

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

(JANUARY 1902.)

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PROSPECTUS.

THE Review of Religions has been started by the Anjuman-i-Isha'at-i-Islam, Qadian and shall be issued from Qadian on the 29th of every month. Its objects are stated further on. It starts with the solution of the all-important question of 'How to get rid of the bondage of Sin' and expects to offer not only an impartial review of the various religions sifting truth from error, but also the solution of the vital questions for which religion exists and upon which it is founded. It further undertakes to refute all objections against Islam, the holy **Qurán** and the noble Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, and for this purpose the editor shall be glad to receive all such objections for which sufficient grounds are stated, and an answer to these shall appear from time to time in the pages of the Magazine.

We are further bound to state that in setting before us the grand and all-absorbing object of revolutionising the existing forms of religion, and in undertaking the tremendous responsibility of pointing out the true method for release from the bondage of sin and breathing into the seekers after truth the spirit which should invigorate them to act upon the principles of truth, we would have undertaken a task quite beyond our power or that of any other mortal, had it not been for the guidance vouchsafed to us in this matter by the All-wise and All-powerful God through the foundation of the heavenly Mission known as the Ahmadiyyah. This propaganda has been established by the hand of God in accordance with His eternal and unchangeable laws. A messenger has come from heaven when all eyes had been looking up to it in the expectations of his appearance. The prophets of God has spoken of this time and the sacred writings gave the glad tidings of the holy man from the East in the latter days. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, whom God has chosen to be His Messiah, has come in fulfilment of the prophecies given to Jews, Christians and Muhammadans. Where and for what purpose this sun of righteousness has arisen, we shall state elsewhere. Here we wish only to point out that

in almost every number of the Magazine we shall be able to give translations of his learned and masterly expositions of difficult religious questions.

Contributions from the pens of other learned writers shall, however not be excluded from its pages, and the editor shall feel obliged to receive contributions from all gentlemen, of whatever persuasions, who have any sympathy for the objects with which the Magazine is started.

We do not start the Magazine as a speculative venture but with the sincere object of doing our duty to man. Nothing but the tottering condition of religion has aroused us to undertake this heavy responsibility. We are conscious that the Magazine shall not suit the taste of gentlemen whom religious prejudice does not allow to consider if there is error in the religion they profess or truth in any one of the systems to which the rest of mankind adheres. We have started it to satisfy the search after truth and we do not care for the approbation or disapprobation of any particular sect. There is not a single instance in history in which abuses have not been hurled at the head of the man who proclaimed the truth. Not one of the prophets and reformers is an exception to this rule. Human nature has not undergone any such alteration as to make us expect any other treatment but we will in true sincerity advise every seeker after truth and wellwisher of humanity to weigh our reasons before forming an opinion against us.

THE OBJECTS OF THE MAGAZINE.

Our object in starting "The Review of Religions" is twofold. Firstly, to draw the world to truth, *viz.*, to teach true morals, to inculcate true beliefs, to disseminate true knowledge, and last though not least, to make men act upon the principles of truth ordained. Secondly, to draw them with a magnetism so mighty in operation that it may create in them a power to act upon the doctrines taught. It is admitted on all hands and not to be treated with indifference, that mere knowledge of the virtues cannot make a man good. Want has always been felt, on the other hand, of the appearance in every age of a person who is naturally endowed with the power of drawing and electrifying other persons. Who is not aware that the founder of the religion which now has so large and highly-paid an episcopacy to build up the Church of Christ "from within, in the true faith of God, and in holiness of life," which is supported by thousands of philosophers, and which squanders wealth like water in employing millions of mission—

aries to gain fresh adherents, had none of these means, yet notwithstanding its plenty of resources, the absence of true magnetism which was the vital force in its conquest over sin in its founder's days, makes Christianity a dead log devoid of true worth. One would now in vain seek in Christian countries that purity of soul and righteousness of heart which the Gospels taught. The large cities of Europe and America are, to draw it mild, theatres where horrible and odious scenes of obscenity and debauchery are commonly represented. Were it possible for Jesus Christ to rise from among the dead and witness the state of the millions who call themselves the flock of Christ, it would indeed strike him with wonder that the generation of people whose lawlessness knows no bounds, who have abandoned themselves to demoralizing excesses and resigned themselves to passions of flesh, and who are overcharged with the cares of this world, go by his name and claim to follow in his footsteps. It cannot be denied then that the fold of Christ to-day is walking in a path different from that in which it walked in the days when the presence of its holy keeper exercised its wholesome influence over it. What is the reason of this marked difference? What causes have led to this change for the worse? Why is it that the vast majority—almost all of the professing Christians, departing from paths of purity and righteousness, have taken to licentiousness, intemperance, luxury and bestiality? What has led the people who were told to "take no thought for the morrow," and "lay not up treasures upon earth" to hanker after earthly advantage and the amassing of wealth? How are we to account for the depth of immorality and the existence of hundreds of thousands of harlots amongst a people whose Book contained the plain injunction "that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart?" Where are we to seek for that purity and chastity upon which Jesus laid so much stress? Is it in the people among whom the man who commits adultery with an unmarried woman is not deemed as guilty of a crime, but if he marries her he is a criminal? Is this the boasted morality of Christianity? Can the pure conscience of a man bear witness that this was the purport of Jesus' teachings? Were the elect of God and the holy messengers of heaven, whom He appointed to teach truth and purity to generations of men, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David and Solomon, who stuck to polygamy to their very death, guilty in the sight of the Lord? Is the wholesale debauchery and excessive drinking of Christian Europe in accordance with what Jesus taught?

