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November : 1953

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ

"Muhammad is . . . the Messenger of God and the Last of the Prophets . . ." — THE HOLY QUR'AN 33: 40

"There will be no Prophet after me"

— THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

VOL. XLI. No. 11

NOVEMBER, 1953 C.E.

RABI' al-AWWAL, 1373 A.H.

THE FUTURE OF THE MUSLIM WORLD

The three problems facing the world

Today there are three problems — the colonial problem, the problem of the form of democracy and the race problem — for which no solution seems to be promised by the scientists, politicians and statesmen of today. Even the leaders and representatives of religious thought seem to have failed us. The scientist is oblivious of our everyday problems, while the politician and the statesman are guided solely in their pronouncements and policies by the circumstances in the midst of which they live and move. If the scientist is amoral, the politician and statesman can, more often than not, even be immoral. To the statesman and the politician it is the end that justifies the means.

Colonialism of the West and the Muslim world

Of these problems the first two have a direct bearing on the world of Islam, the race problem in all those parts of the world where Islamic ideology controls the conduct of the people to all intents and purposes being non-existent. Islam, unlike all other religious systems of the world, is not merely a "pure" religion but has the distinction of being an "applied" religion. It has solved the race problem so well that its achievements in this sociological domain in particular elicit praise even from its professional detractors. Of the other two, its colonial problem, although not so oppressive and atrophying as about a quarter of a century ago, is yet as acute as ever. The Muslim world, the victim of its strategic importance, is still at grips with the West. If it succeeds in freeing itself in one area, it finds to its horror that the hydra of colonialism has made its appearance in another. If Egypt is about to rid itself of the last vestiges of foreign domination, the Muslim knows that already Libya has taken its place, and that the thorn of Israel has been implanted by the West in its bosom. Thus the hard struggle of the world of Islam to shake off the dead weight of colonialism of European powers that overpowered it during the last century seems to be interminable. In parts of North Africa under French domination there is not even the beginning of the end. There the struggle for independence promises to be hard and arduous; for France is contriving by every device to tighten its hold on Morocco.

The need of the Muslim bloc

As to the problem of the form of democracy, the body politic of the Muslim world is sick, although there are signs to show that it is awakening to the new era of some form of democratic government. As yet large parts of the Muslim world are wedded to hereditary monarchy, while in others un-Islamic ways of life and modes of expression, which include respect and obedience in the man in the street for those who claim descent from some important figure in Islam and its history, are still the rule of the day. As to the share of the Muslim world in the struggle for supremacy between the forms of democracies of the West and the East under the guiding domination of Soviet Russia, it is true to say that the Muslim world has yet not cast its lot

with either. Instead, with Pakistan in the lead, it is trying to raise a voice of its own. This voice, as yet not very audible, has begun to find an echo in some parts of the Muslim world. The late Mr. Liaqat 'Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, warned the Muslim world of the danger of losing its entity if it did not take steps to form a *bloc* of its own. He knew that for the Muslim world there was but one escape from the slavery of the West and the East — the Muslim *bloc*; for the divided Muslim world is too weak to withstand the pressure from the West or the East if its component parts did not weld themselves together into one unit. Although the internal problems of the various parts of the Muslim world seem to hamstring the movement of an envisaged *bloc*, the Arab League is showing the practical way of approaching the problem. It has decided that the Arab countries should enter into a common defence pact. The Egyptian Chief of Staff at a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the other Arab countries held at Cairo on 26th August 1953 appealed to his counterparts to do their best to give effect to the letter and spirit of the pact.

The time has come when petty jealousies and undue emphasis on minor details of rituals which are the root of all the basically superficial differences are eradicated; for the interested, within and without, take advantage of this and beguile the man in the street. The formation of the Muslim *bloc* is the only solution of the ills and troubles of the Muslim world. Besides, this is the only way in which it can work as a counterpoise between the West and the East, also save its own identity, and undo the wrongs that have been done to it by the West. The question, therefore, before the Muslim world is how to achieve this. It is to this end that we should guide our energies.

A remedy or two

The first thing the Muslim should remember is that it is his solemn duty to reduce all the differences between the various sections of the Muslim world to their original dimensions. Once the Muslims in general learn to view these superficial differences which today seem to overshadow every phase of their life to the eclipse of their ultimate destiny, they will not find it difficult to resolve other differences, even political, that exist between their countries as separate political entities. So much for the ideological side. With regard to the hard realities of life, the Muslims should lose no time organizing their own banking, so that the Muslim countries in need of help would not be at the tender mercies of the West or the East. We are not being idealistic when we say the difficulties of Iran and Libya could have been solved if a Muslim World Bank was in existence. The humiliating position in which they find themselves could have been avoided. In this connection it is but right to remember that God has blessed the Muslim world with advantages — their strategic position and mineral wealth — which are peculiarly its own. Eighty per cent of the oil resources of the world are to be found in Muslim countries. They have in their power the means of stopping a third world war. They can be a deciding factor in the affairs of the world.

BY THE LIGHT OF THE QUR'AN AND THE HADITH

A Message to the Muslim Peoples on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr (1372 A.H.)

From His Royal Highness the Amir Sa'ud of Sa'udi Arabia¹

"The dangers to the Muslim world from within and without

Praise be to God Who has given us an abundance of His bounty, Who has guided us to a right path and Who has opened our hearts to follow His commands. It gave us pleasure to fast His month, and we ask Him for the full reward and beseech Him for mercy. And we ask for peace and blessing on our Prophet Muhammad, his peoples, and on his companions.

I wish to take this valuable and auspicious opportunity to ask, on behalf of our beloved king and on my own behalf, for a blessing to all the Arabs and Muslims in the Eastern and Western corners of the world on the occasion of their completion of the duty of fasting; and I also wish to send them sincere greetings on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr. May future 'Ids find them all successful and prosperous.

The sacred month of Ramadhan has ended with the Muslim world in general, and the Arab world in particular, in a difficult stage in their struggle of defending and protecting their rights, and realization of their just aspirations. From the far corners of North Africa to Egypt, and from the shores of Palestine to the borders of China, the Muslims have been experiencing difficulties and strains in varying degrees, and facing recurring dangers from various directions. They have been raising their voices high to repel harm, and have been calling on each other to stand united in the face of aggression. In addition to all this, the Islamic world has today become a target for destructive ideas which do not harmonize with the teachings and doctrines of the religion of Islam. There are beginning to spread in the Islamic world today various kinds of evil and harmful practices of the kind which are prohibited by all religions and unanimously considered by all moralists to be very harmful. These evils can cause the greatest harm to the structure and edifice of the Islamic nation, and can have the effect of weakening the Muslim peoples and robbing them of the power to resist and withstand the attacks and infiltrations of their enemies.

How to repel these dangers

In order to escape this sad fate, and in order to have the proper weapons with which to carry on their struggle, and in order also to have the means to accomplish their just demands, the Muslims have but to resort to those things which had earlier given rise to their great glory, established their grand heritage, founded their illustrious civilization, and built their overwhelming force. The Muslims could achieve this if they understood the meaning of the *Kalima* — "There is no God but He

and that Muhammad is His Messenger" — and if they also obeyed the word of God and apply themselves in the service of God's cause. At the time when the Muslims were heeding these principles they ruled supreme and ruled justly; they also built their glory and founded and spread a glorious civilization in the East and West, and they recorded for themselves glorious achievements in the annals of world history. It is in the *Kalima* and in adherence to the principles of sincere fraternity, uprightness, strong solidarity and conformity of opinion preached by Islam that is to be found weapons sharper than all other weapons and also strength surpassing all other strength. It

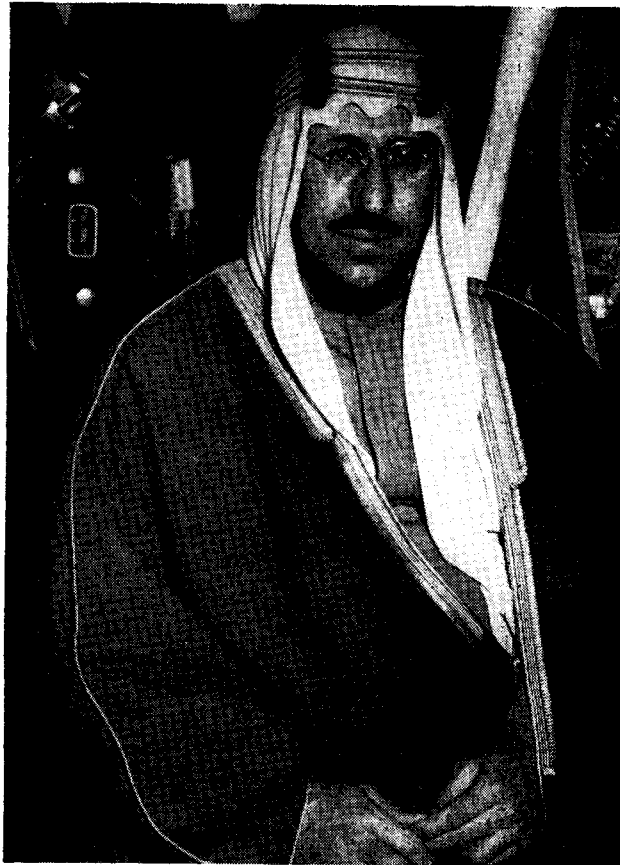
was with these weapons and with this strength that the Muslims rose high, although they had been the weakest of all nations. They also achieved victory although they had been small in numbers and lacking in material means; and they spread knowledge in the corners of the world although they had earlier been more cut off from learning and civilization than the other nations of the world.

As we celebrate on this day the 'Id al-Fitr, and after having kept the fast for the month of Ramadhan — the month during which the Qur'an was revealed to guide mankind — we remember what we were in the past and what we have now become. And we cannot find before us anything with which to alleviate our present distress other than to possess the strength which we had possessed when we adhered to the *Kalima of Tawheed* (the Unity of the Godhead) and obeyed the Book of God and the *Sunnah* (Practice) of His Prophet. With these we rose to great heights, were safe from the oppression of others, and caused justice and righteousness to spread amongst other

peoples. When we relaxed in our adherence to these practices and ceased to obey them faithfully, we were reduced to meekness and dejection and became an easy prey to the oppression of others.

We ask the Almighty and Merciful to guide us to His Word and to make us obey His Book and adhere to the *Sunnah* of His Prophet. We also beseech Him to guide us to the right path and to grant us as a result of our fasting, our prayers and our recitation of the Qur'an, a blessing from Him and a light that would show us our path, make our purpose one, strengthen the bonds of our brotherhood, and show us the path of righteousness and justice among peoples. Surely He is the Hearing, the Answering.

¹ This message was broadcast by Radio Mecca in the Arabic, Urdu and Indonesian languages.



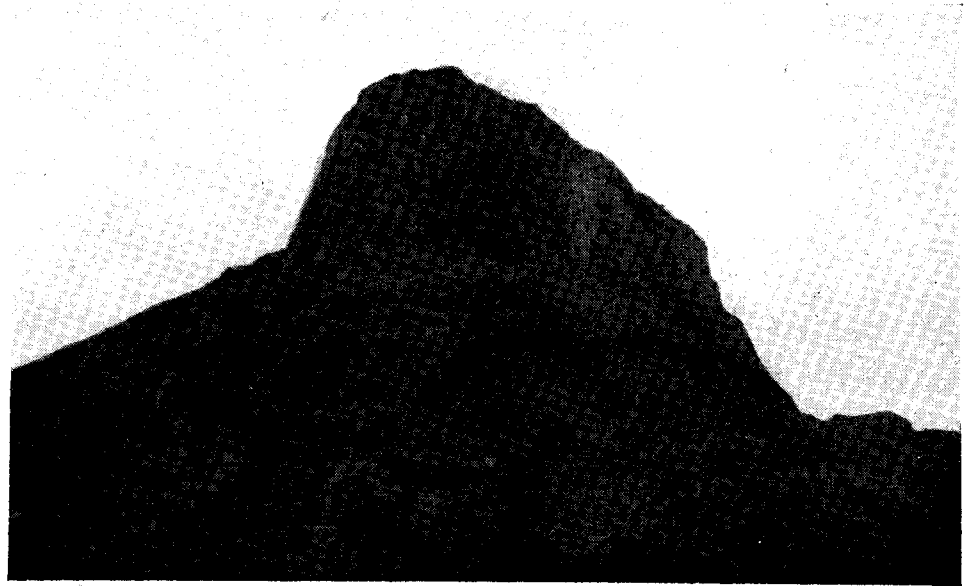
His Royal Highness the Amir Sa'ud

In Commemoration of the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad
(12th Rabi' al-awwal, 1372 A.H. — 19th November, 1953)

Why I Regard
Muhammad as the
Greatest Man in
The History of the
World

By The Late

KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN



A view of the mount known as Jabal al-Nur — the Mount of Light — situated near Mecca. The Cave of Hira lies in this mount. It was in this mount that the Prophet Muhammad received his first revelation, which forms the first five verses of the 94th chapter of the Holy Qur'an

The moral decrepitude of the world on the eve of the advent of Muhammad

During the month of Rabi' al-awwal the world of Islam celebrates the birthday of the greatest man in the history of the world — a man of whom the Qur'an says: "We have not sent thee but as a mercy for the world." There are various ways of judging the greatness of a man, but I would make mention of the two that seem to me most decisive in the matter, especially when estimating the merits of a prophet. And these are:

- (1) The task before him — that is to say, the state of affairs that needed reformation at the time he appeared; and
- (2) What did he bring to the world to improve its conditions?

Judge Muhammad from these two points, and you will find in him the Blessing of God personified, and the greatest man that the world has ever seen. Every prophet of God appeared at a time when evil in some form or other was prevailing among nations to which each prophet was sent, but Muhammad appeared at a time when evil was rampant and virtue had become extinct in every corner of the world. Moses came to liberate the children of the bondage from Egypt and carry them to the Promised Land, but he was born where culture, knowledge, art and wealth were not lacking. Egypt was tyrannical, no doubt, to the House of Jacob, but the Egyptians themselves did not suffer. Jesus came at a time when the Roman civilization was such that it could compare most favourably with modern culture. The Romans were idolators, but the knowledge of God and His Commandments was not unknown to the people of Jesus. Spiritless ceremonialism, worship of the letter of the law, hypocrisy, vengefulness and self-indulgence were the chief evils of the day. But Muhammad came at a time when complete death — moral, mental and spiritual death — had overtaken the whole world, when thick

¹ *The Life of Mahomet*, London, 1861.

clouds of ignorance, irreligiousness and impiety were blackening the horizon of the earth; beliefs universally clouded and actions perverted. Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism had lost all healthy influence on the lives of their followers. Christianity, as Sir William Muir says,¹ was decrepit and corrupt, its real tenets lost and the doctrines of pagan cults taking their place.

The social and moral condition of the world was equally deplorable. The people of the day had not only ceased to practise virtue, but vice was looked upon as virtue and people committed sins of the blackest dye to earn merit in the eyes of the Lord. Every nation had sunk to a state of complete moral depravity. These were the days of the Middle Ages in Europe, and the Mazdaic and Puranic ages were at their prime in Persia and India respectively. Illicit sexual relations were committed as a virtue with the sanction of religion. In the confessional Christendom more sin was committed than was washed away. In Persia the phallic cult was at its climax, and Mazdak, among his other abominable tenets, taught partnership in women. He sanctified scenes of obscenity in the performance of religious rites accompanied by every kind of Bacchanalian orgy. The condition of India was worse. A *sakit* priest could of right command the company of others' wives for his pleasure. You cannot imagine any form of vice, of iniquity and unrighteousness, that was not committed as an act of virtue everywhere, and Arabia was the darkest spot on the earth of God, where murder, rapine, adultery, drinking, infanticide and robbery were the pride of the people; and besides general promiscuity in sexual relations, incestuous connections were freely indulged in.

The word of God had nearly disappeared. The Scriptures of the various nations had suffered in their purity. There are few today who honestly believe in the genuineness of the Bible, and such was its condition at the time of which I speak. That was the right time for the appearance of a prophet. That was the fullness of the time when Muhammad appeared.

The exclusive achievements of Muhammad

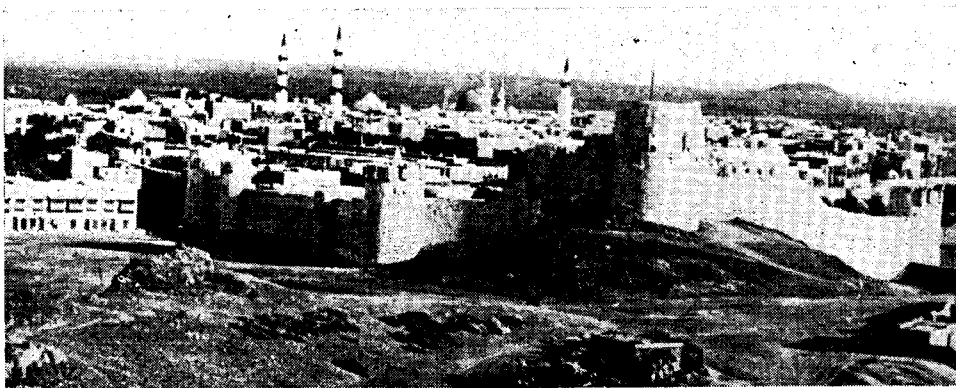
I cannot go into all that the Prophet Muhammad taught or did for humanity. I would only refer to some of the things that are his exclusive achievements, and which entitle him to claim universal allegiance. I would refer only to those things he taught or did that were not taught or done by any prophet, reformer or benefactor of humanity before Muhammad.

Muhammad's conception of religion

(1) For the first time, he explained the true conception of religion. The world was not without its religion before him, but religion was believed to be an institution for the purpose of pleasing God and receiving His favour or of appeasing His anger through various forms of ritual and sacrifice, offerings and prayers. The pagan world before Christianity had her Christs everywhere: the son of Mary was the last of the series. Sin and its atonement through the blood of an incarnate god was the ancient religion everywhere, thousands of years before Christianity. Muhammad came and gave him a new objective of religion. It is not salvation from the fall, but the upliftment, the development of that potentiality which is latent in man; in other words, the evolution of humanity. Like everything in nature, man possesses certain aptitudes and capabilities, or hidden faculties. It is to work them out, to bring them to development

On the other hand, Muhammad, like a professor of anatomy, explores the whole human mind, goes into its every seam, from heel to head. He does not propose to kill our instincts or crush our passions if they be, and because they are, carnal; instead, he propounds a system to control them so that they may function to our best advantage and pass from the bestial to the noble, from the mother instinct that germinates passion and instincts to the tendency for self-preservation, or, in other words, the instinct of existence. This instinct gives rise to two passions — the passion of anger and the passion of desire. Then anger and desire, whether in their refined or corrupt form, branch forth in various directions, some towards good, others towards evil. For example, if anger in its evil form creates enmity, malice, prejudice, hot temper, tyranny, backbiting, abusive language, cowardice, hypocrisy, the same anger in its noble form appears as bravery, courage, high-mindedness, patience, perseverance, toleration, courtesy, meekness, humility and forgiveness.

Again, in the case of lust or desire, in its evolved form it becomes love, devotion, mercy, generosity, contentment, selflessness, trustworthiness, trust in God, and so forth; but in its degraded form it remains meanness, niggardliness, avarice, pride, extravagance, jealousy, envy, dishonesty, boasting, laziness and the like. Then these two passions in their united form give rise to various other things. Our consciousness has a third side also,



A view of Medina

In the background can be seen the five minarets of the Prophet's Mosque and also on its right hand the "Green Dome" of the mausoleum of the Prophet Muhammad

to the best advantage, that religion has been vouchsafed to him. Religion, as Muhammad taught, is a theory of life, a thing to live upon, in order to bring to prominence that which is novel and good in us

And the good which is in us is the Divine flame breathed into us by the Breath of the Lord. But this Divine element is hidden in the welter of human passions which in their primitive form approximated rather to the beast than to man, as we visualize him. Just as everything in nature brings beauty and sublimity out of ugliness, so also is our carnal nature the seed-bed of nobility. The Prophet of Arabia was the first Divine Messenger to disclose the secret in plain terms to the world. The evolution of which I speak is the evolution of our consciousness — the sublimation of the animal consciousness into the Divine. This, in fact, is the subjective side of religion, according to the teaching of Muhammad, and in this is his superiority manifest. The aim of the other messengers from God was the same, but the methods ascribed to them by tradition for accomplishing their purpose were neither easy nor systematic, and at times unnatural. They would give us noble words of advice, but that in incoherent form; they would read us sermons on morality; they would supply us with a code of ritual and ceremonials; they would suggest prayer and sacrifice, and that is all.

and that when properly cultivated rules the emotional, sentimental and passionate side of it. This is the mental aspect, which, again, has its good or evil developments. If a creed or faith does not comprehend the whole range of human psychology, it cannot serve the purpose for which religion comes from God. Matter achieves its highest development in the human form, where it gives birth to a consciousness which differs from animal consciousness in the vastness of its comprehension and growth. Everything in nature is on its way to an ultimate perfection, and this by observing a certain prescribed course. Similarly, our further evolution in this world lies in the evolution of our consciousness, just as physically we have reached the desired end; and for this soul-development religion is the prescribed course. For the world, I believe, has become too wise to accept the dogma of the angry God and mankind's reconciliation with Him through sacrifice as the basis of and reason for religion. The world has had enough of such scapegoats. The sublimation of human consciousness into Divine consciousness can be the only laudable object of religion, the only watchword for which martyrs may be worthily made. This transmutation of the baser into noble cannot be effected by magic. It can only be accomplished by incessant striving and hard work under the guidance of a master mind who understands the true anatomy of the human soul. This is the work of a true prophet from God. I

cannot understand any other object for which God sends His religion to humanity. The Qur'an, in its opening verse, discloses the same object of Divine Revelation. Is not Muhammad, then, the ideal teacher of humanity if he lays down rules and regulations to raise humanity from the animal to the divine, and for this purpose gives us guidance so that we may sublimate the root passions in us — anger, lust, and cognate passions — into Divine Morality. Muhammad deals with every phase of the question; he deals with every good or bad form of passion; gives advice and suggests guidance so that we may aim at the best and avoid the corrupt. I do not find the same elsewhere.

