless telegraphy, were also known to the ancients.

We see in our day how steam locomotion is succeeded by electricity. In a decade or two, except in museums or books, the popular mind will have lost all trace of the existence of steam power. In like manner, even as the electric tram, motor omnibus, and taxi-cab have for the most part superseded the horse-driven vehicle, no great stretch of the imagination is required to visualize the time when the horse will become an extinct animal.

If, therefore, we give a little thought to the obvious, we shall easily arrive at the conclusion that in the old days wireless telegraphy nullified wire transmission. The horse was succeeded by steam power, to be superseded in turn by electricity, and these were eventually rendered obsolete when air transport became general. Luxury and vice overtook the world, together with some decimatory upheaval by "primitive" people upon the super-civilized, similar to that of the Goths and Vandals in more recent times. Cities were razed to the ground, entire civilizations wiped out of existence, and man began all over again to think the same thoughts and to do the same things his ancestors had done—and these things we term scientific discoveries and original thought.

Recent discoveries on the Continent of Africa, in the western hinterland, prove that a high state of civilization existed on the "dark Continent." One explorer has averred that his discoveries have led him to conclude that the lost Atlantis was situated on the Atlantic seaboard of the west coast of Africa. If a discovery of this magnitude and importance can be made on a continent where other explorers found nothing more interesting than naked "savages,"

it only helps to prove how little we really know about the civilizations of the past.

Such ancient feats of engineering as the great aqueduct at Carthage and the Pyramids of Egypt have never been surpassed; and in the case of the latter, no modern scientist has yet been found to accurately determine their utility, nor have the moderns produced an engineer capable of erecting them.

If we admit the existence of the *Creator of All Things* we are bound to admit that our thoughts and ideas were created by Him, and that the brain was created for receptivity and assimilation. It has been proved that all material things endure, taking on new form, but retaining their essentials. As this applies to the material world it must apply with greater force to the spiritual world, and thought in its essence being of the spirit, is no more perishable than matter. Hence, our scientific "discoveries" have never been discovered by us. We are but the transmitting instruments of God. "There is nothing new under the sun."

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE AGES

Professor A. NEVILLE J. WHYMANT, Ph.D., Litt.D., F.S.P.

IT is with the object of giving some new ideas and some fresh points of view with which to enable those readers of this REVIEW who are ready to consider a thoughtful proposition to take a new attitude of tolerance and even friendship towards other peoples and other faiths that I write these words. Philosophy was the first of the sciences, and will be the last. Hence it will be well to spend a short time in examining the world's thought in relation to posterity.

The first man of whom we have any legendary or mythological record was P'an-ku, who was supposed to have lived in ancient China somewhere about 10,000 B.C. He is said to have instructed the people in the arts and sciences and to have taught them the Way of Life—in other words, he taught them Philosophy. What that philosophy was we can see even in present-day China and Chinese thought. But twelve thousand years ago is a long time, and is probably uninteresting to very many people, and so we will take a later period.

The first books among the Egyptians (who were the oldest race next to the Chinese, or such is generally conceded) are the books of Instruction or Philosophy written by Ptah-Hotep and Ke'gemni. These books are remarkably similar in character to the earliest saws and proverbs of the Chinese. In fact, all beginnings are one; and although it is an undoubted fact that the Chinese were the first to reach a stage of civilization and education, it is only natural that other races in the beginning of things should follow in the same track, although no communication was established between the two.

The fundamental teachings in these very early books are, as will be expected, axiomatic. "It is said by the Great One, 'Seek not that which is not thine own. Do not those things which thou wouldst not have done to thee. Seek nothing that is not higher than that which thou hast. Seek naught but good. Cherish life as a precious gem and take no thought of destruction.'" Very simple injunctions these, but none the less necessary and real in an ordered state of society, and equally so to a race desiring to reach a position of real and thorough organization.

And thus through Zoroaster, Socrates, Confucius, Plato, Mencius, Gautama Buddha, Brahma, Lao-Tzŭ and the founders of the Shinto faith do we reach times not so distant, but we can think of them in more modern terms. The call is now, and has been for some time (excepting among scholars and literary men, perhaps), for something new. The Atheist movement is new (comparatively speaking), and in addition has several other attractions for the worldly-wise. Hence its popularity. But in the world of religion too the cry is for something new, something which will not link us to a long-forgotten past, but which is of our day and our mind.

And thus it comes about that many of these philosophies, suited to the minds of those who produced and nurtured them, are classed as religious. The depth and height of thought, mysticism, and philosophy of Zoroastrianism estranges the Western mind from such a faith. The scientific nature of Buddhism makes it necessary for a Westerner to be a scholar to understand it. And with Confucianism one needs to enter into the psychology of the Chinese mind in order to grasp its meaning—a terrible task, indeed, for any man, even for a sinologue. And thus the need arose for a simpler faith, and the consequent birth of Christianity.

This faith, indeed, was in the first instance, and still is to a certain degree, one of the simplest of them all. But the guardians of its existence, notably the Jewish and Roman Churches, elaborated it into a profound ritual, which soon palled upon the minds of those who acknowledged its teachings, and a revulsion of feeling produced the Quaker movement, which in its turn turned away many by its severe rigidity.

And at last, from the garden of Mediæval Philosophy—Arabia—arose a man who saw that religion must be not only national and communal, but individualistic. Hence the promulgation of the doctrine of Islam—Obedience to the Divine Will. Each must decide for himself, and the keynote of the religion is a reliance on the Reason of Man which was given by the All-Powerful and is sustained by Him.

The Philosophy of the Ages, then, is as a garden of many-hued flowers, each of a fragrant perfume, and so shall it be until in contemplation of the ultimate end of Life and Being all show their one origin in the Home of Life itself.