Do Christians follow the injunctions of their Master who told them to turn the left cheek when smitten on the right? Are not these matters of the deepest concern? What is the wanting factor that the result is so different? What is the cause of the total failure of Christianity as a reforming agency? Is it not true that it is all owing to the absence of the holy personage who worked so wonderful a transformation in the apostles? Jesus, it is true, has not ascended to heaven, and his sacred body lies entombed* in the sacred dust of Khan Yar Street in Srinagar Cashmere, as we shall show elsewhere in the pages of the Magazine, but it is equally true that the magnetism—the transforming power which came with his person into the world—has long since disappeared and ascended to heavens. It is also written in the sacred writings that that magnetism shall once more descend upon earth in another manifestation which, on account of the identity of the motive force, shall be looked upon as the second coming† of Messiah. But these are things to which only passing reference can be made here, their full discussion being reserved for another place. Here we wish only to point out that books are not sufficient to impress upon the heart moral and spiritual virtues, nor is power granted to a man for the performance of deeds of virtue through their sole agency. Release from the bondage of sin and the slavery of passion cannot also be effected by preachers who are themselves slaves to their passions, who go out preaching virtue and righteousness in the streets, but when alone in their homes, take a glass too much and lie intoxicated till late in the day. The fact is that none can inspire a heavenly life and enable human beings to soar to the heavens but he only who comes from heaven. Who sees can alone show to others, and who comes himself purified and transformed, can alone purify and transform the human race. The secret of God's existence is a deep one, and he only can break the seal who, cleansed of all impurities, leads a pure life. This again brings us face to face with the question, how to be enfranchised from the bondage of sin, and how to get out of the impurities of life? There is only one answer to this all-important question, *viz.*, that such a regeneration can only be effected by him who comes with a magnetism from heaven, who on account of the extreme purity of his soul and the surpassing

* The spiritual death of christianity is important evidence of the death of its founder; for if Jesus is living why does not his influence work?

† The advent of John The Baptist was regarded as the second coming of Elias for that very reason.

cleanliness of his heart is metaphorically called a manifestation of the Deity, who removes the poisonous matters and gives the *elixir vite* in their stead, and who burns the carnal passions and low motives of worldly life and ennobles the soul with the pure and exalted divine morals. Look at the sun and the moon ; each new day requires a new appearance of the glorious orb of light. The holy one that rose in the days of Pilate among the Jews was, no doubt, a sun of righteousness, but only so long as his magnetism attracted the hearts and his light worked a heavenly transformation in the souls of his followers. He is now a sun but one that has passed below the horizon. The radiant light which shone from his face and the brilliant lustre which he cast around him is shorn of its beams and grown quite obscure, not the least trace of it being visible among those that call themselves after his name. The holy one that sheds such light is not and cannot be God, but there is no doubt that he is one with God and his soul is in constant and close communion with God. He is the fountain-source of the divine powers, and the rare and hidden manifestations of the powers of the Almighty which are not generally disclosed, are revealed through him. Such persons are called the manifestations, incarnations and representatives of God. In the manifestation of the divine powers they sit on the throne of God's glory.

God is one and without any partner or rival, but persons of this type, the elect of God, whom the world has seen, may be counted by thousands. We may see a single face reflected in a thousand looking-glasses, and yet there are not really a thousand faces but only one face of which there are so many reflections. This world is a grand reflector ; in other words, it is a palace of glasses for the reflection of the face of God and the face of Satan. God stands against some of the mirrors and therefore the image of God is seen in them. Against others Satan makes his appearance and his likeness is consequently witnessed in them. But from these reflections it should not be imagined that the images are so many different gods. There are thousands of the manifestations of God, and thousands of those of the Devil. To allow multiplicity in the manifestations of the evil one and to limit those of the Deity to a single one, is both irreverent and unjustifiable. God made Adam in His image and after His likeness, and the Prince of the Devils manifested himself in the person of Cain. The manifestations of the Deity and the Devil have since then been appearing in the world, and therefore it is unreason-