Muhammad's conception of God

(2) Similarly, it was taught in the clearest terms, for the first time, that God was not an impersonal one, as one clothed with human passions, that the pleasure or anger of God were not His passions; they involved an assumption under which His pleasure became expressed when human faculties became full-fledged, but if they became stunted through our wrongdoings and lost their purpose, it indicated His wrath.

This enabled the world for the first time to realize the true conception of heaven and hell, the former consisting in the full development of human faculties, and the latter in their defilement and corruption in this life, as well as in the life after the grave.

Muhammad's conception of human capabilities

(3) The world had very erroneous conceptions of human capabilities. Evil had been taken as its backbone; nothing sublime or beautiful was in humanity. If some religions, like Christianity, declared evil and sin to be the sole furniture of the human mind, others taught that human life was full of trouble and tribulation, and that salvation lay in annihilation, seeing that this world was thought to be full of nothing but misery and evil. Muhammad, for the first time, declared that human nature was potentially perfect — a truth established today by biology; he taught that it was free from any taint of evil. Sin, he declared, was an acquisition, an after-acquirement and not a heritage. Human nature, as the Qur'an says, was capable of unlimited progress, but with inclination to degradation as well; man could soar to the highest of the high, but can go to the lowest of the low, and the religion Muhammad brought was to work out the former and check the latter.

(4) For the first time it was established that there was no intermediary between man and God. The Divine precincts were accessible to every person. It was not right belief alone, but belief translated into actions, that earned merit in the eyes of the Lord, irrespective of the creed or class to which the doer of the actions might happen to belong.

Muhammad's conception of man

(5) It is a well-known and an undeniable fact that Muhammad, and Muhammad only, and no one else, established monotheism in its purest form. The worship of One God, Who was neither begotter nor begotten, nor had any associates with Him in his Godhood, was taught in the most unequivocal terms. Before Muhammad, the world worshipped everything in the universe. The sun, the moon, the stars, clouds, water, winds, fire, trees, rivers and stones, egg-shells and many a god-incarnate man, were his deities. The Prophet Muhammad brought down all these man-made gods from the pedestal of divinity. It established two truths — the equality between man and man and the subservience of the rest of nature to the human race; the former giving rise to all good and healthy principles of democracy and the latter affording stimulus to scientific researches. All barriers of class, creed, colour and descent were demolished; white and black, red and yellow, were all declared equal in the sight of the

Lord, for they came from the same essence and from the same first parents. To demolish the distinction of race, blood and riches, it was said that the noblest in the sight of God was he who was most virtuous among men. For the first time it was formulated by 'Omar, the second successor of Muhammad, that the government of a country could not be called a true government if every unit from among the ruled had not the right to have its voice heard and respected. The meanest subject of a State was for the first time given the same right to be heard on a question affecting the State, or religion, as the ruler of the State himself. For the first time in the history of the world, hereditary right to rule gave place to a right by election, and no matter who was appointed, the governor or governing body was only there to see that the laws formulated by Islam were carried out, and that any fresh laws or detail introduced in State management were in conformity with the general principles enunciated by the Great Lawgiver. A plebeian was encouraged to point out the fault of a ruler in his administration.

Muhammad raises the status of women

(6) It was in pursuance of this principle of equality between man and man that the state of woman was raised by Muhammad for the first time in the history of the world. She was declared to have come from the same essence as man, a twin of man; her right were declared sacred, and a Muslim was enjoined to respect those rights. To her is due what is due from her; that is a golden principle promulgated by the Qur'an, which the world did not know before.

(7) Religion after religion appeared, and civilization after civilization came, but no one cared to take notice of the slave class like women. Muhammad was the first to take commiseration on that abused class; he abolished all the different forms of slavery, excepting war captivity, and he laid down laws to ameliorate the condition of those in war bondage, and laid down principles of treatment to be meted out to them on such equal terms that it nearly banished slavery in his own time. He raised the status of the slave to such an extent that the slave of today became the king of tomorrow.

Muhammad and the freedom of conscience

(8) For the first time the principle of "no compulsion in religion" was enunciated and acted upon by Muhammad. Differences of opinion in religious matters were respected and individual opinion encouraged. Freedom of conscience was allowed. For everyone to be held responsible to his God alone for his religion was a thing hitherto unknown to the world. History is full of religious persecutions and crusades, and Christendom has exhibited the worst type of religious intolerance in her religious zeal. The world needed reform in this respect, and Muhammad came. We do not read of persecutions of Galileos, Latimers and others in the annals of Islam. Heresy has been condemned, but not punished. Muhammad did wage wars, but they were wars of defence, and against those who wanted to nip Islam in its very bud. Muhammad in this connection laid down the ethics of war as well.

For the first time the world was taught by the Prophet Muhammad the right use of the sword. Secular and sacred history alike show that the sword has never been dispensed with. It was unsheathed by the Hindu prophets and the Hebrew patriarchs; for neither the Hebrew Law nor that of the Hindus is in any way favourable to "pacifism". "The Prince of Peace" also declared that he had come to send on the earth "not peace but a sword"; that he had come to fulfil the law and the prophets. The laws of his religion permitted it, and his prophets waged war. In fact, he would have had recourse to the sword had a favourable occasion arisen, but it did not; and if he prevented Peter from drawing the sword, it was because the

time was not propitious. Violence would but have entailed further trouble for him and for his followers. Besides, what Jesus himself could not do has been done with considerable thoroughness by his followers. His words have proved dangerously prophetic. A large portion of the wealth and the brain of Christendom is expended in discovering various ways in which they may send sword and fire more efficaciously into the world; and that not for the furtherance of any human cause, but to pander to the spirit of aggression and "grab".

I, however, maintain that at times it becomes one of our highest humanitarian duties to unsheathe the sword. We cannot conscientiously stand aside as indifferent spectators when the liberties of an oppressed people are being trampled upon, when religious freedom is at stake. There do arise situations when the use of arms becomes an unavoidable necessity. But the arms have often been abused, and it was the duty of a prophet from God to tell us the right occasion when the sword can be wielded.

Muhammad on the use of the sword

Jesus was prepared to send sword and fire into the world, but Muhammad was compelled to do so. He allowed the use of arms on the following three occasions:

- (1) To save a house for the worship of God from destruction, be it Christian, Jew, Hindu, Buddhist or Muslim (The Holy Qur'an, 22 : 40).
- (2) To establish freedom of conscience. Everyone, according to Qur'anic teaching, has the right to choose his own faith, and no one should force his religious beliefs on others by persecution or otherwise. And if a person does so, it is the duty of a Muslim to fight against such religious persecution, irrespective of whether the aggrieved be a Jew or a Christian, and the persecutor a Muslim (The Qur'an, 2 : 190-193).
- (3) In self-defence (The Qur'an, 22 : 39).

But in each case a Muslim should suspend hostilities whenever the oppressor shows an inclination towards peace (The Holy Qur'an, 2 : 194).

Other prophets of the world, especially the Hebrew, drew the sword for a cause of doubtful righteousness, as the Old Testament shows; but Muhammad did what righteousness demanded. Nevertheless the Western mind has become so much poisoned by prejudiced statements directed against Islam that it will not care to hear what is true.

Muhammad and universalism

(9) For the first time the world received those broad principles from Muhammad which will establish the universal brotherhood of man in the world. Jesus had had such a desire; but it remained only a dream, and the history of Christendom has never shown a spirit of universal brotherhood. Islam was that brotherhood which welded high and low, rich and poor, white and black, into one fraternity. The world of today goes after universalism, but if the universalism ever becomes a reality, it will be on the principles of Islam. And in this connection I may refer to the conception of Muslim Godhood. The pre-Islamic God was a tribal God everywhere, whether in the East or the West. He was the God of Abraham and Jacob, He was the Mazda of the renowned ancestors in Persia, but the Qur'an speaks of a *Rabb al-'Alamin* — God, the Creator, the Nourisher and the Sustainer of all the worlds, of all the nations and races, and Who made no distinction between man and man.

(10) Muhammad laid the foundation of universalism in another way. For the first time it was proclaimed that every religion in the beginning came from God, every great prophet was raised by God, every nation was given a Divine warner, and Muhammad made it the duty of the Muslims to accept the prophets of others as their own prophet; the Muslims cannot

make any distinction that all these prophets had come with the same religion from God, and taught the same truth, but their teachings suffered in purity and had become adulterated by successive generations, and this led to all the differences between religion and religion.

Muhammad on the place of intellect in religion

(11) Muhammad was the first teacher of a religion that made religion and science helpmates one to another. He abolished dogma and made reason and logic the only test of religious truth. There is nothing in his teachings that can insult intelligence or cannot meet the demand of rationality.

(12) Muhammad placed the acquirement and cultivation of knowledge even before the worship of God. In his judgment, exploring in the realms of nature with a view to bringing the various manifestations of nature to subserve humanity was the real glorification of God. He gave such an impetus to learning that it brought forth, within a century after him, a tremendous upheaval of various material sciences in Muslim lands. In pre-Islamic days, man worshipped every manifestation of nature from an egg-shell to stars, clouds, etc. Muhammad preached subservience of nature to man, and with one stroke the gods of yesterday became the servants and handmaids of today.

Muhammad unlike other prophets of God lives what he preaches

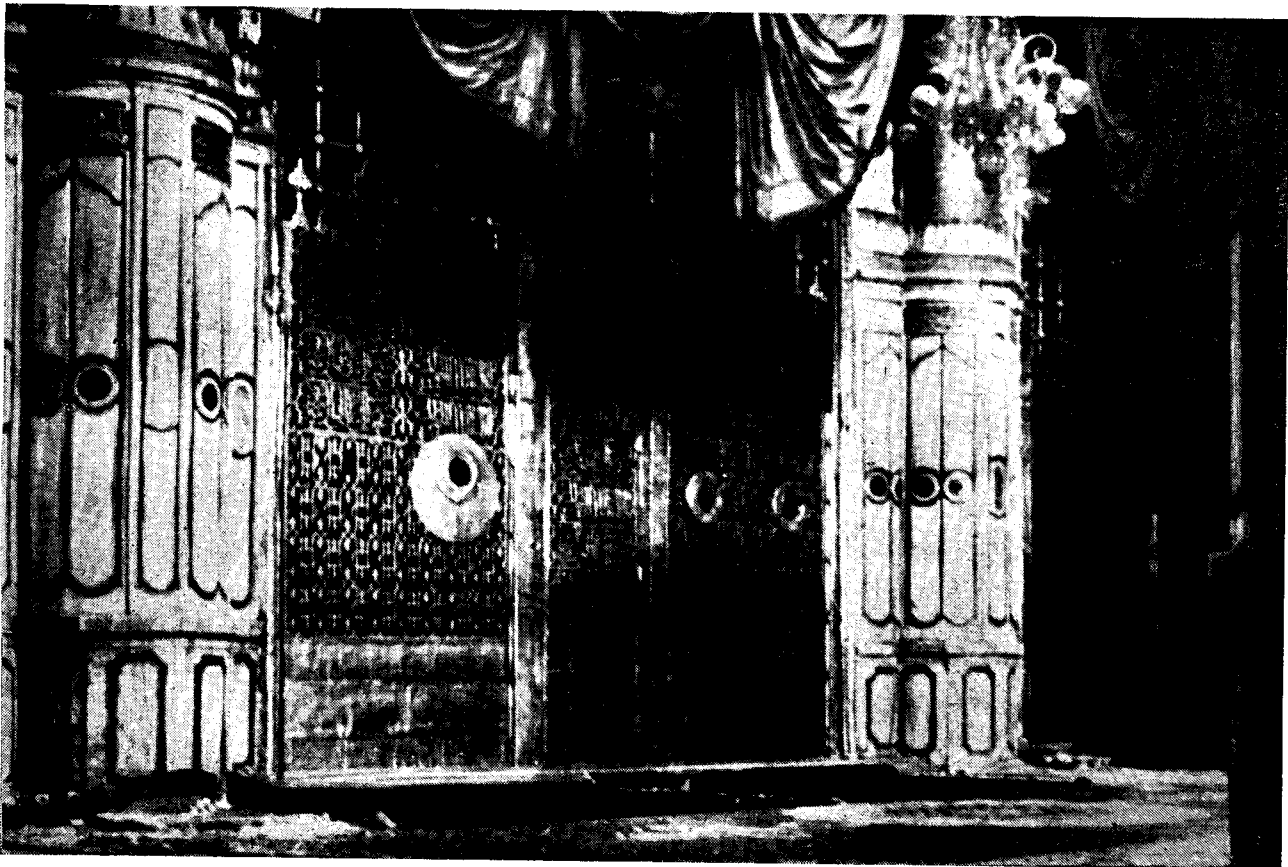
(13) Muhammad is the best exemplar and, I may say, the only prophet who himself worked out all the principles he taught to others. There is not a single ordinance or injunction in the Qur'an that he did not act upon. We read homilies and sermons elsewhere, we find idealistic and impractical theories of morality and ethics, but we fail to find them practised by their own teachers. Muhammad is the only noble exception to this rule. Whatever he taught to others, he practised himself.

His life is an eloquent commentary on the Qur'an. We need not go to the commentators for their exposition of the various ordinances and injunctions given therein; because we read them in the very actions of the Prophet Muhammad. Every virtue recommended, every evil forbidden in the Qur'an, finds illustration in his action to which, indeed, 'Ayesha, his wife, would refer when asked to explain any Qur'anic verses dealing with our daily life; she would, in like manner, read some Qur'anic verses when asked about the ways of the Prophet Muhammad on some particular occasion; and most commentators on the Qur'an follow the same course. They refer to the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad in illustration of the precepts of the Qur'an, which contains upwards of five hundred ordinances and injunctions, every one of them with its illustration in the life of the Prophet Muhammad.

Much of the ethics preached by Jesus remained an admittedly unattainable ideal in Christendom, simply because there was nothing in the recorded actions of the Teacher to guide his followers therein. "Love your enemy and resist not evil" (Matt. 39, 44) remained a cry in the wilderness in Christendom, while the Qur'anic injunction, "Repel evil by what is best", became a practical reality in Islam, simply because it was constantly receiving practical illustration in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad. For the emancipation of the slaves, the Qur'an ordered, "For the love of God, give away your wealth in freeing those enemies whom you have captured in war". In this verse, the Qur'an taught a practical way to "love your enemy", and Muhammad was the foremost of his followers in acting upon this injunction. I can multiply illustration after illustration on this score, but I will give here only one more instance — an instance which for certain reasons has always had a special fascination for me. We Muslims say our prayers five times a day, but the Qur'an speaks of another prayer which, though optional for a Muslim, was compulsory for the Prophet Muhammad. It is the

midnight prayer called *Tabajjud* (The Qur'an, 17:78, 79), which means that the worshipper should first sleep and then leave his sleep after midnight for the prayer. It makes the prayer incalculably more difficult. The Divine Order came to the Prophet Muhammad when he was at Mecca, in the very beginning of his ministry, and he kept up the midnight prayer to the last moment of his life. His feet would get swollen by standing in midnight prayer, when the rest of the world, among them his own followers, enjoyed calm sleep. Was this the act of an impostor? He may obey his own orders, in order to set an example for the others, but in this case no one else had to obey the order. It was only for himself. Why should he subject

them all in actual colours. From an orphan to a king he passed through every shade and vicissitude of life; he performed every duty of life, and thus became the best exemplar. In him you find a child, a young man, an elderly man, a son, a brother, a husband, a neighbour, a playmate, a soldier, an army commander, a conqueror, a persecuted fugitive, a tradesman, a king, a judge, a man in adversity and in prosperity. Varied as these positions are, you will find in him the same man from beginning to end, a thorough gentleman, to use the English phrase; always unchangeable and unchanged in his temperament, in his dealings, in his general mode of life. What then can be said of the calibre of those other teachers who could not set themselves above the dead-level of



A view of the interior of the mausoleum at Medina, where the remains of the Prophet Muhammad and his two companions, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, are interred. This building is enclosed by a pentagonal wall which is encircled by a brass railing. The pentagonal wall carries the "Green Dome". The entire building is known as Maqsura sharifa. In our picture we see the brass railing with three circular holes in it. The first on the right faces the grave of the Prophet Muhammad, while the second and third those of the Caliphs, Abu Bakr and 'Umar the Great

himself to a most irksome duty if he was the composer of the Qur'an himself and the fabricator of his own religion? Why should he continue to observe this injunction so strictly even in those days when he became the Lord of Arabia? A new revelation could conveniently absolve him of it, if the Qur'an was the creation of his mind. Here is food for an honest mind to think upon.

Muhammad on the assemblage of virtues

(14) And what an assemblage of virtues and morality we find in him. If the Qur'an gives us, on one side, an exhaustive anatomy of ethics, and deals with the stern and soft sides of morality, the life of the Prophet Muhammad, on the other, mirrors

ordinary life? We may follow any walk in life; we may come to face any contingency or any circumstances, but we shall always find something in the words and deeds of Muhammad for our guidance; we shall find there a light to show us the right way when we are groping in the darkness. And we find something in the words and deeds of Muhammad for our guidance; we shall find there a light to show us the right way when we are groping in the darkness. And we find something else in Muhammad. He does not leave us rigidly defined, cut-and-dried ways which we must follow slavishly. He encourages our personal judgment. He gives us hints relating to various contingencies of life based upon broad moral principles, and we may act according to circumstances, in their light.

Muhammad is the only historic religious personage

(15) Muhammad is the only Prophet who may be called historic in the true sense of the word. From his childhood up to his death — and especially the period of his ministry as a Prophet — most of his life is on record. I know more of him than I know of my own parents in many respects ; and is it not a wonderful thing that, with all our knowledge of him, he commands our respect and admiration ? I cannot say what would be our estimate of others had we known more of them. The lives of other Prophets are enshrouded in mystery and myth ; we know very little of their daily lives, they speak like oracles ; they are tolerable when considered as subjects of fiction, but Muhammad is more definitely historic than any personality in history.

(16) A Prophet comes to act as a guide and a model ; Muhammad has a special claim to those qualifications. He is the Prophet in human colours, and consequently a true specimen for our imitation. He faces difficulties, and surmounts them with means within the reach of humanity. Other Prophets, as the report goes, have recourse to miracles to meet the difficulties in their way. One could understand the need of a miracle in order to strengthen the conviction of, or drive home, certain truths to a man in the streets—it is a necessity, and there is a genuine report of any number of miracles performed by the Prophet Muhammad for that purpose — but we, in our day, have to face similar difficulties in our lives, and we cannot do miracles in order to surmount them. Moses saved his people from the Egyptian tyranny through a miracle, but Muhammad defended the city of Medina with his little band against ten thousand odds through his heroic and soldier-like measures which a commander of an army will be proud to follow with advantage. But Moses with all his miracles could not infuse that spirit of manliness into his followers which we observe in the ranks of Muhammad. Jesus had to complain always of the lack of faith in his disciples, but Muhammad had a band of the faithful unique in their devotion to the master.

Muhammad on intoxicants

(17) Among his various reforms one may make mention of "drink and gambling" which are still the pest of humanity. Today the Western world has entered on the campaign against drink, but Muhammad saw the evil, both of drink and games of chance, at a time when no one saw anything wrong in either of them, and it was Muhammad who purged one-fifth of humanity of their evil consequences.

Last of all, I would mention one thing, which, in my humble opinion, is the core of religion — the only object for the accomplishment of which religion came. It is the development of the human mind, the conversion of our consciousness into a true conscience. We have the animal in us, and we have to sublimate it into a divine being, reflecting divine morals. No religion extant is without something to achieve that object. But Muhammad teaches us in the shortest and surest way. Where other religions demand from us the observance of rigid ascetic penances, and the putting aside of our mundane duties if we are interested in the cultivation of our mystical faculties, Muhammad wants us to remain in the world, but live the worldly life in a way that may carry us to our goal. We need not divide our week into God's day and man's day. Every minute of our life belongs to God, and should be spent accordingly. For this purpose, Muhammad wants us to say our prayers at least five times a day, to commune with the Deity after every important interval of our daily life, in words the bearing of which may spiritualize our doings within the periods intervening between those prayers. Muhammad wants us to lead the family life, and teaches us the way to make it a nursery of good morals and spirituality. The chief problem in our life is that of our bestial passions and carnal desires. Muhammad does not suggest their killing, as has been done in many religions. He teaches their control ; we have to train them in such a way that the low passions imbue high morality and generate spirituality. "Hand in action and heart with God" is the Persian proverb which becomes a reality in Islam. In this respect, again, I remark that Muhammad was the first to evolve such a system.

The Visions and Revelations of the Prophet Muhammad¹

By DR. RAJ NARAIN, M.A.(Luck.), Ph.D.(Columbia)

The beginning of Divine Revelation

The religious career of Muhammad, the Prophet, "began with visions in his sleep as bright as the dawn of the morning. Then a love of solitude came upon him."² In the solitude of Mount Hira he found greater and greater satisfaction. Spending whole weeks at a time there with a few scanty provisions, his spirit gloried in fasting, in vigils, and in the search for a defined idea. He hardly knew whether it was day or night ; whether he dreamed or watched. For hours at a time he remained kneeling in the darkness or lying in the sun, or he strode with long steps on the stony rocks. When he walked, it seemed as if voices came out of the rocks ; when he struck a stone, it answered him.