able to assert that in the whole world and during all ages there has been but a single manifestation of God. Every age stands in need of new light and a new representative. Whenever this light grows dim in a people and the influence of a heavenly magnetiser is not felt among them, they bend down solely to the earth and its mean cares, and carried away by the current of carnal desires are drowned in a flood of sins and impurities, being unable to get out of it. History bears strong evidence to it. As already stated, the vast difference between the spiritual conditions of the followers of Christ among whom he lived and taught and the Christians of to-day, points to the same conclusion. With the death of the great Teacher and his apostles there came a change over the people, and as the distance of time from the great **Founder** increased, the faith in God gradually lessened and their moral condition became worse and worse. Such has been the lot of Christianity; and Islam, although in some respects it has fared better, presents a similar history. The mighty and powerful magnetism of the Prophet **Muhammad**, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, not only ennobled the souls of his companions only so far as to make them bow to the glory of the eternal and living God instead of images and creatures and exchange their false religions for the truth concerning God, but at the same time breathed into them the soul which annihilated all their passions for and hankering after the world and its advantages. They saw God and sacrificed their lives in His way with such zeal and resigned themselves so completely to His will that each one of them was an Abraham in his relation towards God. The great and noble deeds which they did with true sincerity, to declare the glory of the living God and blot out the false dignity of the images from the hearts of men, are unparalleled in the history of the world. Their sincerity was blessed by the Lord and achieved for them such successes in the conquest of the countries as even fire-arms are unable to do. When we consider, on the one hand, the darkness which spread over Arabia and the unbelief and image-worship which disgraced the whole country, and cast a glance, on the other, at the transformed peninsula and its sons after the companions of the prophet had done their part in the cause of their benighted countrymen, we are obliged to confess that a new spirit of truth and zeal had been breathed into them.

The holy zeal and sanctity of the Prophet, may God pour His eternal blessings upon him, had exercised its saintly influence over

them. They shunned every vice and transgression as if they stood in the awful presence of God's majesty. Their only ambition was to vie with one another in virtue and goodness. Such was the righteousness of the companions of the holy Prophet of Islam, and nearest to them in sanctity and virtue was the generation that followed them. Even the third generation, *i. e.*, the people who saw and learnt from the followers of the companions of the holy Prophet, was so pre-eminent in righteousness compared with the generality of the following generations that it could have hardly recognised them as following the precepts of Islam. What was the reason of this? The same that we have described in the case of the change that passed over Christianity. The time in which they lived was so remote from the time of the great magnetiser that they hardly felt the influence which had operated upon the companions, or those that were directly or indirectly their disciples, and hence they could not abide by the righteousness which so eminently distinguished the first three centuries of Islam. Notwithstanding this change that has passed over Islam, we evidently find the Muslims superior to the Christians in four respects. Firstly, they believe in the one living and true God, and do not worship or deify creatures. Secondly, intoxication which is the root of all evils and the great enemy of all good morals, is so rare among them that compared with the wholesale drunkenness of Christian nations, they may be declared to be quite free from the pestilence. Thirdly, the great Christian vice of gambling is also comparatively rare among them. Fourthly, God has protected their men and women from the wide spread of prostitution which forms a sad feature of the Christian communities. This difference is to be attributed to the appearance in different ages among the Muslims of such reformers as draw people to virtue. It is, however, true that in the intervals when such reformers were not to be found in their midst, their righteousness and love for God have also been on the wane.

All these facts point to but one conclusion, *viz.*, that for the true reformation of the world it is of the first importance that when one great magnetiser has passed away from the world and on account of the remoteness of period his influence too is not felt over hearts, another magnetiser should appear to re-establish the influence which vanished away with the lapse of time, and to draw the souls of all those who unite themselves with him towards spiritual and moral progress in the same

way as the steam-engine draws the carriages that are annexed to it. In short, this principle is the key to the guidance of mankind, and it is established by the combined evidence of all the prophets and messengers of God that regeneration can only be effected by one whom Heaven has granted the magnetism to draw all people into one society and one fold. He establishes and strengthens a twofold relation in them, *viz.*, (1) close communion with God and complete resignation to His will, and (2) mutual relationship which establishes a brotherhood among men in the true sense of the word.

It is clear from these remarks that there must be some peculiarity in the person of the magnetiser who works a pure transformation among his followers and draws people towards truth by the power which nature has granted him. From the word of God we learn what that peculiarity is. It tells us that the man who guides people to the path of truth and virtue combines two excellences in his person. Firstly, his love towards God is so deep that his own personality is consumed in the fire of love, and the divine lights attract him within their own pale. His person becomes a manifestation of the divine attributes in the same way as iron under the heat of fire becomes like fire. The first stage is that in which his soul feeling aversion to the sensual worldly life is naturally inclined to get out of darkness. He therefore breaks off all bonds which could keep him united with darkness and removes every obstacle that could keep him away from God. His soul is freed from the trammels of earthly passion and cleansed of faithlessness, vanity, selfishness, the fear or hope of others than God and regard for one's own ends when pretending to serve God, which is the root of all evils and low motives. Thus relieved of every weight and freed from every obstruction, his soul soars higher and higher towards its Creator, and flowing like a drop of water at last attains the desired proximity to that ocean of existence and is fully invested with the divine morals. The result of this complete union is that as God in His very nature loves man and provides for his good, so does the transformed and perfect man naturally love his fellow-beings and has at heart their well-being in this world and the next, and this is the second excellence which he possesses. For sympathy with man he is granted a simple heart free from cunning and craft. When he speaks, it is only out of sympathy for man and for his guidance, and not under the fear of losing or the vain desire of being able to sustain

well a part in a religious controversy. He is granted the divine attributes of true Providence, Mercy and Justice. Divine morals are represented within him as a reflection, through the mirror of his pure and transparent nature. In this sense he really becomes a substitute or representative of God upon earth. When the perfect man reaches this stage, God who does not waste any energy or capacity in man, seeing in him the admirable qualities of sympathy and philanthropy, charges him with message towards the people that delivering them from sensuousness he may lead them to higher and spiritual life. The holy Quran refers to this in the verse *د لي فتد لي فکان قاب قومين اودلي* i. e., the perfect man upon whom the revelation of the Quran was sent down became so near to God that vested with divine morals he was sent back with the mission of deliverance to the world, and as his nature was gifted in the highest degree with two forms of zeal, *viz.*, a zeal for the love of God, and a zeal for sympathy with mankind, therefore the chord of his soul fell within these two arcs. Like the chord which is common to two arcs, being semicircles, the holy Prophet of Islam occupies a position bearing the same relation to God as to man. His spiritual position is therefore intermediate between the Creator and the created.

In brief, this is the real philosophy of God's sending His vicegerents upon earth. No prophet was ever charged by the Almighty with the message of reforming the world unless he had attained the perfection to which reference has above been made. The assertion that the prophets of God were themselves involved in sin and darkness and therefore not able to release others from the bondage of sin, is both erroneous and irreverent. Even worldly governments cannot take such a foolish step as to entrust the administration of a portion of their territory to incompetent and unprincipled governors who instead of doing anything for the welfare of the country shall lead them to certain ruin by their evil example. If then worldly governments exercise their powers so judiciously in the selection of their officers, what is it but heresy to assert that the Almighty and All-wise Ruler of the Universe upon whose choice of a reformer hang the everlasting destinies of the human race, could not exercise even so much judiciousness in His selection as the weakest ruler-upon earth? The truth is that earthly people do not know the man that comes from heaven, for he is not of this world. He is

subjected to cavils from the blind, for the blind do not see him. As darkness is eternally hostile to light, it does not like that light should come into and illumine the corners of the world. The sons of darkness are up in arms against light, and after a great spiritual struggle light is victorious, and the overhanging clouds of darkness are dispelled.

It must also be pointed out here that the divine law according to which the vicegerents of God have been appearing upon earth for the guidance of men is not a dead letter now. If it is true that God wills now as He willed in time past that men should repent of evil and be righteous, we undoubtedly stand in need of an inspired reformer who like the former prophets has the magnetism to draw people to goodness, who possesses divine attributes, whose life stands out in purity eminently above others, whose teachings have the power to attract and who can show extraordinary signs.

Our object in this Magazine is to show—

- (1) who this inspired reformer is ;
- (2) what arguments and signs there are which support his claim ;
- (3) what his moral teachings are ;
- (4) what beliefs he inculcates and what he rejects ;
- (5) what truths and knowledge he has brought and in which of the divine books they are to be found ; and
- (6) what path he teaches for seeking union in God.

Under these six heads falls the vast variety of the subjects to which the pages of the Magazine shall be devoted. Besides these it undertakes to refute every objection against Islam, the holy Quran, the holy Prophet Muhammad, may the blessings of God be upon him, and the great Reformer, the holy founder of the mission to which reference has above been made. It shall defend the cause of truth and oppose every false doctrine or erroneous teaching which is in violation of the rights of the Creator or the created.



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE GRACIOUS AND THE MERCIFUL

**We praise Him and pray for His choicest blessings
upon His noble Prophet.**

How to get rid of the bondage of Sin.

In the following pages we propose to point out the remedy for the devouring evil of the times. It is plain that the marvellous material progress of the world is more than counterbalanced by its deplorable spiritual decline. The souls of men have so far fallen away from their natural nobility that they eschew pure truths and shun their very contact. It seems as if some forcible energy were dragging them down with an accelerated motion into the sink of iniquity and the lowest depths of vice. Such an entire change has passed over the intellects of men that what is spiritually ugliest and most detestable is admired for the dazzling beauty of its polish. Tender conscience, that inward monitor to man, feels that it is falling off from its natural purity under the demoralizing influence of some unseen power. The poison is so generally spread that it has destroyed almost a whole world. Pure and noble truths are laughed at and trifled with, and a turning to God and total resignation to His will is looked upon as an absurdity. Every soul upon earth seems to be bent upon earthly cares and advantages, as if some hidden power had constrained it to that course.

Such is the evil attraction of vice, and the truth is, as we have already pointed out, that there are attractions working everywhere in the world. The efficiency or inefficiency of an attraction depends upon the certainty or uncertainty of our views with regard to any matter; and if the certainty is greater, the attraction too is more powerful. It is a principle the truth of which is no less unquestionable in the spiritual than in the material world, that an attraction

can only be counteracted by its opposite, if the latter is more powerful than the former. Since the world in its present state is being dragged down under the influence of an evil attraction, it can never raise itself up to the level and soar into the higher regions, unless an opposite and more powerful attraction from heaven overpoises the existing earthly tendencies and brings about a greater certainty in the opposite direction. To make it more clear, no change for the better can be brought about until people begin to see with certainty that there are real and more substantial and lasting advantages and delights in submission to the commandments of God than can be felt by indulging in carnal passions and evil desires, that these advantages and delights can be palpably felt in a virtuous life, and that transgression is not only equal to but worse than death. This certainty, when it has an entire control over the mind, can alone be a safe protector against sin.