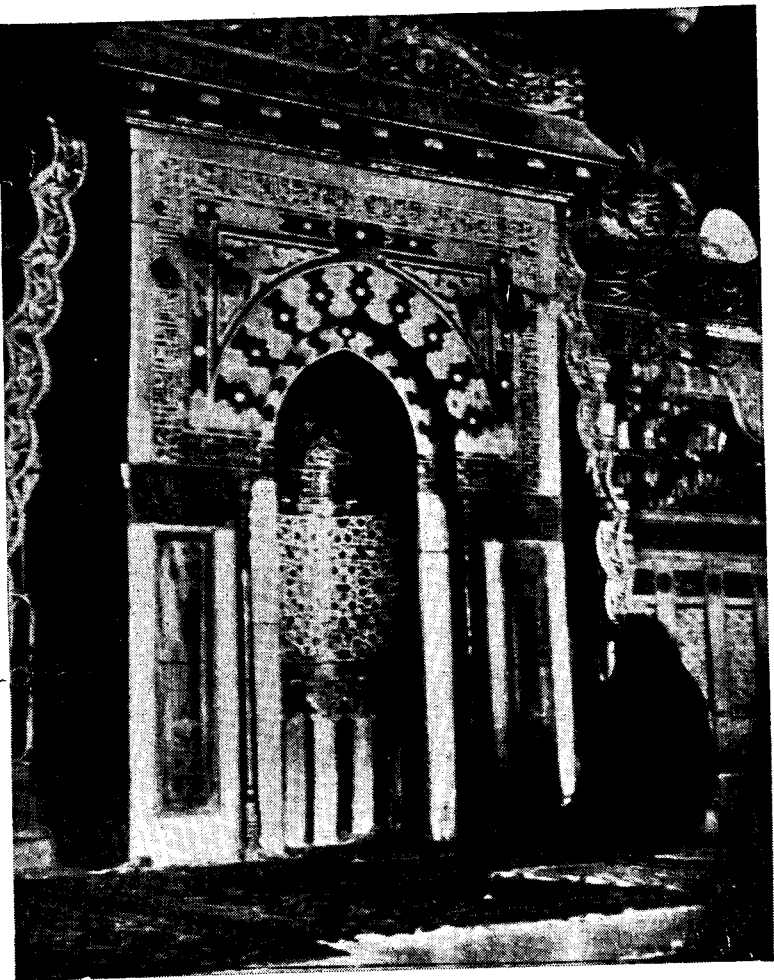
On his return the good Khadija was troubled to see him so silently elated. Sometimes he appeared to lose all consciousness of what was going on around him and lay inert on the ground, his breathing hardly perceptible. Then he would sleep, his breast rising and falling regularly with peaceful slumber. But his respiration would grow more rapid. He would dream of an enormous human being as huge as the heavens over the earth and covering the whole horizon who would then approach, rush towards him with extended arms ready to seize him. "Mahomet would wake with a start, his body covered with

sweat ; Khadija would wipe his forehead and question him gently ; she would anxiously try to calm him. He would remain silent, or evade her questions, or he would answer in words she did not understand."³

Then one night, the Prophet states, Gabriel came to him as he slept and said : "Read (*Iqra*) !" The Prophet replied that he could not read ! The angel took hold of him and pressed him so hard that he could no longer bear it. Then he let him go and said : "Read !" The Prophet said : "I cannot read." When the angel asked for the third time and pressed him hard, the Prophet said : "What shall I read ?" The angel replied : "Read : In the name of thy Lord who created — He createth man from a clot — Read : And thy Lord is the Most Honourable."⁴

The first Revelation of the Prophet

"I awoke," said Muhammad, "from my sleep, and it was as if they had written a message in my heart. I went out of the cave, and while I was on the mountain, I heard a voice saying : 'O Muhammad, thou art God's messenger, and I am Gabriel !' I looked up and saw Gabriel in the form of a man with crossed legs at the horizon of heaven. I remained standing and observed



A view of the place in the Prophet's Mosque at Medina where the Prophet Muhammad used to stand when leading the congregational prayers

There was no Mihrab — the curved niche — in the days of the Prophet and his immediate Caliphs. The Umayyad Caliph, 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz, when he reconstructed the Prophet's Mosque, is said to be the first to have built the first mihrab in the Prophet's Mosque at Medina

him, and moved neither backwards nor forwards. And when I turned my gaze from him, I continued to see him on the horizon, no matter where I turned."⁵

The vision of Gabriel on Mount Hira described above is confirmed by the following verses of the Qur'an :

"Your comrade erreth not, nor is deceived ;
Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire.
It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired,
Which one of mighty powers hath taught him,
One vigorous ; and he grew clear to view
When he was on the uppermost horizon,
Then he drew nigh and came down
Till he was (distant) two bows' length or even nearer,
And He revealed unto His slave that which He
revealed."⁶

Again :

"That this is in truth the word of an honoured messenger ;
Mighty, established in the presence of the Lord of the Throne,

(One) to be obeyed, and trustworthy ;
And your comrade is not made.
Surely he beheld him on the clear horizon."⁷

The 13th verse of *sura* (chapter 53) tells us that Muhammad "verily saw Gabriel yet another time. This is generally accepted as a reference to the Prophet's vision in which he ascended through the seven heavens."⁸

In verse 27 of *sura* 48, we find yet another reference to the Prophet's visions. The Prophet, it is stated, had had a vision that he was entering the sanctuary at Mecca in peace and safety.⁹ The *sura* speaks of the fulfilment of this vision "for his messenger in very Truth".

We often find in the tradition the statement that Gabriel came to Muhammad in visible form. It is even stated that the angel resembled a certain man who is mentioned by name. Muhammad relates in *sura* 53 that on two separate occasions he saw the being who gave him his revelations, and he describes the incident in a way which clearly shows that the visions were strict exceptions. When accused by the pagans of possessing a jinn in him who gave him his revelations, Muhammad replied that the "being who came to him was no ordinary mean divining spirit, but a lofty heavenly being, one near the throne of the Lord".¹⁰

The phenomenon of Revelation

More interesting than the visions are the revelations of the Prophet. The earliest tradition contains various details of psychological significance as to the external appearance and the process of revelation. The details seek to elucidate three basic problems : how were the revelations perceived by the Prophet himself ; how were they perceived by others ; and in what circumstances did they come upon him ? To consider each *seriatim* :

(i) The revelations, says the Prophet, came to him in two ways : "Sometimes Gabriel cometh and communicateth the revelation unto me, as one man unto another, and this is easy ; at other times it affecteth me like the ringing of a bell penetrating my very heart, and rending me as it were in pieces, and this it is which grievously affecteth me."¹¹ But what was revealed in the latter way never left him.¹² In a different form of the tradition, the Prophet says : "Sometimes the revelation approaches me in the form of a young man who hands it down to me."¹³

(ii) The Messenger of God heard a sound like the humming of bees near his face ; thereupon *sura* 23, 1 *seq.*, was revealed to him.

(iii) The Prophet used to move his lips in pain as soon as revelation began. After the revelation of *sura* 75 : 16, however, he listened till Gabriel had withdrawn ; thereupon he recited what he had heard.¹⁴

(iv) 'Umar asked the Prophet : "Do you know when the revelation comes to you ?" The Prophet replied : "I hear loud noises, and then it seems as if I am struck by a blow. I never receive a revelation without the consciousness that my soul is being taken away from me".¹⁵

How were the Revelations perceived by others, and what were the external signs of Revelation ?

(i) 'Ayesha, Muhammad's favourite wife, relates : "Once, I witnessed how the revelation came . . . on a very cold day. When it was completed, his brow dripped with perspiration."¹⁶ (ii) The Prophet covered his head, his colour grew red ; after some time he recovered. (iii) "Thereupon the Messenger of God sat down,

turning towards him (Uthman Ibn Mazun). When they talked the Messenger of God let his gaze veer towards heaven ; after a while he looked down to his right side and turned away from his companions following his gaze and began to shake his head as if he tried to understand what was said to him, while Uthman sat looking on. When Muhammad has reached his aim, his gaze turned over towards heaven." (iv) A revelation caused him much pain ; the pain was perceptible to onlookers. "That time he separated himself from his companions and remained behind. Thereupon he began to cover his head with his shirt, suffering intensely. . . . When the Messenger of God received a revelation, he began to cover his face with his shirt. When he had swooned, we took it away." (v) Zaid Ibn Thabit said : " I was at Muhammad's side when the *sakina* came upon him. His thigh fell upon mine so heavily that I feared it would break. When he recovered, he said to me : Write down, and I wrote down *sura* 4:97." (vi) 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Amr said : " The *sura* al-Ma'ida was revealed to the Messenger of God, while he was riding on his camel. The beast could not bear him any longer so that he had to descend from it."

In what circumstances did the Revelation come upon the Prophet ?

(i) When he was directly or indirectly asked to give his opinion or decision, then the answer used to be revealed to him. (ii) Revelation came upon him while he was riding, while his head was being washed, while he was at table holding a bone in his hand, and while he was in the pulpit. (iii) It is also known that like David who wrapped himself in the skin of the sacrificed ox, and the Icelandic seer in a grey sheepskin, the Prophet adopted the proven method relative to producing inspiration.

In the foregoing an attempt has been made to describe the visions and revelations of the Prophet. Two facts might help to appreciate and understand them : (i) the Prophet's grandfather, 'Abd al-Muttalib, is reported to have had visions regarding his grandson's greatness. The Prophet's mother, too, is credited with having heard voices while she was carrying him in her womb.¹⁷ It is possible that this family trait flowered more fully in the Prophet. (ii) The Prophet was conscious since his earliest youth of his being an object of God's special care and protection, and had a feeling that he was especially called.

REFERENCES

- 1 In describing the visions and revelations of the Prophet, I have used as far as possible the language of the original writers in order to preclude any possibility of misrepresentation. This is my excuse for quoting rather extensively in this article.
- 2 T. B. Hyslop, *The Great Abnormals*, London, 1925, p. 165.
- 3 E. Dermenghem, *The Life of Mahomet*, London, 1930, p. 60.
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The author is indebted to Dr. Waheed Mirza, Head of the Arabic Department, and Mr. E. Ahmad Shah, retired Head of the Philosophy Department, both of Lucknow University, for a critical reading of the MS.

A Story from the Mathnawi of Jalal al-Din Rumi (died 1273 C.E.)

The Sympathetic Parrot

A perfume dealer owned a parrot which served him in a twofold capacity. It charmed his leisure hours with its amusing prattle, and it guarded the shop when he was out on business. One day when the parrot was alone on duty, a cat slipped in by the window, and the parrot, faithful to his assignment, flapped his wings loudly and made chase. The cat leapt to the counter which was well spread for display, and, knocking over a flask of perfume, made exit by the way he had come.

On his return, the dealer saw the parrot wet with scent, standing at attention over the broken bottle, and misjudging the situation, he smote his pet such a blow that all its beautiful head-feathers fluttered to the floor. The injured parrot opened his mouth to make protest, but no sound came forth. Stunned by the shock, the power of speech had left him.

Some weeks later, as the dealer was sitting moodily with his silent bird, a bald-headed man entered the shop. Seized with sympathy that had to be expressed, the parrot regained his voice as suddenly as he had lost it and inquired : "Pray, whose perfume bottle did you break?"

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THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN THE LAW OF ISLAM

(The following is a translation of a conversation reported to have taken place between an Egyptian journalist and a Moroccan author.)

Does the Shari'a allow polygamy?

Polygamy is permissible according to the *Shari'a* of Islam, but it is permissible only in the sense that the ruler may make it obligatory or prohibit it altogether according to what he thinks would be in the best interests of the community. In the opinion of the Imam Shaikh Muhammad 'Abduh (d. 11th July 1905), for example, polygamy is not permissible at the present time.

But in the Qur'an polygamy is prohibited only in those cases where the husband is unable to do justice to his wives.

Yes, but the *Sunna* (the Practice) of the Prophet Muhammad treats this from a different point of view and regards woman as possessing a jealous nature. The five eminent collectors of the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad reported that the Prophet Muhammad said, "The family of Hisham Ibn al-Mughirah have requested my permission to give their daughter in marriage to 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, but I did not give them my permission for this, nor will I give it them in the future, unless and until 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib divorces my daughter, for she is part of me and what befalls her befalls me and what harms her harms me."

But what about God's word, "Men are the guardians of women (qawwamun 'ala 'al-nisa)'"? (The Qur'an, 4:34).

This is used in the same sense as one would say, "Parliament is the guardian of the Government, or that Government is the guardian of the nation". The phrase "*qawwamun 'ala*" in the context simply implies guardianship, supervision or assistance. The two eminent Egyptian authorities on the interpretation of the Qur'anic verses, the Imam Shaikh Muhammad 'Abduh and Sayyid Rasheed Ridha, have expressed the view that this phrase in this context means only that man is merely the head of the family, and that he is the head of the family not in a dictatorial or despotic sense but on a basis of mutual consultation and co-operation with his wife.

Does the Shari'a grant women equal status with men?

Yes, and this is one of the sources of pride for Islam. We must remember that God has said of women, "And women have rights similar to those against them in a just manner" (The Qur'an, 2:228), and that means that men ought to give women their rights in a just manner. But the apparent inequality between man and woman which appears in the other part of this verse which says, "And men are a degree above them," and also in the provision contained in the Qur'an to the effect that the evidence of two female witnesses is equal to the evidence of one male witness, and also the provision that the share of woman in an inheritance is smaller than that of a man, do not really place woman in an inferior position *vis-à-vis* man. They were provisions based on various realistic considerations, one of which was the fact that women did not have the same social opportunities as men to gain experience, skill and general knowledge. It is known that the Prophet Muhammad said that the evidence of a bedouin could not be preferred to that of a town dweller, and some Muslim jurists have accepted this principle. Would that acceptance imply that a bedouin is a woman? The criterion of this doctrine is the relative measure of experience of different persons.

The difference in the rights accorded to man and woman in the *Shari'a* with regard to inheritance is also based on similar sociological considerations. There are cases where a woman would be entitled to a greater share of an inheritance than a man, as where a deceased is survived only by a daughter and his parents. And when we consider fully the rights accorded to woman in the *Shari'a* in financial matters, we can appreciate fully that woman is considered in every respect a citizen possessing equal rights with man.

But what is your opinion on the fact that the Prophet Muhammad has described woman as "not perfect" in intellect and faith?

You must not forget that the Prophet Muhammad said almost in the same tradition, "I have not seen anyone else who are defective in intellect and religion is more capable of having the better of an intelligent man than you women." This means that woman can defeat the intelligent man. What is meant here by the "deficiency in intellect" is that woman had an inferior intellect in comparison with her menfolk simply as a result of the fact that she had a smaller measure of education at that time.

The abolition in the Qur'an of the differences between man and woman is nothing but an emphatic recognition of human progress and a heavenly care which reveals the value of the Qur'an and its finality and an assertion of its value and desirability.

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¹ Courtesy, the Editor, *al-Anwaar*, Tetuan, Spanish Morocco, for July-August 1953 (Vol. VIII, No. 36).

THE IDEOLOGICAL BANKRUPTCY OF EUROPE AND THE FUTURE PROSPECTS OF ISLAM

The Duty of Muslims and their Leaders in the Changes of the Modern World

By SAYYID QUTB

Communism, succeeding in Europe and Asia, is transitory because it does not satisfy the spiritual and idealistic phase of the life of the individual

Communism is sweeping Europe today and will sweep America tomorrow. Communism will do this not because its resources are greater or more effective, nor because its powers of production are more stupendous, nor again because its scientific and other progress is more advanced or developed. None of these factors will be decisive in promoting the march of Communism and its onslaught on the other political and social ideologies prevailing in the world at the present time. What does lend material aid to Communism is that it gives the Western man an idealistic outlook on life and a higher purpose and target for him to pursue — things which Western civilization cannot now offer, as I tried to show in my article "The Moral Bankruptcy of Europe," *vide The Islamic Review* for October 1953. Compared with the materialist social and economic ideologies of the West, Communism can be regarded as "progressive" and "intellectual", in the sense that it leaves room for the growth and development of ideas and theories while the Western systems are entirely incapable of permitting such progress and development but, instead, stifle the zeal and energy of the intellectual and the idealist.

The ideals preached by Communism, although not yet fully achieved, are of their nature capable of achievement in a comparatively short period of time. When the aims of Communism are attained, Communism will begin to suffer from the same ills as those now afflicting the ideologies of the West. Communism will then become arid and impotent and will lose its charm in the eyes of Western man and lose also its appeal to the idealist and the intellectual. If this be the fate that awaits Communism in the materialistic Western world, the fate that awaits it in the non-materialistic Eastern world, particularly in the Islamic world, is bound to be far worse. The East possesses a culture and a civilization entirely different from that of the West. The Eastern people's ideological heritage is one that was built on intellectual and non-materialistic foundations. The Eastern people's view of life is far less materialistic than that of the Western peoples, and it is at the same time more dynamic and more capable of growth and development mainly because its sphere of activity — a spiritual and idealistic one — is wider and more fertile. The scope for experiment with a view to finding solutions for the social ills of mankind is far greater

in the Eastern systems than in Communism and Western capitalism.

An analysis of "dialectical materialism"

Communism today is playing an important part in shaping the future of the materialistic civilization of the West. It is providing an end to the materialist theories which predominated in the civilization of the West since the Roman days and which led Western thought to the present state of sterility. Communism is accelerating the decay of Western civilization and bringing it gradually but surely to its natural and inescapable doom. Communism is thus proving to be the last link in the chain of "dialectical materialism", the theory which says that the social ideologies of the West carry within them conflicts which lead to their own destruction and to the birth of other ideologies based on the triumph of some conflicts over others, then the destruction of those ideologies by the similar interaction of conflicts within them, a process which continues until Communism is eventually reached, which will put the seal on the further interaction of conflicts and the destruction of old ideologies and the birth of new ones of a similar species. In other words, Communism is regarded as the end of this process of development, and after it there will be no new internal ideological activity or development in the West.

This view is not shared by all social thinkers. I, for one, do not concur in the views advocated by the supporters of the principle of "dialectical materialism". The reason for this is that I regard life as a dynamic and constantly progressing thing, and I refuse to believe that social progress and development will stop irrevocably at the stage at which Communism wants it to stop. Man will always find a theory or ideal which he will pursue and which will give him an opportunity to develop and progress, and without such an ideal or aim life will be empty and barren for all.

The world will choose something like Islam that combines in itself the materialism of Communism and the highly imaginative spiritualism of Christianity

The violent materialistic trend which swept European civilization in the form of Communism was the reaction to the narrow and unimaginative view preached by the Christian Church in the Middle Ages. The hostility of science to religion was also the direct product of the narrow-minded attitude which



The writer, Mr. Sayyid Qutb

the Church took against scientists and scientific discoveries and innovations, and it cannot be over-emphasized that this attitude which alienated the scientists from the Church and from religion could have easily been avoided, had the Church chosen to be liberal-minded in its outlook on science. The estrangement of science was thus by no means an inevitable and inescapable end, and it need never have come.

The antagonism between science and Christianity is giving a tremendous fillip to the success of Communism. But the success of Communism will eventually lead mankind to choose for its salvation a happy medium between these two opposed ideologies. Mankind will not, however, choose the highly imaginative spiritualism of Christianity nor the violent short-sighted materialism of Communism. It will select something that partakes of neither and combines a pure and true spiritual outlook with a moderate and realistic materialism. From these two ingredients mankind will cast for itself a new ideology which will be ever ready to give birth to new hopes and which will thereby cause man to march forward towards securing an ideal and happy society.

The only system of life ever known to mankind to provide this desired philosophy and pattern of life is Islam, whose views on man and his destiny are quite different from those of either Christianity or Communism.

Europe might have enjoyed long ago the wholesome fruits of Islam and of the Muslim way of life had it not, for an historical accident, chosen to shut its doors before the advancing tide of Islam. So deep and violent was Europe's antagonism to Islam in its early days that it struggled hard and spared no effort to oust the Muslims from Spain and to uproot all traces of their influence there.

The duty of Muslims at this juncture of human destiny

This was God's will, no doubt, for Europe was not ready at that time to accept the sublime light of Islam when it shone for the first time, and to benefit from it. Europe had had to undergo a long series of bitter experiences, to suffer from the narrow-mindedness of the Church and to be thrown thereby in the lap of extreme materialism, and to suffer endlessly because of this materialism, so that by its spiritual, intellectual and scientific experiences and trials, it would be prepared to receive and accept wholeheartedly the light of Islam when it shines again. In other words, this conversion of mankind to Islam will come in three stages. First, mankind will suffer under the materialistic system and will be forced to look elsewhere for a remedy. And so it will be driven to Communism — the second stage — only to find that this system, too, is not the balsam for its malady and frustration. And then it will stand puzzled and bewildered between extreme materialism on the one hand and extreme spiritualism on the other, and it will take a long time to make up its mind on which of these to choose.

I am neither over-optimistic, nor over-confident when I say that it is my firm conviction that the leadership of mankind will eventually fall to Islam. Had mankind never been given Islam it would have been driven by sheer necessity to devise a system that would not have differed very much from Islam. It would have been inspired in devising such an ideology simply because it would find no other solution to the emptiness and frustration thrust upon it by Western civilization.

We can thus appreciate the magnitude of the task that awaits Islam and the Islamic world. Both Muslims of today and tomorrow have a duty to mankind as a whole in its gravest hour of need. The bulk of mankind, which at one time shut its doors firmly before the advance of Islam, will soon feel desperately in need of Islam as the only thing that can give it spiritual food to survive. Then, more than ever before, the non-Islamic world will be capable of comprehending and

appreciating the true merits of the teachings of Islam. And it will be the duty of the world of Islam to offer to the non-Muslim world what it wants and to present it in such a way as would harmonize with the experiences and trials which the non-Muslim world has undergone ever since the first dawn of Islam.

The Challenge of the world to the leaders of the Muslim world

This is indeed a stupendous task, and the leaders of Islam must lose no time in preparing and equipping the Muslim world for it. The Muslims must keep paramount in their minds, however, that mankind will not be simply seeking a set of bare metaphysical ideas and theories. It would want a realistic and practical code and system of life; and any theories that are presented to it will be judged mainly on the beneficial results that have been proved to result from their application in the realm of practical life. This has always been the criterion in passing judgement on social ideologies, and it will be the way in which the non-Muslim world will judge the ideology of Islam. It is, therefore, the sacred duty of the Muslims to lead such a life as would portray effectively the great merits and healthy attributes of their belief. The social order in the Muslim world must present itself to the non-Muslim world as the practical interpretation of the teachings of Islam, so that the non-Muslim world will, when it starts looking in earnest for a way out of its intellectual and spiritual strife, will not fail to be impressed by the beauty and charm of the Islamic ideology in its practical phase.