It is further necessary that there should reign in the heart the absolute conviction that light is granted to man from heaven only through the sun who is the *Imam* (the spiritual head) of his time. Hence it is that ignorance with regard to such a spiritual head is followed by a death of ignorance. The person who thinks he can do without that real source of light is deluded, for he sets himself in opposition to the unchangeable laws of God. The eyes have a light, yet to avail themselves of it they must borrow the light of the sun. The *Imam* resembles the sun in being the true source of all light: he comes from heaven and illumines the world, and the eye is blind that does not borrow light from him. On the other hand, the person who, with the aid of this light, stands on a firm footing of certainty is attracted towards virtue. Between the earthly and heavenly attractions a struggle would naturally follow and each will try to overcome the other. The one shall be drawing a man to virtue, the other to vice, the one to the East and the other to the West. The more powerful the two opposite attractions grow, the more fearful shall the struggle be. It is a necessary consequence of great material progress that these two attractions should display their highest powers. When the world has attained the highest stage of material advancement the days of heavenly advancement are not far. It is certain that upon the heavens also preparations are, then, being made for a spiritual reformation. An attraction is produced upon heavens and the two contend with each

other for supremacy. Dreadful is the day when neglect and vanity reign supreme upon earth, for it is the day of vengeance and the promised day of the great spiritual struggle. That terrible struggle has been described in metaphorical language by the holy prophets of God. Some have represented it as the final struggle between the angels of heaven and the devils of the bottomless pit, at the close of which comes the end of the world; while others have from crass ignorance taken it to be a physical struggle which shall be carried on with steel and gunpowder. The latter view is, no doubt, the result of misjudgment and superficial notions, and metaphorical words describing a spiritual contest have been misconstrued as meaning a physical war.

In short, a hard struggle is now going on between the darkness of earth and the light of heaven. The prophets of God from Adam to Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of God be upon them, foretold of this mighty struggle. It has leaders on both sides, the concealer of truths on the side of darkness, and the revealer of truths on the side of light. The one comes from heaven with hosts of angels and is a manifestation of Michael, and the other enters the lists with the powers of darkness and is an incarnation of the Devil. Now, when the inhabitants of Pandemonium are standing fully equipped in a battle-array, and have either done or are engaged in doing their wicked deeds, we are naturally led to hope that the heavenly host is also making preparations for crushing the evil ones, and good judgment enables us to draw the conclusion that the host of heaven is not negligent of its duties. But the heavenly government is averse to hubbub and clattering and carries on its operations in solemn silence. Superficial observers can hardly be aware of its doings until a sign appears in the heavens, and a *minaret* (light-house) is erected upon earth, silvery white and shining with light. The heavenly light descends upon this minaret which then enlightens the whole world.

The closing remarks of the last paragraph require to be explained. The spiritual system notwithstanding its coincidence in all prominent points with the physical world, displays certain peculiar marks which a superficial observer cannot detect in the latter. An instance of this is to be found in the way in which the earthly attraction becomes the *premium mobile* of heavenly attrac-

tion, although the two are directly opposed to each other. It is therefore reasonable to assert that at a time when both these attractions shall act in their full force—in the last days of the world's history, when material progress shall have attained the highest stage—the two attractions shall contend with each other for supremacy, for true success is not attained unless the enemy is destroyed. Where therefore the two rivals are equally thriving and powerful, the contest must necessarily be a hard one, for each one of the rivals has at heart the destruction of the other. Reason therefore also supports the prophetic utterings of all the great patriarchs and prophets in as much as the struggle between good and evil is the necessary consequence of the collision of the two rival forces, of which either one must overcome the other, or both be annihilated in the contest.

According to the prophetic utterances this final contest between good and evil may be thus described that after the lapse of a thousand years from Jesus which was the millennium of the Devil's imprisonment, an evil attraction gained ground upon the earth. This was the time in the world's history when the Muslims had renounced the true and noble principles of Islam, and therefore that religion was in a declining state. Its spiritual progress had at that time been hampered and its conquests had come to an end. It was born in the days when the author of evil lay in chains in the bottomless pit. Its rise and decline at these two periods was necessary that what the prophets and last of all St. John had spoken, might be fulfilled. It was therefore in fulfilment of these predictions that the religion of Islam began to decline after a thousand years from Jesus, and its further progress was then and there checked. Satanic movements and operations thenceforth assumed different shapes and appeared in many-coloured garments. The tree of evil took root in the ground and ramified to an enormous extent. Some of its branches spread into the East, others reached the uttermost settlements of the West, and not a few shaded the North and the South. No corner of the world was spared the evil. But the time during which the Devil had been let loose was like the time of his imprisonment limited to a thousand years, and the prophets of God bore testimony to the same effect. With the close of the thirteenth century, after the Flight of I our holy Prophet, the period of Satan's freedom came to an

end. For it must be noticed that in the computation of the periods of prophecies we must start with the lunar year as our basis, this system of reckoning the prophetic periods being taught by Almighty God to both Jews and Muhammadans. The solar year is an innovation of man, and, therefore, being against the sacred Scriptures of these two religions, cannot be applied in reckoning prophetic times. In short, the days in which we are living mark the termination of the respite granted to Satan. The period for which he was set at liberty has come to an end; but as he does not like that his freedom be restrained and his authority taken away, a struggle between the good and evil attractions must naturally be the result. It had been so ordained from the beginning and the Words of God cannot pass away.

Other facts also uphold the same view, *viz.*, that the thousand years of Satan's supremacy have come to an end, and we are now living in the millennium of God's reign and the dawn of it has already appeared. The sixth thousand from the appearance of Adam has come to a close, and the seventh, in which the second Adam should have appeared, has begun. God made Adam on the sixth day, and the sacred Scriptures further bear testimony to the fact that a day is equal to a thousand years with the Lord. The promises of God, therefore, make it absolutely necessary that the second Adam must have been born already, though not recognised as yet by the world. We cannot further avoid the conclusion that the place fixed by God for the appearance of the second Adam must be in the East and not in the West, for from Genesis ii: 8 we learn that God had put the first Adam in a garden *eastward*. It is therefore necessary that the second Adam should appear in the *east*, in order to have a resemblance with the first in respect of his locality. This conclusion is equally binding upon the Christians and the Muhammadans, if they admit the authority of their Scriptures and are not of an atheistic turn of mind.

The way has been smoothed for a clear understanding of the true state of facts. The spiritual atmosphere of the world is overcast with dense clouds of darkness and the time has come when light should shoot out its beams and dispel the overhanging gloom. But it is vain to expect that the dim torches lighted by earthly hands should penetrate the darkness visible. Only clear and radiant heavenly light can drive it away. Pitchy darkness has overshadowed the world, and the faint and

flickering lamp of right eousness is ready to die out. Traditional beliefs, unfruitful knowledge and formal prayers cannot bring back the light. The blind cannot lead the blind, nor is it possible that darkness should dispel darkness. A new minaret is now needed which should raise its head far above the low huts made by earthly hands, so that heavenly light may descend upon it and the celestial lamp enlighten its top and thence shed its pure lustre upon the whole world. The higher the minaret is, the farther shall the light reach and thus illumine distant corners of the world.

It remains to be explained what a *minar* (minaret) is. Minaret is the name given to the pure, hallowed, noble and magnanimous spirit granted by God to the perfect man by reason of which he gets his *light* from heaven—an idea existing in the literal signification of the word. The loftiness of the minaret represents the magnanimity of the soul of the perfect man, its firmness stands for the constancy and determination which he shows at the time of the greatest trials, and its whiteness is a symbol of his guiltlessness which is ultimately established. When the perfect man has passed through all these stages and undergone all these trials, when his magnanimity, constancy, patience and determination shine forth in their full glory and his innocence is established with conclusive arguments, then is the time of his advent in glory, and the period of his first advent, which was a time of trials and persecutions, comes to an end. Then does the holy spirit invested with the glory of God descend upon his person, and the Divine attribute of glory is manifested in him. All this takes place in his second appearance.

The same reality underlies the peculiar manner of the advent of the Promised Messiah. The Muslims hold that he shall descend near a minaret. The descent spoken of in that tradition really stands for his advent in glory which shall be accompanied with a manifestation of the Divine power and attributes. It does not exclude the idea of his previous presence upon earth, but it is necessary that the heavens should hold him so long as the appointed time of God does not arrive. It is also an unchangeable Divine law that spiritual realities are symbolized by physical emblems. The temple at Jerusalem and the Ca'ba at Mecca are illustrations of the same law and represent the manifestations of Divine glory. The same explanation holds good in the case of the tradition which describes the descent of the Promised Messiah upon or about a minaret in a country to the east of Damascus. The word 'east'

should be specially noted, for Adam also had been put in a garden eastward. The object of the prophecy is in no way interfered with so long as the minaret is built before the glorious advent of the promised one, for it appears from the prophetic utterances that the minaret is to be a sign that shall indicate his advent in full glory. It had been ordained that the Promised Messiah should appear in the world in two characters. At first he shall come as an ordinary person suffering under trials and persecutions of every sort. When the days of suffering are over, then shall be the time of his advent in full glory. It is before that time that the minaret must be completed, for it appears from the traditions that a minaret must stand as a symbol of the reality, and it shall be a physical picture of the spiritual minaret to which we have before referred. The world shall not recognise him before his glorious advent for he is not of the world. Nor shall the world love him, for he comes from the God whom the world does not love. It is therefore necessary that he should be abused, persecuted and charged with all manner of crime. The Islamic prophecies testify that the Promised Messiah shall not be accepted in the beginning. On the other hand, he shall be subjected to malignant and bitter treatment from the ignorant and to oppression and outrage from the mischief-makers. A man shall do violence to him and think that he has done a deed of virtue, another shall do him injury and regard his deed as most pleasing in the sight of God. Thus shall he suffer and undergo every trial and face every difficulty till the coming of the appointed time of God and the fulfilment of the Divine law of persecution against prophets. Then shall come the time of his glory. Capable hearts shall have their eyes opened and they shall begin to think of him with unprejudiced minds. "Can this be a liar," they shall say, "who cannot be subdued and crushed." "What is the reason," they shall reason with themselves "that Divine assistance is without intermission granted to him and never to us." The inspiring angel of God shall then descend upon their hearts and admonish them that every one of the circumstances related in the traditions which had been a hindrance in the way of their acceptance, need not occur to the very letter. It was possible—nay highly probable—that some of those traditions were errors and fabrications, and others were couched in metaphorical language and could not be fulfilled literally. What was the cause of the misfortune of the Jews in rejecting Jesus? Nothing but that they waited till every word of prophecy should have been fulfilled in a literal sense, and exactly according to their own notions of it. But their expectation was vain and their hope a delusion. With