Many in the East and the West err gravely when they endeavour to lead the Muslims away from Islam and to cause them to look elsewhere, especially in Western civilization, for the solution of their present social and other problems. Such advocates of the adoption of the materialist civilization of the West cause harm both to the Muslims and to the world in general; for they seek to deprive mankind of the only recourse that it may have when the present materialistic trends of Western civilization expose to the world the abysmal bankruptcy of the Western ideology. It has sometimes been said by the advocates of Western civilization that it was the materialist outlook of the West that gave rise to its present great industrial progress. This may be true, but it does not mean that once the Muslims or the non-Muslims begin to heed conscientiously the teachings of Islam they will have to destroy all factories and workshops, abandon all cities and mansions, and go back to live in caves and tents and to ride only camels and donkeys. The implications of the arguments of the anti-Muslims are ridiculous and preposterous.

Islam is a liberation movement which liberates mind and soul of man

Islam was a liberation movement which sought to liberate both the mind and the soul. It liberated the mind of man from doubt and superstition and it directed him towards constructive work on this earth. It rid him of the fear and suspicion which he had of nature and it made plain to him that nature can be his friend and not his enemy. It also liberated the intellect of man from the depression which had gripped it and created new interests and avenues for man to exploit. Thus life grew vigorously under the aegis of Islam and from this progressive and highly developed life of the Muslims, Europe took the foundations on which it built its prosperity and civilization. Perhaps one of the greatest attributes of Islam is that it links life in this world with the life hereafter, thereby ensuring that man's life on this earth is prevented from degenerating into absolute materialism and becoming empty and barren — a fate which, as we have seen, has befallen Western civilization at the summit of its industrial and productive development.

Islam's liberation movement conquered many territories and realms not merely with the power of the sword or with economic materialism. Such materialist weapons could not have made it possible for Islam to sweep the world with such great speed and effectiveness which surpassed the success of such a violent movement as the Fascism of modern times which had the advantage of unique superiority over its adversaries in military strength. The military forces of Islam did not have such a superiority in material strength over their adversaries — their superiority was only the faith and zeal of their leaders and soldiers and in their devotion and loyalty to the missions entrusted to them. The clue to the success of the Islamic movement is thus to be found in the dynamic nature of its principles and in the intrinsic nature of the mission of liberation which it advocated. Islam offered spiritual food to a spiritually starved mankind and it embellished life by providing man with a brilliant and superior ideology and a sublime aim to pursue. Nations and armies rallied freely to the Islamic call and they opened their doors wide to its acceptance because they found that the application of the teachings of Islam in neighbouring lands had promoted justice and stability and ensured spiritual and social liberation of the Muslim peoples.

Western writers on Islam as a liberation movement

The late Professor Sir T. W. Arnold, the renowned student of Islam, says in his book *"The Preaching of Islam"* (p. 55); "When the Muslim army reached the valley of the Jordan and Abu 'Ubaydah pitched his camp at Fihl, the Christian inhabitants of the country wrote to the Arabs, saying: 'O Muslims, we prefer you to the Byzantines, though they are of our own faith, because you keep better faith with us and are more merciful to us and refrain from doing us injustice and your rule over us is better than theirs, for they have robbed us of our goods and our homes.'"¹ He also says: "The people of Emessa closed the gates of their city against the army of Heraclius and told the Muslims that they preferred their government and justice to the injustice of oppression of the Greeks."²

But justice and liberty were not the only things that attracted the non-Muslims to Islam; it was more clear and simple doctrines which were demonstrated by the people who practised Islam faithfully in its early days that attracted the non-Muslims and caused them to welcome Islam into their midst. It was the trust which people had in the wholesomeness of the Islamic ideology and the hope of a better spiritual and material life inspired by it, coming at the time when other faiths spread only despair and frustration, that gave Islam its superior appeal to mankind. Of this, J. H. Denison says in his book *"Emotions as the Basis of Civilization"*, "In the fifth and sixth centuries, the civilized world stood on the verge of chaos. The old emotional cultures that had made civilization possible, since they had given to man a sense of unity and of reverence for their rulers, had broken down, and nothing had been found adequate to take their place . . . It seemed then that the great civilization which it had taken four thousand years to construct was on the verge of disintegration, and that mankind was likely to return to that condition of barbarism where every tribe and sect was against the next, and law and order were unknown . . . The old tribal sanctions had lost their power . . . The new sanctions created by Christianity were working division and destruction instead of unity and order . . . Civilization like a gigantic tree whose foliage had overreached the world . . . stood tottering . . . rotted to the core . . . Was there any emotional culture that could be brought in to gather mankind once more into unity and to save civilization . . . ?"

"It was among these people that the man was born who was to unite the whole known world of the east and south."³

The condition of the world today resembles that at the time of the advent of Islam

Mankind now stands in a grave position very much similar to that in which it stood in the fifth and sixth centuries and which J. H. Denison has described so lucidly. Christianity, which at that period found itself incapable of saving mankind from the chaos that awaited it, is today even more impotent to fulfil such a great task and unable too to become a positive influence on mankind and to provide a balsam for the social ills of man. And Christianity finds itself in such a position despite the fact that it compares very favourably with the other great religions of the world. And so Islam is left as the only eligible candidate to endeavour, as it did in the sixth century, to save mankind.

The disunity and corruption which prevailed in the fifth and sixth centuries had encouraged those sunering from it to enter the fold of Islam in great numbers. Now, the emptiness of Western civilization and the bankruptcy of Western moral ideology and the fact that the West cannot find in its midst something capable of giving mankind a sublime ideal to pursue or to save it from the chaos and destruction that hovers menacingly above it, will inevitably lead the West to welcome Islam. But, as I have already emphasized, this will happen only if the West finds Islam in brilliant colours when translated into practical application in the Muslim world.

As Muslims, our duty in this generation and in the next is quite clear. Communism may survive this generation but it is bound to crumble and disintegrate not later than the early part of the next generation, if the present pace of discontent and frustration in the world is maintained. And before the end of the twentieth century Communism will have swept the whole of Europe and America, leaving the field clear for Islam.

When that happens the struggle which now exists between Communism and Capitalism will have to come to an end. It is significant that Communism and Capitalism are in reality of the same species — the materialist species — though only too often the advocates and adherents of these two ideologies profess that their doctrines are founded on entirely different foundations, when the struggle between Communism and Capitalism comes to an end, there will be a new and mortal struggle between the intellectual and spiritual ideology portrayed by Islam and the ideology portrayed at first by Capitalism and later by Communism.

I, for one, have no doubt as to how this will end. I do not for one moment doubt that the Islamic ideology will be the victor. Its victory has for long been guaranteed by the fact that it gives ample scope for all the sections of mankind to develop and impels them to work harmoniously towards a common good target. Its success will also be ensured because it does not permit the ascendancy or rule of one race or social class over another, since it was originally devised as a universal system for the whole of mankind.

A comparison between the teachings of Islam and Christianity

A critic of Islam may say that if it be true that Christianity has fulfilled its mission and depleted its resources since the fifth century C.E., and has ceased to have had any positive influence or effect on the life and destiny of man because the ideologies which were inspired by it have begun to crumble, and as indeed is demonstrated by the fact that the adherence to the teachings of Christianity has waned or even disappeared even in those

¹ Quoted from Azdi's *Futuh al-Sham*, Calcutta, 1854.

² Quoted from *Baladbur* (ed. de Goeje, p. 137), Leiden, 1866.

³ Quoted by Muhammad 'Ali in his *New World Order*, Lahore, Pakistan.

countries that have at one time been zealous Christian countries, can it not be said that the same fate has befallen Islam? What reason is there for believing that Islam has not exhausted its mission in four or five centuries after its inception, and has ceased to be of any positive influence on mankind? Islamic societies, it should be admitted, have for long ceased to adhere faithfully and conscientiously to the teachings of Islam and have adopted a system of life which, although not as highly materialistic as the European systems, is at least not Islamic in the real sense of the word.

It would be easy for me to reply to such a criticism by the aid of a dogmatic answer from a purely Muslim point of view. In that case I would have said that Christianity had admitted clearly that it was devised solely as a creed for a limited section of mankind. Jesus Christ said, "... I am not sent but into the lost sheep of the house of Israel".⁴ In other words, Christianity is merely a supplement to the old Judaism, and is not, on its own confession, an independent and self-contained creed. Christianity adopted the Old Testament of the Jews which contains the Mosaic Code and many stories and tales as ranking equal with the New Testament, which contains, among other things, the Gospels and the Epistles of the Disciples. Islam, on the other hand, started on mainly fresh ground and was directed to mankind as a whole. It never confined itself to any narrow boundaries, from the point of view of either race, time or place. But, as I have already said, I would not be content with giving this purely dogmatic answer to the critics of Islam. Rather would I adopt a practical and dispassionate attitude and seek to refute the allegations of the critics of Islam by means of logical argument. I would start by asserting the fact that mankind has never known a system or ideology capable of organizing the affairs of humanity as a whole and of promoting harmony and unity between its many component races than Islam. Islam's view of the world, of life and of man is the widest and most comprehensive view ever known. It is also in great contrast to the outlook of other ideologies in that it is more capable of growth and development of itself and more capable also of harmonizing between the powers of nature and the powers of man. It is also more understanding and appreciative of the needs of man and of his limitations. A social system or ideology which is based in this manner on the realization of the true nature of man and his environment is certainly the more able to permit the development and progress of man and to lift him to the highest levels of prosperity and happiness.

Why Islam has not been understood by Europe

If we admit this undeniable fact we arrive at the conclusion that the arrest of the tide of Islam in its early stages and its inability to penetrate deep into the far corners of the world simply meant that humanity was not at the time ready for the acceptance of any great measure of Islamic influence. An honest and unbiased examination of the facts of history reveals that the offer which Islam made to the world when it first appeared was a most praiseworthy one. To a world that was torn bitterly by the Persian and the Roman Empires, and where a feudalistic reign of terror predominated, and where society was divided into an over-privileged nobility and a very under-privileged working class and slaves, Islam offered freedom, justice, fraternity and equality to all. No wonder that many Christians and Jews who were suffering under these two empires were very highly impressed with the unique and novel teachings of Islam and were only too willing to extend a hearty welcome to the advancing Muslims. The principles of freedom, justice, equality and fraternity were not formally admitted or recognized in Europe until after the French Revolution in the late eighteenth

century — almost eleven centuries after they were first propounded by Islam. Once formally admitted and recognized in Europe, these principles failed to develop in a healthy manner and soon degenerated into their antithesis. They simply could not develop or mature in the practical manner they did in the early world of Islam. The reason for this was that Europe had inherited a great deal of ideological principles from the Roman Empire, and as this inheritance could not be shed off completely, it prevented Europe from being in a proper frame of mind to comprehend and digest the true significance of the Islamic principles with which Europe came into contact as a result of the Crusades. Because of this maladjustment there was chaos and instability all over Europe for a long time afterwards. In the end, the contact which Europe had with Islam during the Crusades had a great but not quite complete influence upon European civilization. And this good influence was far greater than that which was exerted by Christianity — the religion which until this day is the official religion of almost the whole of Europe.

Why Christianity failed to make a decisive influence on Europe

The criterion of all this was the positive nature of the teachings of Islam as contrasted with the negative nature of the teachings of Christianity in the matter of the organization and planning of human society. Christianity has at no time been able to exert a complete and decisive influence on Western society which had developed on the ruins and foundations of the old Roman system. And Christianity had at no time given mankind a clear, practical and vivid picture of the social set-up or system which it advocated, though it has given a sentimental and poetic picture of the kind of individual which it likes. Islam, on the other hand, has propounded the basic theory and has accompanied it with a practical interpretation and demonstration. And although Islamic society in Spain and in the Middle East during the Crusades was not perhaps truly demonstrative or indicative of the full application of the teachings of Islam, yet it contrasted favourably with European society, so much so that it left a lasting impression on the Europeans who came into contact with it, an impression which was sufficient to cause them on their return to Europe to insist on reforms and to endeavour to implement some of the attributes of the Islamic ideology. They tried to engraft on the European ideologies the Islamic conceptions of freedom, justice, fraternity and equality and to start a social renaissance; but their activities were comparatively short-lived and disorganized. And the French Revolution, which arose solely to propagate these idealistic conceptions, failed to make any truly lasting impression on Europe or to save its ideologies from degenerating into Communism as they have now done.

These historical facts enable us to explain the reason for the failure of the tide of Islam in its early days to invade Europe successfully. They show quite clearly that Western society was not ready at that time to take a greater measure of the Islamic ideology. Now, however, Europe has suffered enough harm at the hands of Capitalism and Communism that it has become capable of properly evaluating the benefits of Islam and perceiving the social and other healing powers of the Islamic teachings.

Again — and I make no apology for repeating it — the Muslims can see clearly that they have a great burden and a stupendous task to shoulder in the matter of the future of Islam. Every Muslim should realize that it is his sacred duty to portray to the West in all that he does the true qualities of the teachings of Islam.

⁴ Matt. 16: 24.

Glimpses into the Past and Present of Egypt

New Forces of Democracy in Action in Egypt

By A. H. M. MUHIY-UD-DIN

A new Egypt is born

The announcement that Egypt has become a republic presents an entirely new prospect, not only for the free Muslim world but also for the world as a whole. It is as yet only the decision of a fifty-men committee of jurists, lawyers, constitution-makers and political philosophers appointed by General Muhammad Najeeb, but a country-wide referendum based on the purely democratic "adult franchise" will unanimously determine the course of effective and active democracy in Egypt for the first time in the history of that fabulous land. Egypt was one of the most ancient empires where "divine right of the king" presented the worst type of mass exploitation. Since time immemorial, and in modern times, it has been associated with a vast disparity between the riches of its ruling cliques and the poverty of its subject people, with the exception of a few short periods of Muslim rule there.

Nothing like Islamic democracy or even Western democracy ever existed in the valley of the Nile, where the adoption of a calendar marked the earliest known date in world history — 4241 B.C. The Muslim conquest in 640 C.E. gave an opportunity for the rise of an Islamic democracy for the first time in Egypt, but this was nullified by the subsequent rise of tyrants.

Egypt's history from 3400 B.C.

Egypt's political history begins about 3400 B.C., when King Menes consolidated the Nile Valley into a kingdom in lower Egypt, with his capital at Memphis, a city which decayed and vanished. The Great Pyramid was erected about 3000 B.C. by King Cheops, and later kings followed his example in building the country's famous pyramids, tombs and temples successively. These have provided a great arena for archaeological excavation by European and American scholars ever since the end of the eighteenth century until this day.

The shepherd-kings of Arabian origin, *al-Hyksos*, invaded and established themselves there about 2000 B.C. The Hebrew exodus and Joseph came successively to Egypt in this period owing to famine in Palestine and Syria. Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dream of the lean and fat kine is an historical fact confirmed by the Qur'an and formerly by the Old and New Testaments.

In 1600 B.C. the monarchs of Thebes in Upper Egypt drove out the Hyksos rulers of Arabia from Egypt and established and maintained a powerful military State for about 500 years, linking the entire upper and lower valleys of the Nile, Syria, Mesopotamia, large portions of Africa and Central and Western Asia up to the borders of Persia and India. It was during these conquests that the first contact between the two ancient civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia was made. Rameses II, the greatest of the Pharaohs of this period, made Thebes what is said to have been the most magnificent city of the age by reason of its statuary and temples. The ruins of Thebes are still among the most splendid in the world. From 1300 B.C. Egypt's power began to decline gradually, and early in this period the Hebrews



Facing the Railway Station of Cairo, there stands to greet each new arrival in Egypt this massive monument which depicts the Rebirth of Egypt. On the monument is written the following words: Nahdat Misr (in Arabic) followed by the words in French le Reveil de l'Egypte, both of which mean "The Renaissance of Egypt"

escaped from a weak Pharaoh and returned to Canaan (Palestine) under the leadership of Moses.

The Persian, Greek and Roman conquerors in Egypt

In 525 B.C. Darius of Persia conquered Egypt and ruled the country until 332 B.C. A canal between the Nile and the Red Sea was initiated in the period for easy maritime business and naval expeditions, but could not be completed owing to heavy Greek invasions. Alexander conquered Egypt and established his Greek empire with his capital city at Alexandria in 332 B.C. After the death of Alexander his general, Ptolemy, became the independent ruler of the country and established a dynasty after him which continued for about 300 years. During this period Egypt had a great name in the arts, science, fortune and power, and was one of the greatest kingdoms of the world.

Egypt fell into the hands of the Romans and became a Province of the vast Roman Empire in 30 B.C., but Alexandria remained the seat of Greek learning, where the barbarous Romans received a gradual indoctrination. Thus the victors submitted to the victims unconsciously, and consequently some of its great name was maintained.

The Muslim conquest of Egypt in 640 C.E.

The next great change for the better status of Egypt was offered by the Muslim conquest in 640 C.E. Although, as during the Roman overlordship, the country became a Province under Medina during the brilliant democratic rule of Caliph Umar (634-644 C.E.), yet as an autonomous Province, Egypt played a

prominent role in sharing the subsequent Muslim conquests during the pious Caliphs (632-661 C.E.). There followed the Umayyads (661-749 C.E.), during which dynasty Egypt suffered a comparatively dull period owing to the Egyptian rebellion against the Caliph 'Uthman (644-656 C.E.), and also owing to the bid for power by Syria and Egypt while the former had the patronage of the Umayyad rulers. During the Abbasids (750-1258 C.E.), Egypt enjoyed an almost sovereign position by powerful ruling families which had their effective say even in the affairs of the Abbasid Caliphs at Baghdad. Support from Egypt had been considered a vital asset for the Caliphs and their grand ministers.

In 868 C.E. Ahmad Ibn Tulun established a quasi-independent dynasty under the loyalty of the Abbasid Caliph, and this continued until 905 C.E., with its capital at Katai, between Cairo and Fustat. This period gave Egypt a good name for wealth, luxury and lofty public works. The Mosque of Tulun is still a witness of its grandeur. The Tulunids were followed by the Ikhshidids (935-969 C.E.). Syria, Mecca and Medina were also annexed to the grand principality of Egypt by the weak Caliph, with the centre in Baghdad. The Fatimids (969-1171 C.E.) conquered Egypt in 969 C.E. and established a great empire linking all North Africa, Sicily, Malta, Cyprus, Syria, Aleppo, Nubia and the Sudan, thus overshadowing the supremacy of the Abbasid Caliphs and giving Egypt a status second to none.

This period of Egyptian history is one of the most glorious for its arts and architecture and advancement of learning. The University of al-Azhar — the oldest and largest seminary in the world — is a living memory of the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt.

Egypt's principal role in the destruction of the Crusaders

During the later Abbasids, the Ayubids (1171-1250 C.E.) ruled Egypt under the so-called sovereignty of the Caliphate at Baghdad. During this period Egypt enjoyed a unique internal peace and took the "lion's share" in checking the tyranny of the invading Crusaders. The Ayubids were followed by the Mamluks (1252-1517 C.E.), who destroyed the Crusaders once for all and established a great power in Egypt. This is also one of the chief periods in which Egypt achieved a great name, not only as a great power but also as a prosperous empire in every walk of advancement, both material and intellectual. Sultan Selim I of Turkey conquered Egypt in 1517 and afterwards it came within the "Pashalik" of the Ottoman Empire (1517-1805 C.E.), and thus inherited the office of the Caliphate from the Abbasid Caliph who had taken refuge at the court of the great Mamluks.

Modern Egypt

In 1805 C.E. Muhammad 'Ali, an orphan soldier of Albania, was called to save the face of the country by the common men of Egypt, led by the 'Ulema of al-Azhar. He was able to satisfy the hopes, ambitions and aspirations of the common people in Egypt and thus formed a big army under the command of his son, Ibrahim Pasha. Muhammad 'Ali gave Egypt an independent status and acquired a vast territory out of the "sick man's empire" of the Ottoman Turks with the hope of building a Middle Eastern Muslim Empire. But his descendants were not worthy of his name, and thus gradually fell under the sway of the French and British. After the failure of 'Urabi Pasha in 1883 the country finally fell into indirect submission to Great Britain. A quasi-independence was given to the country owing to hard pressure and the rise of nationalistic movements, under Mustafa Kamel, Muhammad Farid and Sa'd Zaghlul; but power-seeking party politics in the long run failed to bring real salvation to the people. In 1922 the British House of Commons approved a nominal independence for Egypt, and Ahmad Fuad I

was proclaimed king. But British forces remained in the land. In 1936 a treaty was made between Egypt and Great Britain according to which the subsequent withdrawal of the British troops was promised, but nothing was done to satisfy the aspirations of the country.

In 1951 the Wafdist Government under the leadership of Mustafa Nahhas Pasha abrogated the treaty of 1893 concerning the Sudan, and of 1936 concerning the British troops in the Canal Zone, as demanded by the entire people through their organizations, Parliament and other mouthpieces; but nothing could be achieved on account of high treason around the throne and the power behind it, the party or persons in office. These high treasons only came to the surface during the Palestine war and occasionally afterwards.

General Muhammad Najeeb with his military officers ushers in a new era for democracy

General Muhammad Najeeb, with a few sincere officers of the Egyptian Army, at last ended once for all the rule of the aristocracy, tyranny and high treason and established the real type of good government under an able party to translate the aspirations of the people into action. Although employing a mere military junta, General Muhammad Najeeb has followed the long-neglected *Ijma' Ummat* (the consensus of public opinion), the third fundamental principle of Islam, by his referendum to the people to establish a republic in Egypt. This is one step towards realizing the formula of the powerful party, *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*.

The establishment of a republic by the free choice of the people as established right now under General Muhammad Najeeb is a victory for the free democratic world against the evil forces of Communism. The unity of the Nile Valley on federal, confederal or even mutual security pacts, and the withdrawal of the British troops from the Canal Zone, are the uncompromising demands of the Egyptian people as a whole. The failures of cabinets and officers were due to their failure to fulfil the aspirations of the people in these directions. Anti-social and Communistic subversive activities were only tempted to work in Egypt with the plea of the foreign troops in a sovereign land without the authority of the country itself. In fact, division between the Sudan and Egypt and the existence of British troops in Egypt without due submission to the command of Egypt are the severest subversive activities which hinder the smooth work of democracy on the one hand, and on the other tempt the subversive elements to spread destructive Communistic propaganda both from underground and on the surface, not only in Egypt but throughout the Middle and Near East.