that Divine law before them and with the God of their fathers above their heads, the opponents of God's messengers should consider lest they were tried by God in the same manner as the rejecters of the prophets before them. In short, such considerations, when duly weighed, shall at last turn their minds to accept the rejected and suffering messenger of heaven, as was the case with the prophets of by-gone times.

There is not the least truth in the assertion that it is the time for resorting to the sword and gun for spreading the true religion and righteousness. The sword, far from revealing the beauties and excellences of truth, makes them dubious and throws them into background. Those who hold such views are not the friends of Islam but its deadly foes. They have low motives, mean natures, poor spirits, narrow minds, dull brains and short sight. It is they who open the way to an objection against Islam, the validity of which cannot be questioned. They hold that Islam needs the sword for its advancement and thus brand its purity and cast a slur upon its holy name. The religion that can easily establish its truth and superiority by sound intellectual arguments, heavenly signs or other reliable testimony, does not need the sword to threaten men and force a confession of its truth from them. Religion is worth the name only so long as it is in consonance with reason. If it fails to satisfy that requisite, if it has to make up for its discomfiture in argument by handling the sword, it needs no other argument for its falsification. The sword it wields cuts its own throat before reaching others'.

If it be objected that sword was resorted to by early Islam and hence the legality of *Jihad*, we say the objection is based upon ignorance of early Islamic circumstances. Islam never allowed the use of the sword for spreading the faith. On the other hand, it strictly prohibits compulsion in matters of faith. It has the plain injunction لا اكراه في الدين "There shall be no compulsion in religion." Why was the sword taken in hand then? The circumstances under which this measure had been resorted to have nothing to do with the spread of religion; they are connected with the preservation of life. Briefly, they are as follows:—

The savage inhabitants of the deserts of Arabia, who could hardly distinguish right from wrong, conceived a hatred towards Islam in its earliest day and became its bitterest enemies. The reason of this hatred may be easily conceived.

When the unity of God and the Islamic truths were preached openly to idolatrous Arabs and convincing arguments against idol worship were impressed upon their minds and they were told how degrading it was for the noblest of God's creatures to bow submission to stones, they found themselves unable to meet the adherents of the new faith upon argumentative ground. This exposure led to a motion in favour of Islam among the more reasonable of them. The ties of relationship were cut asunder, the son parted from his parents and brother from his brother. This exasperated them the more and they saw plainly that if their fathers' false religion was to be saved, excessive measures must be taken to stop the ingress into the new religion. The new converts to Islam were therefore violently persecuted and no efforts were spared to block the way to the new faith. Those acquainted with early Muslim history know full well what barbarous and cruel treatment was meted out to the early converts, and how many were murdered in cold blood. But these harsh measures did not prevent people from the acceptance of truth, for even a superficial glance is enough to convince a man of the reasonableness and purity of Islam as against idolatry. At length when the implacable foes of Islam saw that severe persecution availed but little and that their ancient religion was threatened to be swept away in the current of Muslim reason, they planned the death of the Prophet himself. But their designs were frustrated. Almighty God saved His messenger and took him to Medina. The unbelievers, however, could not rest in their homes so long as they heard that the religion they had persecuted was gaining ground in another place. They pursued the Muslims to their new abode, and nothing but their extirpation could satisfy them. What could Islam do under the circumstances but defend itself? For what fault were Muslims to be mercilessly butchered and not allowed to protect their lives? Why should not the inveterate persecutors have been brought to retribution and just punishment? The Muslim battles were therefore not undertaken for gaining converts but to protect innocent Muslim lives. Can an unbiassed judgment accept the conclusion that Islam was unable to prove its reasonableness as against savage Arabs? Can an unprejudiced mind believe that men who had sunk down so low as to worship images and lifeless things and who indulged in every manner of vice, could yet vanquish the noble religion of Islam on intellectual grounds, and that failure in proof led it to resort to the sword for increasing the number of its followers? Those

who have advanced such objections against Islam have been guilty of grave injustice, inasmuch as they have concealed the true state of facts.