Some of the

SAYINGS OF ALI

By al-Hajj Qassim Ali Jairazbhoy

Pages XXIII + 33

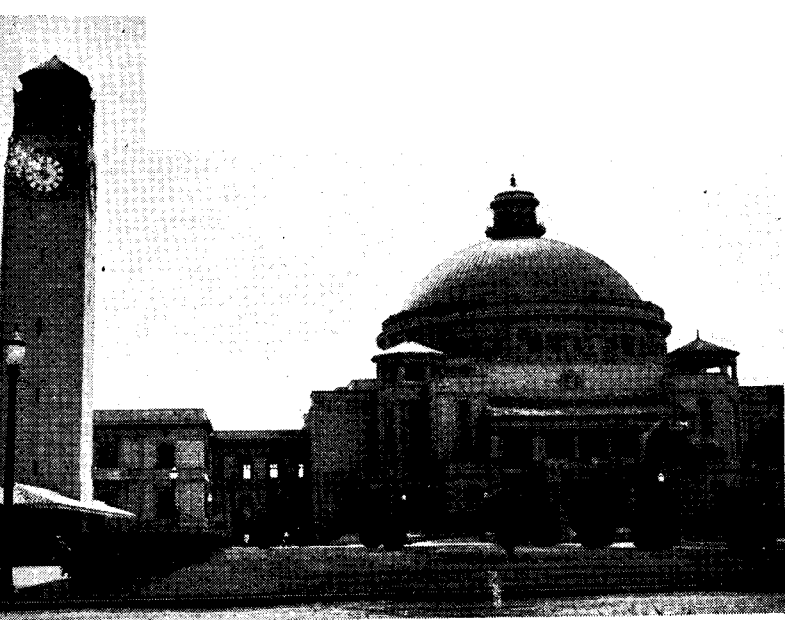
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His sayings deal with such important problems as those of justice, knowledge, purity, piety, forgiveness, intercession, etc.

We recommend that every lover of knowledge ought to possess a copy of this interesting booklet

Obtainable from:

The Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust
The Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England



MODERN EGYPT

(Declared a Republic)

Total Area: 386,110 square miles. Inhabited Area: 3,5

The principal crops grown are cotton, rice, sugar cane, and maize. In its barren deserts are petroleum, manganese ore, phosphorus, and iron.

For the 1951-52 Budget, the figures were: Revenue: £

Learning

Fu'ad I University,
founded in 1908 at
Cairo



Wear

Cotton — the 'white gold' — occupies 70 per cent of the land in Egypt's e



Art in foliage

The beautiful Moorish gardens at
Cairo on the bank of the Nile

The man behind

The Fellaah who is going to benefit from the new
guidance of General



Industry

A view of the
Workers' Town,
al-Mahallat
al-Kubra, the
Manchester of
Egypt



EGYPT IN PICTURES

(Republic on 18th June, 1953)

Area: 13,578 square miles. Population: About 20,000,000.

Wheat, cotton, sugarcane, and maize. The principal mineral resources to be found mainly in iron ore, phosphate rock, gypsum, natron and sulphate of sodium.

Revenue: ££212,415,000. Expenditure: ££231,000,000.



Wealth

'Gold' – occupying the pride of place in Egypt's economy

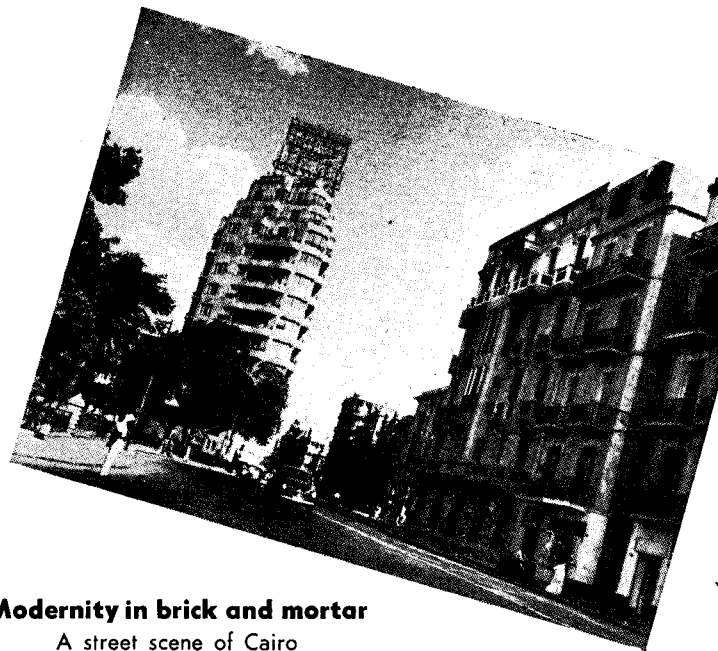
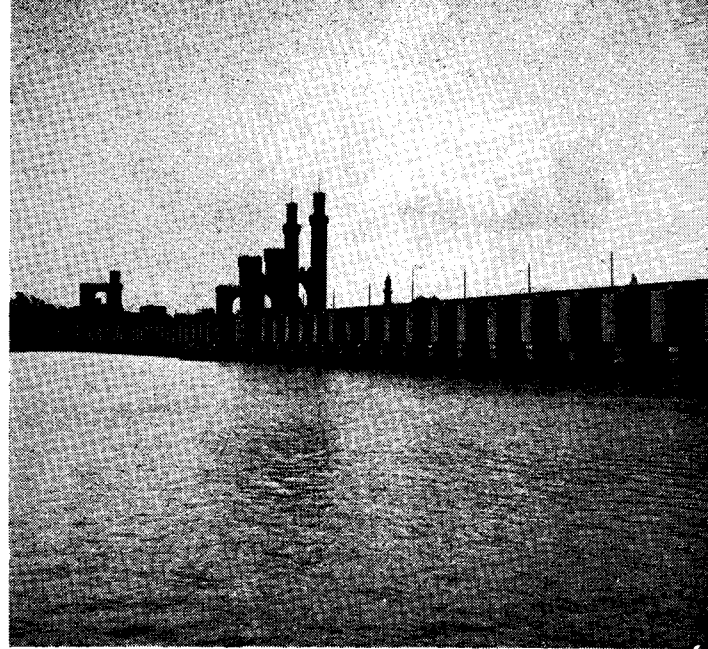
Modernization behind General Najeeb

The dawn of the new era that has dawned upon Egypt under the leadership of General Muhammad Najeeb



Nature in Harness

One of the many dams on the Nile. The one depicted here is that of Muhammad 'Ali Barrage near Cairo

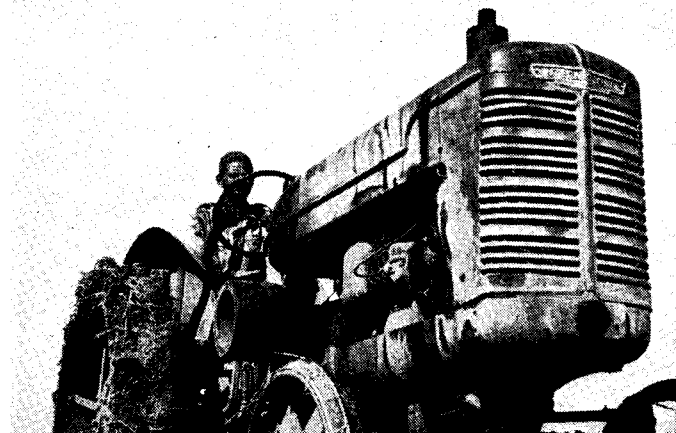


Modernity in brick and mortar

A street scene of Cairo

Agriculture

The use of modern implements in Agriculture



WHITHER MOROCCO AND TUNISIA?

THE STORY BEHIND THE DEPOSITION OF THE SULTAN

By ABU MUHAMMAD

French statesmen look upon the struggle for independence of Morocco as "the Cross" versus "the Crescent"

When asked a question by M. Clostermann, the French Deputy, about recent events in Morocco, M. Bidault, the French Foreign Minister, said, "I cannot allow the Crescent to triumph over the Cross"! Perhaps these words sum up the French Government's attitude towards the people of Morocco and towards the world of Islam in general. And they tell a horrible tale, and give a timely warning to the Arab and Muslim peoples of the sinister designs of France against the "Crescent".

France had been planning to depose the Sultan of Morocco since October 1950, when he returned to Morocco from France after making forceful representations to the French Government and asking for the independence of Morocco and the realization of the just demands of its people. Ever since that date, there have been frequent severe clashes between the French Government and the Sultan and his nationalist advisers. France was patient for a while, but soon found that the Sultan and the nationalist party, al-Istiqlal, were quite adamant in their demands and were intent upon pursuing them relentlessly. The Sultan appeared to French eyes as the champion of the rights of his people; and various attempts by the French Resident-General in Morocco to intimidate the Sultan and make him bow down to French claims failed dismally. And so France found that the only alternative left to her, if she were to carry out successfully her policy of ultimately annexing Morocco to the French Union and depriving her of every vestige of independence, was to depose the Sultan and instal in his place a Sultan who would be more amenable to French control and who could be trusted to toe the French line.

The principal actors in the plot against the Sultan

The deposition of the Sultan, Sidi Muhammad Ibn Yusuf, in August 1953, was planned and engineered mainly by four persons, Marshal Juin, General Guillaume, the French Resident-General in Morocco, M. de Blisson, his deputy, and M. Boniface, the French Regional Commissioner for Casablanca. These four were the arch-planners of the deposition and who eventually carried it out. But they had hirelings also, chief amongst whom was the Pasha of Marrakesh, al-Qallawi (pronounced al-Glawi).

The deposition of the Sultan was first planned for February 1951, and the form which it took recently did not vary much from the original plan. In 1951, the French caused Berber tribesmen to gather in large numbers around the main towns and

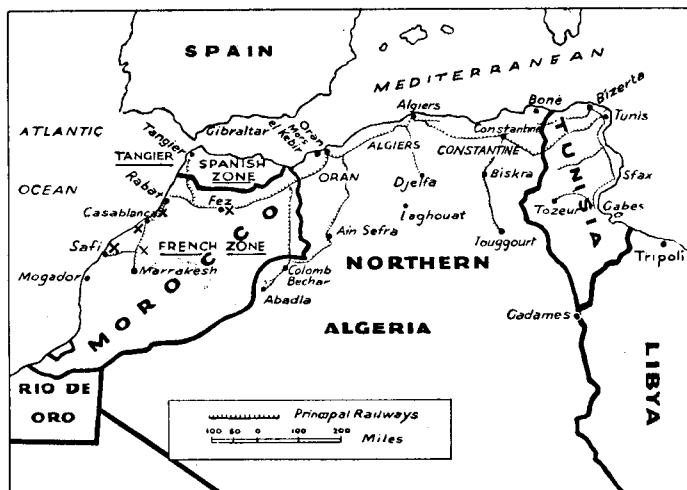
cities of Morocco and threatened to attack the Arab inhabitants and depose the Sultan unless he signed the protocol which authorized the sham reforms proposed by France. The Sultan at the time fully realized the gravity of the situation and, in order to save his people from massacre and bloodshed, hurriedly signed the protocol submitted by France. But it was not long after the tension had eased and after the menacing Berber tribesmen had returned to their desert and mountain strongholds that the Sultan openly declared that he had not signed the protocol freely and willingly, and that he therefore denounced it. The French, naturally enough, were furious. Never again will the Sultan be allowed to make such a mockery of French authority or be allowed to disrupt their plans!

Al-Glawi's prominent role in the drama of the deposition of the Sultan

Another plot for the deposition of the Sultan began to hatch. This time, however, the plot was to be more strategically planned, and there must be no slip or hitch.

An impregnable iron curtain was thrown around the Sultan's palace. He was allowed no contact with the outside world, nor with his loyal advisers, most of whom were thrown into prison or detention camps, or made to flee outside the country by fear of imprisonment. The Istiqlal Party, the nationalist party which has sought the fulfilment of the national claims of the people of Morocco, was systematically persecuted. It was deprived of all its leaders,

and its members were hounded without mercy. At the same time, al-Glawi, the favourite blue-eyed "baby" of the French, was pampered and petted and given every opportunity to defy the Sultan and to degrade him in the eyes of his loyal subjects. Al-Glawi proceeded, with the tacit support and encouragement of the French Resident-General and of Marshal Juin — who referred to al-Glawi as "this great friend of France" — to advocate that the Sultan, by his rejection of the "reforms" proposed by Mother France, was acting against the interests of his people and denying them progress. The Sultan's avowed support of the Istiqlal Party was described by al-Glawi and his men as "treachery to the people of Morocco". By refusing to co-operate fully with France, the Sultan, al-Glawi said, had become "unfit to hold the position of the Imam (religious leader) of the Muslims of Morocco, and he was not therefore entitled to the loyalty of his subjects". In other words, al-Glawi was audacious enough to maintain that disobedience



to France was a sin according to the teachings of Islam! Unfortunately, this line of argument appealed to the Berber tribes led by al-Glawi, who were soon solidly behind him in this open defiance of the Sultan.

Al-Glawi plays the game of the French, who have always been trying to divide the Muslims in Morocco into Berbers and Arabs

The next move made by al-Glawi was to gather round him a few benighted Pashas and Muslim divines and make them sign a petition requesting the deposition of the Sultan. It was not long before Morocco had been divided, as a result of the activities of al-Glawi, into two opposing factions — Berber and Arab. The Berbers were hostile to the Sultan and the Arabs, who live mainly in the towns and cities of Morocco, remained loyal to the Sultan. The passions of the Berber tribes, who are in the main poor and simple folk, were whipped up to a frenzy against the Sultan and against their Arab fellow-citizens. The unity of the Muslims of Morocco was torn to pieces and there developed a real danger of civil war and strife in Morocco.

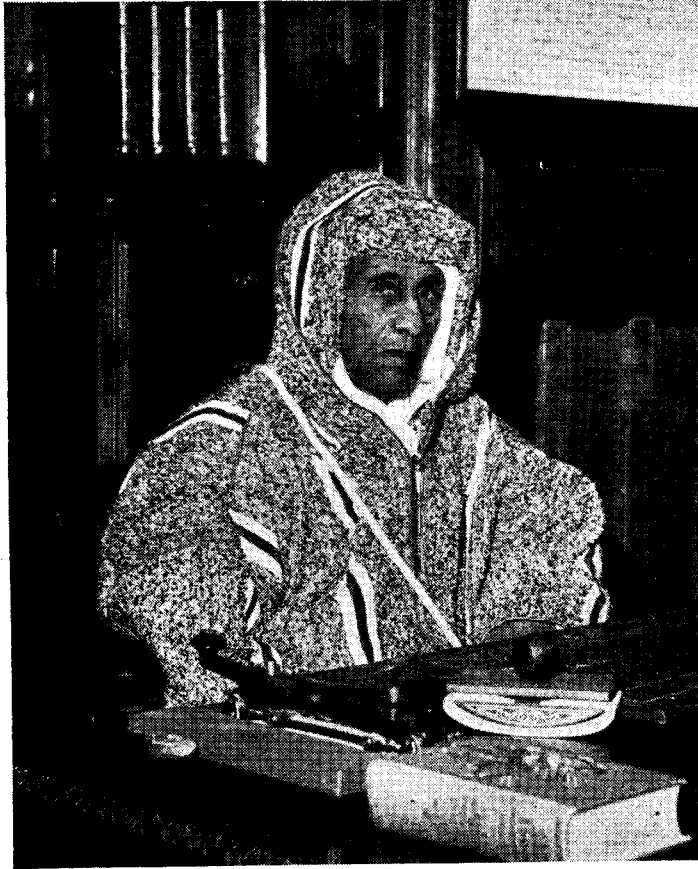
The protest of the University of Qarawiyyin and the Arab League

The Muslim religious leaders in the renowned University of al-Qarawiyyin were quick to express their loyalty to the Sultan and to denounce in bitter terms the effort to depose him on so-called religious grounds. Many Pashas and notable personalities in the country also followed the lead of the men of al-Qarawiyyin and re-affirmed their loyalty to the Sultan and their support of him in his struggle on behalf of the people of Morocco. At the same time, the Arab League in Cairo protested to France against the plot that was being hatched against the Sultan. In France, too, many notable political and other figures launched an attack against the French Government's attitude towards the Sultan and the people of Morocco. Notable amongst those who stood in support of the Sultan were M. Mauriac, Professor L. Massignon, General Catroux and M. Charles Andre Julien. These lovers of freedom, however, did not achieve much by their campaign in favour of the Sultan of Morocco, and the reason for this was that France at the time was in the throes of severe internal instability and labour and other social troubles.

The plot against the Sultan was finally executed on 21st August 1953, the day of *Id al-Adha*, the most important religious festival in the Muslim calendar. A few days before that date large numbers of Berber tribesmen left their mountain

and desert strongholds and under the leadership of al-Glawi marched on the main towns and cities of Morocco. They struck camp in strategic positions around these towns and cities and waited for the order from their leader to attack the Arab inhabitants. The Berber tribesmen were in an excited and fanatical mood. They were heavily armed, and their heart were filled with wild hopes of plunder and loot from the defenceless Arab inhabitants. There was not one important town or city in Morocco which was not surrounded by these Berber tribesmen and which did not lie under their tender mercies and in imminent danger of their barbarous attacks.

The Berber tribesmen asked for one thing, emphatically and without compromise. They wanted the deposition of the Sultan, Sidi Muhammad Ibn Yusuf. Unless that was done speedily they would march on to the towns and cities and themselves, by force of arms, depose the Sultan.



The man behind the deposition of the Sultan of Morocco, the Pash of Marrakesh al-Qallawi, (pronounced al-Glawi)

The duplicity of the French Government in its instructions to its Resident-General in Morocco

At this stage, the French Government in Paris intervened officially in the matter. The threat presented by the Berber tribesmen headed by al-Glawi, and which was inspired directly by the French Resident-General, M. Guillaume, M. de Blisson and M. Boniface, was officially taken notice of by the Paris Government. The French Prime Minister recalled the Resident-General in Morocco to Paris for consultation on the developments in Morocco. The Prime Minister, it was reported, informed the Resident-General that he should endeavour to induce the Sultan to give his consent to the "reforms" proposed by France and that if he did so he was to be retained as the reigning sovereign. The orders that were in fact given to General Guillaume were, however, quite different. He was told that he was to go ahead with his move to depose the Sultan,

who had for long been looked upon by France as a thorn in her side.

Soon after the return of General Guillaume to Morocco, there were sweeping arrests of Moroccan nationalists. Then the Sultan's palace was cordoned off by tanks and armoured cars, and guns were trained on the chambers occupied by himself and his family. The Sultan was allowed no contact whatever with anyone outside the precincts of the palace. On 13th August 1953 General Guillaume again called on the Sultan and asked him to sign a decree authorizing certain "reforms". The Sultan quickly rejected this request on the ground that the so-called reforms were not in the best interests of the people of Morocco, and also on the ground that they derogated severely from the

sovereignty of the Moroccan nation. Under great pressure, however, the Sultan ultimately signed a "protocol" to the effect that he would consider these "reforms" at a later date and see if agreement could be reached with the French Resident-General on the implementation of at least a part of them.

General Guillaume left the Sultan's palace to "try to induce" al-Glawi, the Pasha of Marrakesh, and his clique that there remained no need of the deposition of the Sultan on the ground that he had now promised to give his consent to them at a later date. Al-Glawi, however, was not satisfied with this. He and his clique had been coached long ago to do exactly this. They had been instructed by Marshal Juin and by the leaders of the French *colons* in Morocco to be utterly relentless and uncompromising in their request for the deposition of the Sultan. They were also told that part of the plot would be for the French authorities to play the role of the defender and protector of the reigning Sultan, and that it was essential, if France were to turn publicly and officially against the Sultan, that it must be made to appear to the outside world that France's hand had been forced by the Moroccan people themselves, so that France should look as if she were, by deposing the Sultan, only saving Morocco from the horrors of a civil war. And so, in conformity with the plot which the French Resident-General had hatched against the Sultan, the Berber tribesmen persisted in saying that they had no confidence in the Sultan as their religious leader; and they "threatened" to strip him of these powers by force. At this stage of the plot General Guillaume hurried again to the Sultan and asked him to sign at once the original decree authorizing the "reforms". The Sultan refused, and asked General Guillaume, in his capacity as the Foreign Minister of Morocco, to transmit a protest to the President of the French Republic and an appeal to the United Nations against the French Government's move to intimidate him into acting against the interests of his people.

General Guillaume returned to Paris to inform the French Government that the "Moroccan nation" had become unanimous in its wish to depose the Sultan, Sidi Muhammad Ibn Yusuf, and to instal a new Sultan in his place. He told the French Government that large numbers of Berber tribesmen, who had for long been friendly to the French, had gathered around the main towns and cities in Morocco threatening to cause trouble if the Sultan was not at once removed from office. General Guillaume told the French Government that unless he was instructed to request the abdication of the Sultan or to depose him, and unless that abdication or deposition was carried out speedily, Morocco would be immersed in a blood bath and the Berbers would attack the Arabs of the towns and cities. The French Cabinet, after some hesitation, gave General Guillaume the authority he requested.

Armed with this authority from the French Government, General Guillaume again saw the Sultan and asked him this time to abdicate. The Sultan refused. Thereupon General Guillaume told him that he would at once be deposed and banished to Corsica. And in a matter of a few hours the Sultan and his family were being escorted to a plane bound for Corsica. And the Sultan has remained there since, living with his family in a hotel, and isolated entirely from any contact with the outside world.

The "new" Sultan

With the rightful Sultan of Morocco out of the country, and a new Sultan, Sidi Muhammad Ibn Moulay 'Arafa, "elected" by al-Glawi and his clique to take his place, the French authorities proceeded to gather all the religious and other leaders in the country to declare their allegiance to the new "Sultan". These leaders and notables were escorted by heavily-armed Berber soldiers to the royal palace to pay homage to the

usurper. And, one by one, like helpless sheep watched by a fierce slaughterer, they avowed their allegiance to the new "sovereign". And as France tightened still further her reign of terror over Morocco, no time was being lost to present the Moroccan people with a list of "reforms" — a rehash of the old ones — bearing a "Sultan's" signature.

The news of the deposition of the Sultan stunned the world and caused a great wave of indignation, particularly in the Arab and Muslim worlds. One of the first reactions was that of General Muhammad Najeeb, the Prime Minister of Egypt, who was at the time on a pilgrimage to Mecca. On Mount Arafat, near Mecca, General Najeeb stood, with hands raised, and asked God to exact His vengeance for the people of Morocco from their French oppressors.

Opinion in Spanish Morocco on the deposition of the Sultan

There was an immediate reaction, too, in Spain, where the Spanish newspaper *Arriba* (which is known to represent the views of the Spanish Government) denounced the high-handed and unconstitutional action of the French authorities. The Spanish authorities in the part of Morocco which is under Spanish control also showed a surprising displeasure at the action of the French authorities against the Sultan, and as the Sultan is considered the constitutional head of the whole of Morocco, including Spanish Morocco, the Spanish Government encouraged the people of Spanish Morocco to disregard the new "Sultan" and to continue to look upon the deposed Sultan, Sidi Muhammad Ibn Yusuf, as the rightful sovereign and the legitimate Imam of the Muslims of the whole of Morocco. The Spanish authorities gave their tacit consent to the Muslim religious leaders to continue to offer their prayers in the mosques in the name of the deposed Sultan and to ignore the new "Sultan". And in this way the gulf between one part of Morocco and another has begun to widen.

The situation in French Africa should give no cause for complacency to the French

The French authorities have been jubilant over the fact that so far there have been no serious outbreaks of violence on the part of the supporters of the deposed Sultan. To the outside world Morocco appears quiet and complacent. But how could there be any show of displeasure against the tyrannical French authorities at a time when the country is tightly under police rule and when every nationalist leader is behind bars? There has been a good deal of passive resistance, however. Many shops were closed in docile protest against the deposition of the Sultan, but these shops were soon forcibly opened by French troops, who smashed their fronts and left them to the mercy of looters and thieves. A few trains were also derailed by the nationalists. The courts of the Pashas and military courts in various parts of the country were kept busy for some time after the deposition of the Sultan passing sentences for long terms of imprisonment on Moroccan demonstrators and sympathizers with the deposed Sultan. Military reinforcements have been brought into Morocco and in some towns the number of French troops almost equals the number of inhabitants. And there has also been a bold but abortive attempt on the life of the new "Sultan". And martial law, which has been in force over Morocco for some time now, promises to remain for a long time to come. Surely these things cannot be evidence of the Moroccan people's acceptance of the new "Sultan" or of their acquiescence in the deposition of the rightful Sultan. The comparative quiet that prevails in Morocco at the moment is only that lull that precedes a storm — a violent and catastrophic storm. The French authorities ought to have the elementary intelligence to foresee this and to realize that the outside world is not altogether quite happy with what France has done in

Morocco. It is not necessary for oppressed peoples always to express their hostility by active opposition to their oppressors. The nations which suffered Nazi yoke were not always showing open and active hostility to the Nazis. But the Nazis knew that those oppressed peoples were not quite happy, and the outside world also knew of the feelings of the oppressed. The peoples of Libya, Albania and Ethiopia, for example, were at times dormant in their opposition to their oppressors. But they struck hard when they saw that they could succeed in their struggle. And the people of Morocco will do the same, and will utilize the present lull to equip themselves for their task. The French Government and the French *colons* are probably thinking that they will soon be able to feel secure in Morocco. They are quite wrong. As the notable French deputy, M. Mitterand, who resigned from the French Cabinet in protest against the French Government's policy in Morocco, said, "The success of the French Government's operation in Morocco is deceptive: it gives victory today, but defeat tomorrow . . ."

The Moroccan question before the United Nations

The delegates of the Arab and Asian *bloc* in the United Nations made a speedy and determined effort to have the Moroccan question discussed in the Security Council. They did a good deal of canvassing, and for about a week the Security Council was engaged in preliminary discussions on this question. The delegates of the Lebanon and Pakistan made very forceful speeches urging the Security Council to discuss the Moroccan question on the ground that it was an urgent matter threatening world peace. Russia expressed her support for the Arab-Asian view on this question. France, on the other hand, objected strongly to the discussion of the Moroccan question on the ground that it was a "domestic" matter for France and not an international matter. France strengthened her argument by threatening to withdraw altogether from the Security Council if the Moroccan question were ever placed on the agenda. And so, when the matter came to the final vote, the Council was divided equally, with five countries — the Lebanon, Pakistan, China, Russia and Chile — in favour of having the Moroccan question discussed, and five others — France, the United States of America, Great Britain, Denmark and Columbia — against this view. There was one abstention — Greece. And so the Arab-Asian view failed to get the necessary majority of seven votes, and the Moroccan question could not be discussed in the Security Council.

But the Arab-Asian *bloc* had nevertheless scored a worthy moral victory. It had some opportunity of airing its views on the reprehensible actions of France in Morocco, and thus acquainting the world with what really happened in Morocco. It was no great disappointment to the Arab-Asian delegates when the Security Council turned down their motion for the discussion of the Moroccan question, for it had always been a recognized fact that the Security Council was a lame and defective organ of the United Nations, crippled by all kinds of peculiar technical and procedural handicaps. Because of its queer composition, the Security Council has proved to be unrepresentative of world public opinion, which, it can be safely asserted, is diametrically opposed to imperialism, especially to oppressive imperialism of the kind practised by France in North Africa. Unfortunately for the world, the members of the United Nations have to take many factors, including political blackmail, into consideration when they decide on how to cast their vote. These considerations are of such a nature that they often act against, and triumph over, the real justice and merit of the case. This state of affairs, however, cannot last for ever; and the members of the United Nations are already conscious of the fact that this organization cannot hope to survive, or to fulfil its mission as a promoter of peace and harmony in the world, unless it were made

immune from sinister currents and trends and unless it were made capable of truly reflecting world conscience.

The Arab-Asian *bloc*, however, finally succeeded in placing the Moroccan and Tunisian question on the agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and the matter was discussed in the course of the Assembly's ninth session which began in the middle of September 1953. The French delegate found little to object to against this course, as the Assembly had decided in its previous session to place the North African dispute on its agenda and had thereby defeated France's impassioned appeals to the contrary. The lovers of freedom and democracy the world over are keenly watching the outcome of the United Nations Assembly's handling of the North African problem.

Meanwhile, France is trying hard, and with some success, to thwart the efforts of the United Nations and to present the Assembly with a *fait accompli* that would leave it little option but to endorse the *status quo* in Morocco. Unless something is done quickly by the United Nations, France will soon be changing the political and administrative structure in Morocco by giving the 400,000 French *colons* an equal share of political and constitutional power in the country. With the other half share of political and constitutional power in the hands of Moroccan hirelings chosen by the French to represent the 10,000,000 Moroccans, France is probably hoping that there will emanate from Morocco a cry against "interference" by the United Nations in the "domestic" affairs of Morocco. It would be an impressive stunt that might deceive those in the United Nations who do not know that the great majority of the 10,000,000 Moroccans have not been allowed to express their views through elected representatives. The new French puppet now masquerading in the role of "Sultan of Morocco" is also losing no time in providing the French authorities with the weapons for the destruction of the Moroccan people's legitimate national aspirations.

The state of affairs in Tunisia

In Tunisia, too, the French have been showing their teeth. The wave of arrests and detentions of nationalist leaders (mainly belonging to the Neo-Dastour Party) has been gaining momentum. There have also been Government-sponsored assassinations, and a recent notable victim of this kind of terror was the late Farhat Hashshad. A new Resident-General, M. Pierre Voizard, has been appointed, and he is known to be a loyal disciple of Marshal Juin, the most reactionary of French colonialists, and the one who favours "a strong hand" in North Africa. So the stage seems to be set for trouble, unless good counsel prevails in the French Government and they decide to heed the national feeling in Tunisia. If they do not do so, they will find that they would have bitten more than they could chew. As M. Claude Bourder, the well-known French writer, has recently said, "The Tunisians are today asking only for internal autonomy; and it remains to be seen whether the diehard colonialists will force them instead to get complete independence . . ."

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A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF THE "PRINCE OF MARTYRS", THE IMAM HUSAIN¹ (Martyred on 10th Muharram 61 A.H. — October 10th, 680 C.E.)

By HIS EXCELLENCY MR. M. A. H. ISPAHANI

THE IMPORTANCE OF 10th MUHARRAM IN MUSLIM HISTORY

Husain saves the life's work of the Prophet Muhammad

The tenth of Muharram is observed as a day of mourning and solemn remembrance by Muslims all over the world. It is the anniversary of that memorable sacrifice which Husain, the youngest grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, offered, along with seventy-two near and dear ones and faithful followers, to uphold the true teachings of Islam in a manner befitting "the Prince of Martyrs".

In the few short hours of that glorious struggle, he and his small band demonstrated, by deeds and not by words, that only by rising above the fear of death and anguish can the foundations of a religion be made indestructible.

Nothing less could the world of Islam expect from the flesh and blood of the Greatest of Prophets, and nothing more could anyone give for the cause of the Almighty than the supreme sacrifice which Husain offered so willingly.

There were times of great trials and sufferings in the life of the founder of Islam. The pagan Arabs threw stones at him and boycotted him; they brought fire to burn his house and plotted to kill him secretly at night. Then, after his flight from Mecca to Medina, they collected armies and forced him to fight; sometimes he was outnumbered, and once he was severely wounded. But he bore all these trials with an invincible faith in God and an unshakable resolve.

This heroic spirit is clearly illustrated in his answer to his uncle, who once told him that the pagans of Mecca were threatening to kill him if he did not desist from preaching against their idols. He answered, "Even if they were to place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand, I would not give up."

It was the same iron will which the natural law of heredity gave to his grandson, and the Prophet Muhammad added to it the advantages of his personal interest in the upbringing of his beloved Husain.

Did he foresee that the time would come when his Husain would be called upon to make the most unexampled sacrifice in

the history of mankind for the cause of truth and righteousness? He lost no opportunity to announce by word and deed to all his followers that he had great hopes in this child. "Husain is from me," he said, "and I am from Husain." These words must have seemed a mysterious saying at first, but fifty years after the Prophet's death the time came when the world realized that it was Husain who saved the life's work of the Prophet from being forgotten and completely undone. Khwaja Mo'inuddin Chishti, of Ajmer, India (d. 1234 C.E.) has rightly judged the full value and importance of the Imam Husain's martyrdom in the lines from his memorable Ruba'iy:

*Shah ast Husain, Padshah ast
Husain,*

*Din ast Husain, Din Panah ast
Husain.*

*Sardad-o-nadad dast dar dast-i-
Yazid,*

*Haqqa kih bind'e "la ilaha" ast
Husain.*

which freely translated reads:

"King is Husain, Emperor is
Husain,

Religion is Husain; the refuge
of religion is Husain.

He gave his head but did not
surrender to Yazid.

Forsooth, the basis of the pro-
clamation of God's unity is
Husain."

Husain was made by the Prophet Muhammad, and the Prophet's life's work was preserved and protected by Husain. Considered in this light the meaning of the Prophet's saying becomes as clear as daylight.

When we pause to realize that the great purpose for which Husain had been brought up and prepared was no less than the protection of the very basis of Islam, we understand that no price could have been too great for such a purpose, and Husain

readily paid the price which no one else could pay.



*An imaginary scene of the Battle of Karbala (680 C.E.)
taken from a Persian miniature which depicts the Imam
Husain on his charger*

¹ Being the text of a lecture delivered on 20th September 1953 before the Jami'at al-Muslimin, the East London Mosque, London, E.1, on 20th September 1953.

The shining example of Husain against reactionary forces that made their appearance after Muhammad

It is not too much to believe that a man of wisdom and foresight like the Prophet Muhammad was able to predict the course of events some years ahead. One need not even have faith in miracles to subscribe to such a belief.

The Arab tribes were united under one banner and Islam became the religion of all Arabia shortly before the Prophet Muhammad departed from the world, but, was the belief in the tenets of the new creed really strong? Did all those who had accepted Islam at that time really believe, or were there some who merely professed the faith for other reasons? Surely, a large number had adopted the faith half-heartedly. The Qur'an bears ample testimony to this fact, and what is more — it proves that the Prophet knew it. In the circumstances, there was a real danger of a reaction, a danger that those who offered lip-service to the tenets of Islam would, sooner or later, want to revert to their original tribal quarrels and loose morals.

When the time came for this reaction, the Prophet Muhammad was no longer among his people, to guide and show them the right path. But the Prophet had infused a spark of his own indomitable spirit in a few faithful souls who were to face the terrible crisis long after his death.

The succession to the Caliphate which was determined at first by election, then by nomination, then by a council of seven persons, soon became a bone of contention among the scheming politicians, until finally the ambitious Mu'awiyah (661-680 C.E.), having captured the Caliphate by force of arms, sought to found a dynasty of hereditary kings by appointing his son Yazid as his successor.

Had the office of Caliph been purely temporal, there would have been no serious danger. But we all know that the Caliphate

embodied spiritual and moral authority as well, and the Caliph was expected not only to rule over the Muslims, but also to protect the letter and spirit of religion, and to lead an exemplary life by following in the Prophet's footsteps.

The responsibilities of a Caliph were much greater in the early years of the new-born religion. Though copies of the Qur'an had been made in Caliph 'Uthman's reign, the traditions of the Prophet had not been reduced to writing. Many of the religious beliefs and practices, therefore, depended on verbal traditions, which were circulated orally. If the ruler of the Muslims were unscrupulous, these traditions could be easily distorted and corrupted. If he were indifferent or uninterested, they would be forgotten. This was the precarious condition of the traditions, to say nothing of the codification of laws and the formulation of a doctrine which would come later.

Yazid's appointment was therefore highly detrimental to the cause of Islam. He openly disobeyed the injunctions of Islam and made fun of the Prophet and his teachings. Like the original pagan Arabs, his outlook was based on tribal rivalry, lust and vengeance. Thus Yazid's rise to power constituted the climax of the reaction against Islam.

The overwhelming majority of Muslims succumbed to his violent, treacherous and ruthless methods. At this stage the Muslims needed a severe shock to realize which way they were going. Had Husain been able to raise a large army and defeat Yazid in battle, the effect would not have been so deep or so lasting. There would have been a period of good government and peace and prosperity, but the reaction would come again, sooner or later.

Therefore, it seems that when Husain decided to oppose Yazid, regardless of all consequences, Providence guided the events in such a way as to put an end to the reactionary elements once for all.

The success which was brought about by Husain's apparent defeat could not have been achieved by a thousand victories.

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The last hours before Husain's martyrdom

As for Husain himself, if he had stayed on in Medina and continued to refuse to take the oath of allegiance, and if Yazid's agents had assassinated him quietly, he would have attained the glory of martyrdom, but the Muslim world would not have been awakened out of its lethargy by this means. So Providence guided him and led him to undertake a long and arduous journey, accompanied by women and children and a few steadfast friends, towards the plain of Iraq, which was the junction of the trade routes, so that the news of his martyrdom may spread to the farthest corners of the world.

The citizens of Kufa, which had once been the capital of his father's Caliphate, at first promised to stand by him, but Providence did not want this to happen. The Kufans were soon tricked, bribed and intimidated to break their promise, and the swords which had been pledged to support Husain were suddenly turned against him and killed his cousin and emissary, Muslim Ibn 'Aqil.

Meanwhile Husain, undaunted by the Kufans' treachery, advanced steadily towards the scene of action.

At Karbala, he was surrounded by overwhelming numbers. Time and again he was asked to acknowledge Yazid as the Caliph, and each time he refused. Repeatedly, he was reminded of the hopelessness of his situation, and repeatedly he affirmed his faith in the righteousness of his cause. It was a war of nerves, but Husain was not to be intimidated or moved from his resolve by any threat.

At last, the brutal Ibn Sa'd banned the water of the river from the Prophet's family and followers. Three days and nights

of intense agony ensued, but the martyrs endured this also unflinchingly.

On the morning of the 10th Muharram, Husain's faithful band of seventy-two heroes arrayed themselves in battle formation. Was there anyone who expected to escape alive? Was there any hope of victory against the thousands of merciless mercenaries of Yazid? Yet the martyrs knew that they had come to fulfil their destiny and not to win a battle. They were certain of achieving a moral and spiritual victory which was much more glorious and much more lasting than victory on the field of battle.

It was Husain's object to teach a lesson to posterity. He advanced towards the army of Yazid and addressed them thus :

"O ye folk! Do you know whose son I am? Do you know who was my grandfather? If you do not know who was my grandfather, let me tell you that he was the Prophet of God, my father was his cousin and successor, the first man to accept the faith and to believe in the Qur'an. My mother was the Prophet's daughter. Are you not ashamed of your conduct towards me?"

"O ye folk! Do you not know that the Prophet said that Hasan and Husain are the Princes of Paradise? I am telling the truth — the irrefutable truth. There are many among you who can verify my statement."

Then he named all those who had heard this Hadith from the lips of the Prophet, and said :

"How then can it be permissible for you to shed my blood? Have I murdered or even injured any one of you? Have I robbed anyone or usurped anything? Why then must you punish me?"

Then he named those who had invited him to Kufa, and read out quotations from their letters.

At this point one of the enemies asked :

"Why do you not acknowledge your cousin Yazid as your Caliph?"

And the Imam answered :

"Yazid has no right to be the Caliph and I can never agree to become his slave. Stone me to death if you like.

"I seek refuge with God from the proud tyrant who disbelieves in the day of judgment."

In this brief address, Husain summed up his defence, his claim and his challenge.

Was there anyone who could reply to it? The only reply was spears and arrows, and Husain and his followers bravely faced these to prove that brute force can never succeed against righteousness. One by one they fought and slew many more than their own number, and eventually achieved the glory of martyrdom. In his last hours Husain displayed the highest ideal of spiritual and moral greatness by praying for the very enemies who had killed his infant son and were inhumanly putting him to death at that moment.

At last, when Husain's friends, cousins, nephews, sons and brothers were all slain, he himself set out and fought on until he fell from his horse. It was the time of the 'Asr (late afternoon) prayer; he paid no heed to the enemy who were preparing to kill him, but performed his duty to God. Then, praying for the forgiveness of all true Muslims, he closed his eyes for ever as his head was cut off and mounted on a spear, to be carried in procession to the court of Yazid.

The Umayyads imagined that they were proclaiming their victory as they carried the women and children of the Prophet's household, bound in ropes, through the streets of Kufa and Damascus, but they were only proclaiming their own depravity, brutality and inhumanity.

Yazid gave vent to his cherished desires when he sang the following verses, striking the Imam's head with his stick :

"O that my forebears who were slain at Badr would see how the Prophet's supporters have been pierced with lances. They would then be delighted and say 'Bravo Yazid — go on retaliating!'"

"The sons of Hashim invented a fiction to gain a kingdom thereby — though no angel came and no inspiration was sent down upon Muhammad."

These words were uttered by Yazid, who sought to usurp the Prophet's place. They are in themselves a self-condemnation.

Husain's martyrdom put an end to the ambitions of the Umayyads. A chill of horror ran down the spine of every Muslim.



His Excellency Mr. M. A. H. Ispahani

The brutal treatment which the heartless Yazid accorded to noble Husain made every Muslim detest him and loathe everything he stood for. Those who had been instrumental in slaying the Prophet's grandson, his family and followers were eventually slain one by one. Yazid himself went mad and passed away, but the glory of the seventy-two martyrs and their leader, the Imam Husain, shall live for ever and shall shine as brilliantly as does the sun at noon in a clear sky.

We remember him with love and gratitude. We mourn for the sorrows which he, his family and followers, had to suffer, and we are moved by our admiration of the Imam Husain to pledge ourselves to defend Islam against all dangers even at the cost of our lives. When we recall the supreme sacrifice of that Prince of Martyrs, it helps us to realize that no sacrifice is too great for the protection of the faith in the Unity of God and the Truth of his Messenger, Sayyidina Muhammad (peace be on him!).

AGRICULTURE IN INDONESIA

By

IZO REKSOHADIPRODJO

Why agriculture is so important in Indonesia

The importance of agriculture in the Indonesian archipelago becomes evident when we bear in mind that not only are huge quantities of agricultural products exported to all parts of the world, both from estates under Western control and from native plantations, but also that sufficient food crops are raised within the Indonesian territory to supply the needs of 78,000,000 inhabitants under normal conditions.

All this would have been impossible but for the coincidence of favourable climatic conditions and a natural soil fertility which one sees in these regions where during the younger geologic period volcanic eruptions provided fresh material, keeping the fertility of the soil at a high level.

This explains the well-nigh unbelievable density of population attained in many parts of Indonesia. For instance, in Java and one or two districts of Sumatra there is a density which surpasses even that of the most densely populated industrial area of Europe. In Java there are 800 inhabitants to the square mile. In one of the districts there are as many as 4,000! On the other hand, there are sparsely populated regions, e.g., Borneo, with no more than 8 to 10 inhabitants per square mile.

The soil fertility in many parts of the archipelago and the possibility of obtaining plenty of manual labour from Java not only stimulated the growth of Western-controlled estates in Java and Sumatra, producing sugar, rubber, tea, cinchona, oil-palm and coconut-palm products, kapok, pepper, coffee, cocoa, agava, etc., but also decided the character of native agriculture in Java, 70 per cent of which is devoted to producing food crops.

How density of population affects the economic structure of Indonesia

As a consequence of the inordinately dense population, there is a preponderance of smallholders in Java, whereas in the other islands with their vast areas of virgin and newly-formed forests, a "shifting cultivation", the so-called "ladang", is usual, where the cultivator clears and cuts down a new patch of forest each time the production of his old field shows a tendency to decrease.

In Java few farms exceed two acres. These small farms are called "bahu". The word "bahu" means one "shoulder", that is to say, a piece of land one man with his wife and adult children is able to till and to take care of. This factor plays a determining part in the life and character of the Indonesian peasant, for besides tilling the soil and taking care of the crop, there is still other work to be done, planting and harvesting. The farmer with his family cannot accomplish this unless he is assisted by the whole community (*desa*).

This communally performed work is called *sambat-sinambat* in Javanese, and *tolong-menolong* in Indonesian, meaning mutual assistance. The remuneration of this *sambat-sinambat* is settled during the harvest time. In this period a definite part of the harvest, varying from one-fifth to one-sixteenth, according to the task performed, is given to those who have lent a helping hand. This results in the establishment of a distribution system through which even the "have-nots" among the country-folk may be certain of a small share of the harvest, provided they are not averse to work.



Indonesia's National Insignia

The smallness of the holdings is of course a serious obstacle to all attempts at improving native agriculture, especially if the projected improvement involves some expense. For the small farmer hardly spends any money on his business, seeds and implements being his stock-in-trade. New implements, new methods of cultivation, mean extra expenditure. If the advantages of these new objects be still uncertain, the high price he has to pay for them make him rather shy of adopting them. This is more so if he has to borrow money at the usually high rate of interest. Farmers all over the world are cautious. Nature, with which they are in daily contact, does not encourage rash and premature decisions. Farmers never take things for granted. They like to see first which way the land lies, and whether the beautiful promises of the Government agricultural officers are indeed likely to come true. Speculation, with a view to acquiring some big gain, does not appeal to them. This caution on the part of the farmers was, and still is, rather strong in Indonesia, especially in Java.

Agricultural export products of Indonesia

But the most important problems facing Indonesia today are connected in one way or another with her agriculture. A country whose population at present stands at 78,000,000 increasing by nearly 1,000,000 each year, and with no major industries other than those connected with the produce of her lands, cannot afford to neglect any opportunity to improve the quantity and quality of her agricultural output.

Indonesia depends upon a few export products for income and employment. In 1951 rubber accounted for over 50 per cent of her exports, the next in importance being petroleum, 13 per cent, copra, 10 per cent, and tin, 7 per cent. If petroleum

and tin are not included, since they are mineral products, the remaining 80 per cent of the country's exports consist almost entirely of agricultural products. The acreage devoted to export products is about one-third of that devoted to food crops.

To get an idea of how important Indonesian agricultural products are in world economy, the following figures will suffice: cinchona exports amount to 90 per cent of world production, kapok 70 per cent, pepper 80 per cent, rubber 35 per cent, coconut-palm products 17 per cent, agava 30 per cent, tea 17 per cent, sugar 5 per cent, oil-palm products 23 per cent, coffee 5 per cent, cocoa 0.2 per cent.

The land is divided into foreign-owned estates producing various export crops, smallholders producing export crops, and people's agriculture carried out by the indigenous population for the purpose of growing subsistence crops. The relation between the two is fluid, as many small farmers may produce rubber and grow rice, as well as cultivating vegetables and owning a few coconut trees.

The acreage devoted to food crops is three times that used for the production of export commodities, as has already been

The amount of land allocated to each of the food crops may be gauged from the following statistics, for Java, based on a survey of holdings there. They show that 95½ per cent of the total sample land is divided between six main food crops — 47 per cent for *paddy* (rice), 22½ per cent for *djagung* (maize corn), 16 per cent for *ketela pohon* (cassava), 5 per cent for *kedelai* (soya beans), 3 per cent for *kajang tanah* (ground nuts), and 2 per cent for *ubi djalar* (sweet potatoes).

It has been calculated that the annual requirements of an Indonesian, on a conservative basis, are: 80 kilograms of rice, 40 of maize, 45 of dried cassava, 5 of soya beans and 2.5 of ground nuts.

Following the transfer of sovereignty, steps were taken to increase the production of foodstuffs by the opening up of under-developed areas outside Java, and on Java itself by improving the existing methods of cultivation. The Ministry of Agriculture provided high-quality seeds, fertilizers, helped in the reconstruction of dams which had been damaged or neglected during the Japanese occupation and the hostilities following. The Ministry emphasized the importance of re-afforestation, and encouraged the prevention of soil erosion. Courses in mechanized agriculture were initiated at Pasar Minggu, Djakarta, which were attended by representatives from the provinces, a tractor pool was established towards the end of 1952 in Sumatra and on other islands, and irrigation schemes were introduced, as their bearing on soil fertility and erosion problems was appreciated. A large-scale land reclamation project in Kalimantan will benefit the whole of Indonesia in the not too distant future.

Food situation in post-war years

Indonesia was self-sufficient as regards her rice supply in 1941, but in 1951 she had to import rice to cover 5 per cent of her consumption needs. Yet Indonesia's agricultural production was at a higher level in 1951 than in any previous pre-war year. This may seem puzzling until it is realized that the population has increased by more than 7,000,000 since 1941. Some time before the war some 200,000 to 300,000 tons of rice were imported, but the increase of population which has occurred since then means that there is an increased need of approximately 600,000 tons. Smallholders' agriculture, which is carried out by almost the entire Indonesian population, is largely aimed at food production, although plants may be cultivated for commercial purposes.

A more detailed study of the food situation in the post-war years shows that in 1949-50, rice production approached its pre-war level, but declined substantially in 1950-51. With imports at about the same level in both years, the total rice supply amounted to 7,000,000 tons in 1949-50, but fell to 6,500,000 tons in 1950-51. The *per capita* rice supply declined more drastically, as the population increased at a higher annual rate. The rice area and yield per hectare had been restored to pre-war years at an even earlier date, 1948-49, so the decrease in production in 1950-51 is a factor which cannot be ignored. The reasons are not hard to find, and are based on the nature of the



An Indonesian farmer and his bullocks ploughing a rice-field

mentioned, but the overwhelming majority of Indonesians are engaged in the production of foodstuffs. Nevertheless, the average holding of each farmer is very small. On the densely-populated island of Java, for example, this holding is about 0.86 hectares (one hectare equals approximately 2½ acres), and the average peasant holding in North Sumatra is only 0.64 hectares, with the result that it has been necessary to import 150,000 tons of rice there annually to meet minimum requirements.

Of the farmers in Java, approximately 70 per cent own land up to 0.5 hectare, 25 per cent 0.5 to 1 hectare, 3 per cent from 1 to hectares, 1½ per cent from 2 to 5 hectares, and only 0.5 per cent have lands exceeding 5 hectares. It is estimated that a minimum of one hectare of fertile land is required for a farmer's family of five, in order to meet daily requirements.

Indonesian peasant's smallholding. On this land he will grow rice, possibly a few rubber trees, vegetables, copra, and in some areas spices, tea and coffee. Following the outbreak of the Korean war, and the United States' policy of strategic stockpiling that followed it, the price of rubber in the world market rose considerably. As export prices of rubber and copra in the second half of 1950 and the first half of 1951 rose more than the price for rice obtained by cultivators, labour and land resources were partly shifted to the production of export goods.

In Indonesia, however, it was the smallholders, not the estates, who provided the major part of the export supply, especially of rubber. The larger part of the increase in export

production was brought about by the diversion of land to rubber production on the part of smallholders. Indonesian output was 16 per cent greater in 1951 than it had been in 1950, and the increase offset the decline in Malaya and elsewhere.

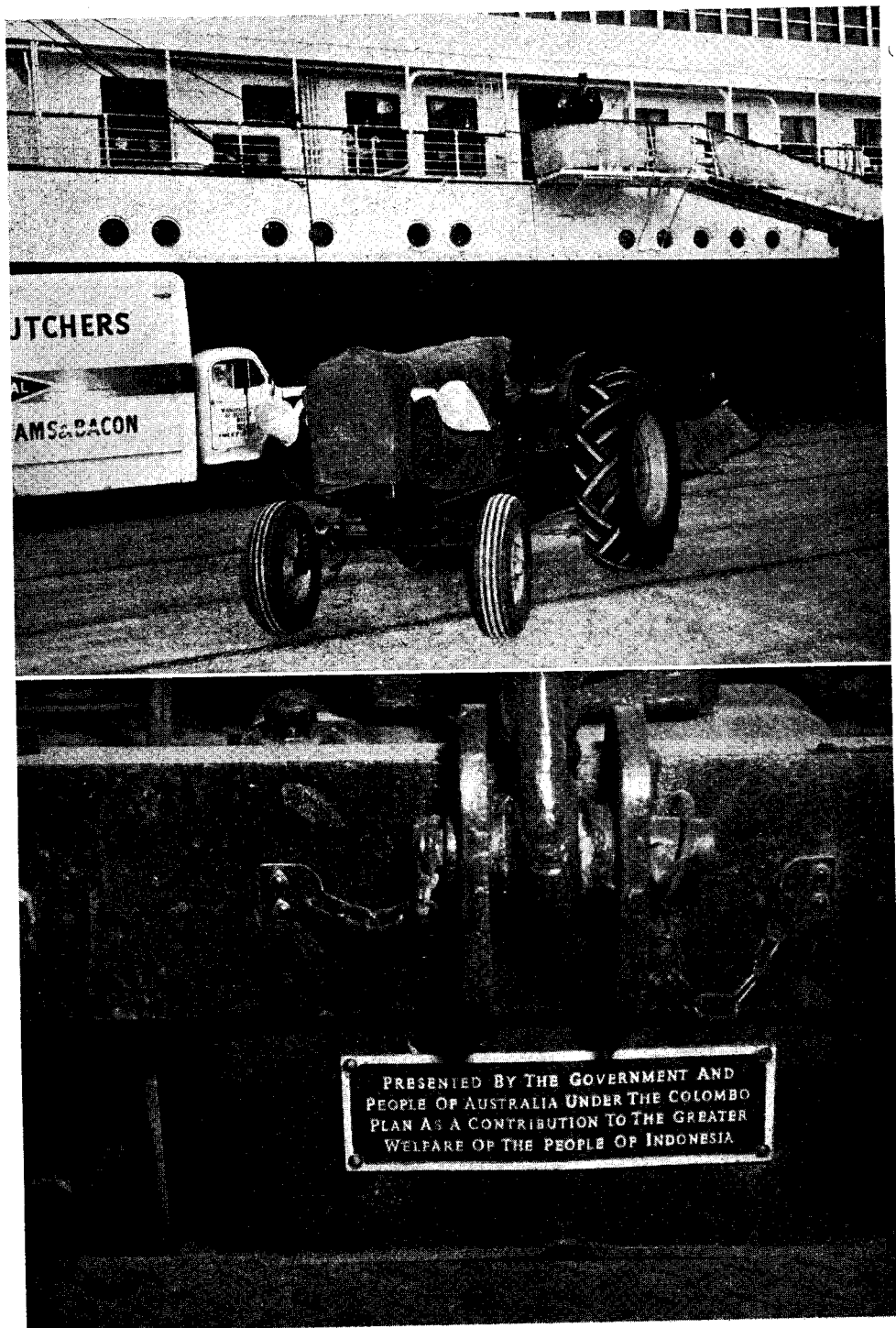
The lowered level of rice imports was the result of difficulties in obtaining supplies on international markets. Furthermore, local shortages, due largely to disorganized internal marketing and dislocated transport, caused a steep rise in 1952. The Government also decided to pay subsidies on imported rice and to control domestic prices in the interests of consumers. A foodstuffs fund for stabilizing rice prices by means of buffer stocks was introduced, and attention was paid to a more equitable distribution in local areas. The Government put forward a plan for the intensification of rice growing throughout Indonesia. Smallholders produce three-fifths of Indonesian rubber and all of her copra. Although production and exports of rubber had reached a record high level in 1951 as a result of the favourable price relationship, the benefits of the increased income were largely offset by rising prices and costs.

So many problems of the Indonesian economy are inter-related. Although rubber is much easier to cultivate and attend to than rice, the lessons learned in 1951, when the price of rubber fell in the second half of the year, will mean that for the future, Indonesian smallholders will not neglect the cultivation of their basic foodstuffs. The manner in which the rubber was cultivated at that time resulted in a diminished fertility of the soil, and the rubber trees themselves were frequently destroyed by excessive tapping after one or two years. Another example of this interrelation is the destruction of forests by some peasants in Java as a result of land-hunger in the post-war years. The number of forests in Java is very small, and although the difficulties of those peasants were solved for a year or two, the soil erosion resulting may eventually ruin the fertility of the land. As a result of the Japanese occupation, and the destruction that followed it, over 400,000 hectares of the 2,712,100 hectares of wooded areas in Java before the war have been deforested. Fortunately the Government Forestry Service has been able to reafforest some 100,000 acres during the past three years.

How the Colombo plan works

The top of the picture shows a tractor that has been unloaded from an Australian ship at an Indonesian quayside

The lower part of the picture shows a placard affixed to the tractors presented by the Government of Australia to Indonesia



Improvements in the cattle resources and fisheries

The attempt to restore Indonesia's cattle resources is of prime importance, particularly in view of the low protein content of the normal citizen's diet. Unlike other countries with large populations, Indonesia has relatively abundant uncultivated land outside Java, which could be developed in order to meet the problem of food shortages in the face of a growing population. This in turn is related with the policy of trans-migration, as there is ample room for new inhabitants to cultivate these areas. The country is always faced with the problem of whether to earn foreign exchange now or to improve the land for the future. It is frequently possible to distinguish in the policies advocated by the Government those plans involving a long-term programme, such as the rehabilitation of plantations, the instruction of farmers, and the establishment of local organizations to help farmers and workers, from those aimed at results in the near future. The latter aim at the increased production of foodstuffs, and stress those factors which may help to stimulate activity on the part of the people themselves.

Improvements in fisheries, and in the use of motorized vessels will, in time, result in a better diet for the majority of

Indonesian people, especially as they are to be introduced together with better roads and modern markets. Young Indonesians have been sent to the United Kingdom and to the United States to study methods there, and when they return to Indonesia they in turn will teach others the most suitable methods for the areas in which they reside.

Participation in the Colombo Plan may help Indonesia to increase her knowledge of modern agricultural developments occurring all over the world. Under the plan, Indonesia will also receive agricultural machines which will aid her a great deal now, while pointing the way for the future. Recently eight tractors, the first instalment of twenty-four tractors and eighty-six lorries valued at £200,000 provided by Australia, arrived in Indonesia as part of the equipment supplied under the Colombo Plan. In addition to those to be received from Australia, forty tractors have been ordered from Italy, and others from the United States. Even all these tools are by no means sufficient to meet Indonesia's agricultural needs. Nevertheless, they will help to make Indonesia's agriculture as efficient as possible, by using the most modern methods and machines available.

Poetry In The Modern Arab World

By DR. S. A. KHULUSI

The new era of Arabic poetry began with the advent of Napoleon

At a time when poetry in the West is fading and losing its former importance, the East, and especially the Arab East, is raising its banner high up in the sphere of political and social life. That is due to the fact that poetry is the child of rural life just as the modern novel is of the industrial scene. As the East is still far from industrialization it is still the home of charming fanciful verse. After six centuries of comparative slumber, known as the Dark Ages, Arabic literature began its Renaissance, that is to say, with the advent of Napoleon, and the appearance of the Arabic press, with the literary and scientific missions sent to the West, and the large-scale translations made from Western literature into Arabic. All these were quickening factors that led to the rebirth of Arabic poetry with renewed energy and extra vigour. The new era of Arabic poetry was heralded in Iraq by the rise of the great satirist 'Abd al-Ghaffar al-Akhras, the poet-philosopher Jamil Sidqi al-Zahawi, and the flamboyant nationalist poet Ma'ruf al-Rusafi. In Syria, there was Jabran and a horde of American Arab poets, and in Egypt Khalil Mutran and Hafidh Ibrahim, and, above all, arose in the Arab world its greatest poet of all ages, namely, Ahmad Shawqi, who is con-



Ahmad Shawqi (d. 1932)

sidered by the best judges of poetry and literary criticism as greater than al-Mutanabbi, the poet-laureate of the twentieth century.

Shawqi

Shawqi's poetry is all music and delicate *nuances* that he acquired during his stay in France as a student of law. Hence we find both the Christian, that is, the Roman Catholic Christian, and French influences prominent in his poetry.

"Walk on the surface of the water," says Shawqi in a poem addressed to King Faisal I of Iraq.

"Walk on the surface of the water
Steadily like Christ
And shine in the East like the soft mellow rays of the sun."

In another poem describing a Christian girl going to church, he says :

"She entered the church, so I watched her.
She was not long in coming out.
I crossed her way and made it difficult
For her to pass. She was cross and bolted
Taking another direction. This was nothing new to me
As I have experienced it at the hands of all beautiful dames.
Thereupon I turned sportingly to some of her companions
Pretending that they were my intimate friends.
So jealous did she become that she walked up to me
With apologetic eyes seeking my friendship.
She was by no means the first gazelle to fall into my trap.
Through the beauty of her looks she ensnared me ;
But through the beauty of my diction I ensnared her.
When she was all mine and fell into my grip in the sacred
chapel,
I set her free as a gift to the son of the Virgin Mary,
Yea to Christ !"

We shall not find much difficulty in spotting the Christian elements in Shawqi's poetry because they are many. As for the French influence, this is seen in his elegant description of Paris and the way of life of the French. Of particular interest in this respect are his splendid lines on Bois de Boulogne. The French idea of liberty, equality and fraternity is beautifully portrayed in his ode on Damascus when it was bombarded by the French in 1925. In it he says :

"Woe to thee ! what has become of the beautiful encampments of Paradise ?
Is it true that it has been effaced and razed to the ground ?"
One cannot help admiring its exquisite diction, its sweet flow of verse and the feeling by which it is inspired of the zeal and patriotism, especially when he says :
"Blood-red freedom has only one gate, which is knocked at
By every blood-stained hand."

This particular line, however, is French in spirit and, I believe, in origin. But the way Shawqi represents it in Arabic is new and exclusively his own. Then a torrent of splendid verses follow :

"France alone values the blood of rebels
And knows full well that it represents light and truth.
In the blood of every freeman there is for our fatherland
A blood-tax to be paid."

The rest of the ode is a sad elegy on Damascus and forceful attacks on imperialism.

Symbolism and its future

Now, after the death of Shawqi (d. 1932), Hafidh and Rusafi, Arabic poetry has passed through a phase of morbid condition known as symbolism. The rising generation is all for it. But until now it has not produced anything worth admiring. At its best, it is hazy and unintelligible. In fact, poetry now is passing through a period of experimentation with various styles and methods, foremost amongst which are the discarding of the time-honoured Arabic rhyme and the use of verses of varying length and rhythm, which are not allowed by traditional prosodists.

A close imitation of Western styles is quite in evidence. But I personally think that the genius of the Arabic language lends itself only to rhyming rhythmical verses of equal length. Nevertheless, there is no harm in starting fresh experiments, but we can rest assured that they will only lead to a more perfect reversion to the old methods of versification — and with a greater appreciation of them. Just as the Arabic proverb says :
"The existence of ugliness is necessary inasmuch as it accentuates beauty."

But we should be fair to the symbolists and not judge them harshly, because they have, after all, a vague idea of beauty, glimpses of which one can trace here and there. Unfortunately, they have no sound knowledge of Arabic and they cannot be bothered with the intricacies of Arabic prosody, which are very difficult for the uninitiated. So, in order to cover their weakness, both in grammar and prosody, the symbolists have protected themselves behind that vague term symbolism. If you tell them that a particular word cannot be used in a certain sense, they will say : "We are only using it in a symbolic sense". And if you object to the scanning of a certain verse, they would reply that it is permitted by symbolists.

There is no doubt that out of this symbolic chaos something new and vigorous and more acceptable to the Arabic taste is bound to emerge.

ISLAM IN ENGLAND

WOKING MUSLIM MISSION AND LITERARY TRUST

Meetings at 18 Eccleston Square, Victoria, London, S.W.1.

Major 'Abdullah W. Battersbey, General Secretary, The British Vigilance Association and the National Committee for the Suppression of Traffic in Persons, London, spoke on "Saying and Doing" at 18 Eccleston Square, Victoria, London, S.W.1, on Saturday 12th September 1953 at 5 p.m. Mr. S. M. Tufail was in the chair. The meeting started with the recitation of the Qur'an by Mr. Hazim Satric. Major A. W. Battersbey in his talk briefly dwelt upon relation between belief and action. No human policy could work to its proper end unless there was doing to supplement saying. Professions of ardent belief and slothful activity were not consistencies. Faith should not be professed only on lips but lived in our lives. Major Battersbey also discussed the implications of the belief in the *Kalima* ("There is

but one God: Muhammad is the Messenger of God") as expounded by the great Muslim mystic Imam al-Ghazali (1058-1111 C.E.). The talk was followed by questions and answers — the main point discussed was why Muslims and Muslim countries on the whole were backward in spite of the wonderful teachings of the Qur'an. In closing the discussion the chairman remarked that Muslims professed what they did not practice. They said they believed in God but did acts which God abhorred. They preached love and kindness to fellow beings but in practice showed hatred and enmity towards their own brethren. Islam to them in theory was a rational progressive and perfect religion, but in practice their conduct was cut off from all reason, progress and perfection. They prided in their ignorance and neglected the social, moral and spiritual needs of the community. In the language of the Qur'an :

"Hast thou seen him who belies religion?
That is the one who is rough to the orphan.
And urges not the feeding of the needy.
So woe to the praying ones
Who are unmindful of their prayer!
Who do (good) to be seen,
And refrain from acts of kindness!" (107:1-7.)

Mr. 'Abdul Majid, Editor, *The Islamic Review*, gave a brief review of the events happening in the Muslim world, on Saturday 19th September 1953 at 18 Eccleston Square.

"How Christianity suffered at the hands of its Followers" was the subject on which Mrs. Sylvia Salma Mortaza gave a talk the following Saturday, 2nd October 1953, at 4.30 p.m. She discussed in detail the development of the doctrines and dogmas of the present-day Church and showed that they have no relation with the original teachings of Jesus Christ, who was only a prophet and messenger of God. The present-day Christianity is much indebted to the pagan beliefs and practices of the pre-Christian era. After the talk, Mrs. Sylvia Salma Mortaza answered many questions raised by the audience.

Mr. Jalal ud-Din Howe conducted a programme of "Queries" on Saturday 10th October 1953.

Forthcoming talks and discussions at 18 Eccleston Square, Victoria, London, S.W.1.

7th November 1953 at 4.30 p.m. "I am an Atheist," by Mr. H. Cutner. Questions and answers.

14th November 1953 at 4.30 p.m. "The Islamic Constitution," by Dr. Mahmudullah Jung.

21st November 1953 at 4.30 p.m. "Prophet of Islam."

28th November 1953 at 4.30 p.m. "Message of Christianity to the Modern World," by Fr. Thomas Holland, D.D., Vice-Rector, Catholic Missionary Society, London. Questions and answers.

Forthcoming lectures in London and Oxford

Thursday 19th November 1953, at 8.15 p.m. at the Corner Club, Union Church, Mill Hill, London, N.W.7. Talk on the Muslim Religion by S. M. Tufail. Chairman, Rev. McEwan Lawson, M.A., B.D.

Sunday 29th November 1953, at 5 p.m. Under the auspices of the University Society for the Study of Religion, Trinity College, Oxford. "Similarities between the Original Church of Jesus Christ and Islam," by S. M. Tufail.

The Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England

Dr. S. M. 'Abdullah and his family left for Pakistan on 30th September 1953. Dr. 'Abdullah is returning to his country after seven years' service at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking.

Maulana 'Abdul Haq Vidiarhie, author of *Muhammad in World Scriptures*, arrived in England from Pakistan on 8th October 1953. After his short stay in the United Kingdom he will be leaving for the West Indies as a missionary. He will be staying there for about a year.

Sunday meetings at the Mosque, Woking, are being held regularly.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE HISTORY OF THE ARABS BEFORE ISLAM (*Tarikh al-'Arab qabl al-Islam*): Vol. I (The Political Aspect), by Dr. Jawad 'Ali. Published by *Al-Majma' al-'Ilmi al-'Iraqi* (The Iraqi Literary Council), Baghdad, 1951.

The author is well known in Arabic literary circles as a profuse writer on topics connected with Arabic history. The book which he has now produced, with the support of the Iraqi Literary Council, will find a great welcome by students of the history of the Arabs. Although, perhaps, it is not the first treatise on this fertile subject, it is, none the less, one of the first in the Arabic language to collect and arrange scientifically the diversified evidence about the early history of the inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula that has been gathered or deduced by various European Orientalists. The author spent a few years in the University of Hamburg collecting material for this study.

The book, which is the first of three volumes covering the history of the Arabian peninsula before the advent of Islam, falls into over 400 pages. It abounds with footnotes, and the bibliography, consisting mainly of works by European Orientalists, is formidable. There is also a large number of plates of early mural engravings and drawings. The author has drawn on many sources, not the least important of which is the Holy Qur'an, in order to fit together, in the absence of orderly records left by the early inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula, the component parts of the history of the country and its peoples in that early era commonly known as the era of *Jabiliyya* (lit., Ignorance). The result of his efforts is that we now have a very interesting and a more reliable picture of the political history of the country which was, by the advent of Islam, later destined to play a very important role in the civilization and progress of the whole of mankind. The author

enlightens us on the origin and development of its language and the anthropology of its various tribes — the latter subject occupying a large part of the present volume.

The book will prove very useful to the more advanced students and researchers into this subject; and the appearance of the author's remaining two volumes to complete this useful study will be awaited with keen interest.

* * *

THE SUDAN QUESTION, by Mekki Abbas, B.Litt. (Oxon.). Colonial and Comparative Studies edited by Margery Perham. Faber and Faber, London, 1952. Price 21/-.

The Editor in her preface describes the author as "a Moslem Arab of the Northern Sudan, born in a small village east of the Blue Nile". Mr. Mekki Abbas was educated at Gordon Memorial College and for a time worked in the Education Department. He was on the staff of the Teachers' College, Bakht-er-Ruda, which Miss Perham describes as "one of the most vital and creative institutions in the Middle East".

In 1944 he was made a member of the nominated Advisory Council for North Sudan, and he attended the Sudan Administration Conference in 1946, which was called in order to advise on the framing of a new constitution. He edited a paper which was "strongly critical of the Government". From 1948-51 he attended Brasenose College at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, and it was during this time he carried out the research necessary for this book.

Apart from Miss Perham, he acknowledges his debt to Mr. A. H. Hourani, Mr. A. Gaitskell, the former head of the Gezira Scheme cotton authority, and several Muslim personalities. Mr.

Abbas is now a director of the Sudan Gezira board. He is one of the Sudanese successors to Mr. Gaitskell, and obviously one of the leading members of the Sudanese intelligentsia. A word of caution should, however, be uttered against the obvious efforts of Miss Perham to try to make out that the author is or rather has been in opposition to the British; for thereby she clearly wants her readers to believe that this book is a work which fully embraces all the trends of Sudanese opinion, whereas in reality it is a brilliant statement of the section of educated Sudanese opinion which supports independence for the Sudan. It is all the more cleverly written because by its apparent Anglo-Saxon understatement, it gives the appearance of being quite impartial. The author gives part of the Egyptian case and does not make the mistake of many of his opponents who support unity of the Nile Valley. They often indulge in offensive abuse, while Mr. Mekki remains polite yet adamant in his opinions. His masterly statement of his case must arouse the admiration of his opponents as well as that of his friends.

The chapter of Mr. Mekki Abbas's book dealing with the Nile waters and the British influence in the Sudan are very ably presented, and he does well to point out that the Egyptian fears about the control of the Nile were first aroused by General Allenby, who used the threat of limiting Egypt's supply of the Nile waters as a political means of attempting to suppress the nationalist movement. Previously, President Carnot of France had envisaged the possibility of driving the British out of Egypt by diverting the Nile waters from the south, and if the Egyptian and British forces had not heavily outnumbered the French African army under Major Marchand at Fashoda in 1898, this threat might have been brought into effect.

In talking of Egypt, Mr. Abbas says that the cultivated area per head of the population has fallen from 1.2 feddans in 1800, when the population was 2,500,000, to 0.31 feddans in 1940, when the population was 16,800,000, and that cotton accounted for about 80 per cent of her exports. This is the reason that she opposed the Gezira scheme and its extension for fear of competition, and she voted £E.4,500,000 in 1949 towards the cost of the Owen Falls Dam in Uganda (as against Uganda's contribution of £7,500,000) in order to assure Egypt's legal rights to a fair share of the Nile waters.

Mr. Mekki Abbas points out that Egypt's fellaheen families, whose average income per head is only £E.20-£E.30 per family of five or six, need to emigrate in large numbers to the Sudan and Iraq; that the Egyptian fellaheen are charged from £E.6 to £E.22 per feddan by their landlords, and they are over-taxed and exploited by the landlords; that 45-75 per cent of them suffer from bilharzia and 90 per cent from trachoma; that they only work 6-8 months per year; that it has been estimated that Egypt's agriculture could be carried out by from one-half to one-fifth the present labour force if modern machinery was fully made use of; that agricultural unemployment and the dearth of land has given a stimulus to industrialization in Egypt; and that the Egyptian capitalists want to increase their exports to the Sudan and to take away the market from their British and Japanese rivals.

In an appendix, Mr. Abbas vigorously attacks the British policy of attempting to separate the non-Muslim south of the Sudan from the north with the possible intention of attaching it to Uganda. He praises the liberalism of the North Sudanese Muslims who have, he says, always shown a liberal policy towards the Christians, even allocating Government money to Christian missions working amongst the pagan tribes. He provides documentary evidence of his contention, quoting the Church Missionary publication, *The Southern Sudan*, London, 1950, and the Sudan Government publication, *The Sudan, a Record of Progress*.

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The former of these publications attacks the Muslim Minister of Education and deplors the use of Arabic. In fact it shows that the missionaries are still carrying on their futile attack on Islam.

Mr. Abbas must be congratulated on an excellent book,

essential to all students of the Sudan. This book would be more complete if it dealt fully with the political influence of the important National Front and the smaller Ashiqqa Party (now divided in the Azhari and Nuruddin factions), and other supporters of Sir A. Mirghani, the Sunni Muslim leader.

WHAT OUR READERS SAY . . .

(The letters published in these columns are, as a rule, meant to be informative and thought-provoking in the interests of Islam. Nevertheless, the Editor does not take responsibility for their contents.)

A PAGE FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORDS OF THE BURMAN MUSLIMS

No. 11, 130th Street,
Rangoon,
Burma.

Dear Sir,

I hope the following few remarks about Burman Muslims will interest your readers.

Muslim Regiments

King Mindon (1853-1878 C.E.), who is famous in Burmese history as a great Buddhist missionary, took more than 3,000 Muslims from Arakan for military services. Muslims were well established in Arakan by that time.

Some of the Muslim emigrants were armed with guns and were retained as the king's trusted bodyguards. A separate regiment was formed for the Muslims, and it was famous as the "Kalapyo" regiment. Veterans of the Kalapyo regiment were armed with swords, clubs, axes, etc., in the fashion of those days.

It may be recalled that during the reign of the famous King Bodawphaya (1782-1819 C.E.), there was a Muslim regiment, and many brave deeds were ascribed to those sons of Islam. In fact they were considered to be the pride of the motherland.

The Burmese war-songs sung by the veterans of the Muslim regiments of Bodawphaya and Mindon bear the marks of bravery and martial spirit, rarely found among others. Most of these songs were recorded by the great Burmese Muslim writer, Sayaji U Nu, who was much respected in the courts as a literary person.

Some famous Muslims during the reign of Mindon

Khalifa U Shwe Lon, a Sufi, imparted Islamic teachings. He was sent to Mecca to build a rest-house on behalf of the king.

Parabaik Sayaji was revered in the Court of Mindon, and his son Thibaw, the last Burmese king, as a great learned person.

U Dun was Minister for Muslim Affairs. He could ride on an elephant with two golden umbrellas over his head in the fashion of Burmese kings. He had long titles.

Mulla Isma'il from Bombay province (India) was a favourite of King Mindon and the queen. He could ride on an elephant and two golden umbrellas covered him from the sun. The present Soorati Mosque at Zegyo, Mandalay, was built by him. The land was donated by King Mindon.

U Mya was captain of the "royal launch".

The artillery was composed mainly of Burman Muslims. Bo U Hashim commanded the "Setkya" gunners, Bo U Yauk commanded the "Mingala" gunners, and U So was in charge of the main artillery force.

Agha Husain Shirazi, of Persian descent, was collector of taxes.

Maung Maung Shin was a favourite of King Thibaw, and one golden umbrella covered him from the sun, which was an exclusive honour for the royal families.

U Pho Hla was recognized by King Mindon as a great literary person.

U Hmaw, U Maung Gale and U Yan Aung were controllers of prices of various goods and the king's trusted friends. U Shwe Thi was the "royal broker".

U Yit was adviser to King Mindon on various matters of the Government. His son, Maung Maung Gyi Ishaq, was adviser to Thibaw, the last Burmese king. They both had long titles.

U Sein, U San Pyaw, the two rich Burmese Muslims, and U Shwe Ban, were Mindon's favourites and trusted companions.

Haji U Pho, the trustee of the mosque at Jundan, Mandalay, was the king's favourite, and it was his duty to find suitable lands for the king's various purposes.

The land of the Arakanese Mosque at Okchukon (now 130th Street), Rangoon, was donated by King Mindon to the maternal ancestors of the writer of this letter.

Famous Muslim Ladies

Khin Mya, head of a small town, Kyopintet, Khin Sein, head of Duwa-ywa village, Khin Lay Gyi, head of Sinte-ywa village, and Ma Ma Ywe, head of Ontazin village, were famous at the Court of Mindon. The king and queen loved them very much, and the former three could use golden umbrellas.

The above historical records are mostly left aside by historians, but recorded well by the very few Burmese Muslim writers. These records are also handed down from generation to generation in the form of stories, and our new generation is marching forward with the past as a source of pride.

Yours faithfully,

MAUNG-KO GAFFARI.

* * *

INTRODUCING ISLAM

Hereunder are a few extracts from the letters written by an Englishman, Mr. Percy Robinson to an English Muslim lady, Miss Joyce Yasmin Scott, which we hope will interest our readers. The whole correspondence started through a letter written by Miss Yasmin Scott to the *Psychic News*, London, about Islam's view of reincarnation.—Ed., *I.R.*

Berwyn,

The Park,

Gt. Barton,

Bury St. Edmunds.

29th May 1953.

Dear Miss Yasmin Scott,

Thank you for your interesting letter to hand this morning. Yes, as you say so well and to the point, obviously you have reintroduced me to Islam after a gap of many, many years. My first knowledge possibly being at a time long before your birth. So things work out in the wisdom of God.

I hope Islam is free from stating the need for blood sacrifice to cover the sins of man. To me that is something quite out of keeping with the love of God. I am more than glad to hear you say that Islam is free from the doctrine of reincarnation.

Yes, I also agree with you that Islam should transport us to a higher and more refined plane than the sometimes obscure progress of spiritualism. In some cases, however, the latter seems to bring some sort of consolation and happiness.

We live in a dreadfully materialistic age, which, as always, will end in a complete corruption of spiritual values. Above all, I view with loathing and horror the degeneracy of women in our time. She lends herself to the very worst of the vile side of human nature. Well, where woman degenerates the race soon falls. Egypt, Greece and Rome all fell from that cause.

It may be that God will raise Islam from its lethargy and use the people of the Prophet Muhammad to be a bulwark against all the degeneracy prevalent in the world today.

* * *

I have this morning duly received your long and most interesting letter together with the pamphlets of exceeding interest. The one *Heaven and Hell* by the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din is a most beautiful and convincing illustration of the degree of enlightenment as to that state of being at the end of this earthly life.

By reading the Qur'an I realized that at long last I had found the Book of Books which completely answered the queries I had developed in my mind for the last forty years. I think in the first place the part devoted to the Unity of God is just majestic. Also, as you had contemplated, I have read all about the sacrifice and crucifixion of Jesus. Both these propositions the Qur'an has alone been able to answer for me, after my weary walk in the wilderness for so many years. I feel I love Islam now, whereas before I only respected it. My greatest comfort is that the Prophet Muhammad tells us that we can approach God direct without the intermediary of a man, minister or priest. Well, in my prayers for the last two years I have been endeavouring to do that.

* * *

I fear I am a trouble to you. But I cannot thank you enough for trying to see whether it is possible to obtain a big plate like the one framed in the house adjacent to the mosque at Woking where your friend Miss Elizabeth Suffern is embracing Islam. You know the face of that wonderful man Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din has made a powerful impression upon me. The face of a truly great spiritual man, I feel. I wonder now, yes, I wonder, if he is the influence from the spirit world seeking to impress me?

Yes, I have known much of the Prophet Muhammad from my boyhood. Arabic always held for me a strange and inexplicable fascination. It seems to be working most effectively only now in my life.

Were I asked today my reasons for inclination towards Islam I would reply as follows:

- (1) Among all the sacred books and all the religions of the world, the Qur'an remains as pure and intact as the day it left the lips of the founder of Islam.
- (2) In the wisdom of God, it was given to a totally illiterate man, thus proving its claim to divine inspiration. The Qur'an is for Muslims the unadulterated word of God.
- (3) The Prophet Muhammad declares a love for all the peoples of the world and that messengers have been sent to every nation. This is a very generous state-

ment which only God could have given him. His national prejudice does not betray itself in the Holy Book. To me this is unequalled in any other so-called religious book.

- (4) Total absence from Islam at all times of the corruption of priestcraft.

* * *

ARE NOT THE GARDENS AND RIVERS IN THE QUR'AN THE DREAM OF THE DWELLER OF A DESERT?

149 Oriental Road,
Woking, Surrey,
England.

15th August 1953.

Dear Sir,

The Qur'an talks of Paradise where those who believe and do good deeds shall enter "gardens wherein flow rivers to abide in them for ever" and again they would "enter a pleasant shade" (4 : 57 ; 14 : 23). Don't you think that this description was only suited to a place where there was scarcity of rain and where shade, gardens and rivers were very rare? I remember the late Rabindranath Tagore, the famous poet of Bengal, once remarked that if he were to conceive of Paradise in his imagination, he would not think of so much water and shade in it. Again an Englishman would also like to have more of sunshine there than anything else. The following prayer by the Prophet Muhammad mentioned in the traditions is again a prayer meant for the local inhabitants of Arabia or of hot regions. The prayer runs thus:

"O God! Make Thy love excel over my life, my property and my passion for cold water."
This passion for cold water can only be appreciated by a person living in a desert.

Now such expressions make some people think that Islam was only meant for Arabia or like places. I would feel much obliged if you could throw some light on it.

Yours faithfully,

BASHIR AHMAD.

REPLY

The whole confusion arises when one takes these expressions literally. The blessings of Paradise mentioned in the Qur'an are just an example to show what they would be like in the life hereafter. For instance the Qur'an says:

"A parable of the Garden which the dutiful are promised" (47 : 15).

The Prophet Muhammad once remarked about the blessings of Paradise that they were blessings "which no eye has seen nor has any ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive them" (*al-Bukhari* 59 : 8).

Although the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic language to an Arab it was not meant for Arabs only. The Prophet was

sent, as the Qur'an tells us, as a mercy to the nations of the world (21 : 10). There is no doubt about it that the Qur'an makes use of expressions and incidents which could only be understood with reference to the history and culture of Arabs and their ways of living and thinking but these are not lacking in their universal appeal. Perhaps it would be easier for one to understand if I take an instance from literary history. For his plays Shakespeare very often makes use of the setting and background of sixteenth century England, but they have still that element of universality which goes to make a literature great. This is also the case with all great writers whether ancient or modern.

Reverting to the point at issue, the expressions such as gardens, rivers and shades and the peace and the pleasures which accompany them are universal throughout the literature of the world. The English have such a great longing for sunshine but Shakespeare could not find better simile for mercy than to say that

"It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven"
and built one of his finest songs about the refrain

"For the rain it raineth every day."

There are hundreds of songs in the English language about gardens, rivers and cool shade that it will be quite unnecessary to mention them here. In Bengali literature, I am sure, this theme must have captured the imagination of many poets and singers and this in spite of the excess of rain and water in that part of the world.

The Hadith prayer mentioned above definitely bears a local colour, but everybody, if he does not find himself in those circumstances, is not supposed to pray in the same language. I quote below another prayer on the same subject which one can say at any time and in any part of the world.

"O God! I ask Thee of Thy love and love of those who love Thee and adorn me with deeds which lead me to Thy love."

But who has not felt, after all, "the passion for cold water" at one time of his life or the other?

* * *

AN ENGLISH MUSLIM ON "TOWARDS TOMORROW — IN ISLAM"

44 Sandringham Road,
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London, N.W.11.

Dear Sir,

"And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful" (Al-Qur'an 3 : 103).

I understand that the afore-mentioned verse is usually associated with the activities of missionaries among Muslims, but I think the verse has a greater significance. I often feel that it is a call to those of us who, because of younger years and later advent into the struggles of mankind, are more progressively minded.

We have a continuously changing world to contend and keep abreast with. Here then, as I see it, is the call for those

amongst us who will — "invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong". As we progress from the simple oxen to the age of diesel tractors and are suddenly bundled "willy nilly" into the startling era of prop-jets, gas turbines and atomic power it is no doubt time that we Muslims decided to take a more serious notice of the instruction which was laid down for us so many years ago.

One way to do this would be for every progressively-minded Muslim to take an active part in the propagation of progressive and constructive ideas throughout the Islamic world. Now, whilst it may be rightly argued that our ideas cannot possibly prevent the invention by others of possibly harmful machines or instruments, it is greatly within our power to influence and even to control the application of men, machines and matter of life.

We could, for instance, make a humble start by learning just how other Muslims live and what their problems and difficulties are. Thereby, in the first instance, broadening our own knowledge and, secondly, because of that new found understanding, tightening the more than somewhat loosened bonds of Islamic Brotherhood. We must also give up the practice — so beloved — of "holding inquests" on "what was" and "what might have been" and get round to the point of realizing that there are more Muslims alive in the world today than there ever were in the so-called Golden Age. It must also be brought to mind that these modern Muslims are spread so far and wide that Muhammad himself would have indeed been proud of the success of his countless followers who travelled and multiplied within the True Faith — propagating their ideas across the face of the world.

How can we hold inquests on Islam when God's Words are even now coming to pass before our very eyes and within our own knowledge. Today there are thousands of enlightened Muslims living their lives in their own European homelands whilst others are even now forging ahead in the many countries that go into the making of the Americas. Contemplate a moment upon this accomplishment that has been attained — since the so-called and oft-lamented downfall of Islam — Muslims living in lands as far apart as Arabia and the United States of America — from Arabia to Finland, Indonesia to England, and for all I know there may even be Muslims in Iceland or New Zealand. Enough of the moans there and let us get down to the real business of welding these far-flung communities into a conscious whole. These new Muslims are not greatly interested in turning over the ashes of yesterday. With them even today is but a passing phase — it is tomorrow that is all important.

By correspondence we can all share our thoughts on this task of facing tomorrow. By correspondence we can all help bring about the tomorrow that we want and so help God in His work of spreading His Chosen Religion throughout the whole world — Islam that will really bathe the whole world in a wondrous light, a world in which tolerance, knowledge, understanding, freedom and true love will be the accepted right of all who breathe.

This, then, is our possible goal and it is up to us to see that we wait not a day longer for its realization than is absolutely necessary.

So much is to be done and so much is to be learned. Let us all then — sit up and write — "and invite to good and enjoin what is right".

Yours faithfully,

JALAL ud DIN HOWE.

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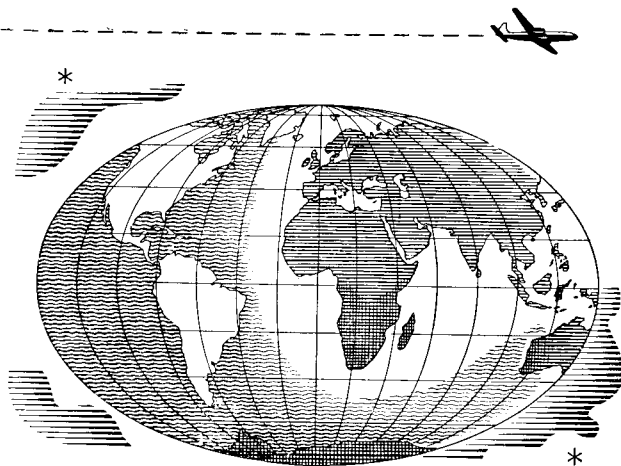
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