It is, however, true that the Musalman *Maulvis* and the Christian missionaries are equally to blame for this unjust charge against Islam. The ignorant *Maulvis* while pretending to support Islam have by their repeated inculcations, ingrafted the false doctrine of *Jehad* upon the minds of the unenlightened public who were misled by the *fatwas* of the *maulvis* on the one side and the objections of the Christian Missionaries, whom they took for learned men, on the other. The doctrine of *Jehad* being thus supported by the evidence of two opposing witnesses, its validity could not be questioned by the masses. Had the Missionaries taken a different course and with true honesty declared that the *fatwas* of the *Maulvis* were based on ignorance of the early Islamic history, and that the circumstances which then rendered an appeal to arms necessary for Muslims, did not exist any more, the idea of *Jehad* would long since have been eradicated from the face of the earth. But they never looked to the consequences and a misdirected zeal for their own religion cast a veil over their judgments in grasping the truth.

It must also be stated here that permission for self-defence and murdering the enemies of Islam was not given to the Muslims until the Arabs had, on account of their excessive oppressions and outrages and innocent bloodshed, rendered themselves culpable and liable to be punished with death. But a clemency was even then shown to such of them as embraced Islam. The unity of religion established a relation of brotherhood and all past wrongs were forgotten. It is here that some opponents of Islam have stumbled and from this they draw the conclusion that the new religion was forced upon the unbelievers. In fact, the case is just the reverse of what the objectors have thought. There is no compulsion here; it was a favour to those who had rendered themselves liable to death. It is apparently absurd to take this conditional mitigation of just punishment for compulsion. They deserved to be murdered, not because they did not believe in the mission of the Prophet, but because they had murdered many an innocent soul. The extreme penalty of the law was upon them, but the mercy of the Gracious God gave them another chance of avert-

ing this merited capital punishment. He knew that during the long years of opposition the Islamic truths had been brought home to them and they well understood the futility of idol-worship, therefore His mercy offered them an opportunity, even after the sentence was justly pronounced against them, for imploring His pardon and the forgiveness of their sins. This clearly shows that it was not the object of Islam to put any unbeliever merely as such to death, but that it was willing to forgive even when the criminal was found deserving of death.

Islam had to grapple with other difficulties. Religious prejudice was so strong at the time that if a member of any tribe adopted the faith of Islam, he was either put to death or threatened with it, and persecution was so severe that life seemed a burden to him. Islam had therefore to face the difficulty of establishing freedom of religious exercise and for this noble object it had to undertake wars.

The early wars of Islam fall under either of the above headings and it never took the sword for its own propagation or for any other purpose. Attempts were made to blot out its very existence and therefore it had to struggle for its life. It did not take up arms of its own accord but was compelled to do so. It had to defend itself and repel the dangerous foe. Later on, when its true principles were forgotten, the doctrine was read in a different light and ignorance looked with pride upon a hateful course of life. But the fault can in no way be attributed to Islam. The source from which it flows is pure and undefiled. That this doctrine has been identified with Islamic teachings by shallow-brained zealots who do not care for the life of man even so much as man should care for the life of a sparrow, cannot be questioned. But the innocent blood that has been spilt in the past does not satisfy them. They have yet a bloody *Mahdi* in store for the world and would like to exhibit the ugliest picture of Islam before all nations, that all people may know that Islam has always had to resort for its propagation to compulsion and the sword, and that it has not a particle of truth in it to gain its conquest over hearts. It seems as if the holders of these views are not satisfied with the humiliation and decadence which Islam has already suffered, but must bring it still lower and subject it to yet more disgrace. These men are a reproach to Islam. But God now wills that Islam should not be branded with reproaches and remain under a cloud

any more. It is already so distressing to find that its opponents who have not taken the trouble to investigate matters for themselves, have it impressed upon their minds that Islam has from its very beginning been employing the sword to add to its numbers.

It is high time that all these base charges should be cleared from the face of Islam. If the *Maulvis* unite to root up the evil from the midst of the Muhammadans, they shall have done a lasting good to, and conferred a blessing upon, their co-religionists. Such an exposition of the doctrines of Islam will further reveal the excellences and beauties of that religion to the general public, and the aversion which its opponents have conceived on account of misconceptions shall be turned into admiration. The clouds of dust being cleared, they shall then be able to get their light from that source of light. It is evident that no one can approach a bloody murderer. Every one fears him, women and children tremble at his sight, and he looks like a mad man. An opponent of an alien religion cannot even pass a night with him lest he should choose to be a *Ghazi* at the cost of his life. Such events daily occur among the ignorant frontier people, and a single bloody deed is deemed sufficient to entitle the murderer to paradise and its manifold blessings. It is a shame for Muhammadans that alien races cannot safely live as their neighbours. They cannot trust them for a single moment and hardly expect any good in times of need. They do not deem themselves safe among them and shrink at the hidden belief of *Ghaziism*.

An instance of this occurred lately here at Qadian. On the 20th of November last a European came here. Just at that time a number of my followers had assembled together and the conversation was upon a religious subject. The traveller stood apart from the assembly and was addressed in polite words. It appeared that he had been to Arabia and other Muslim countries, and that he came here with the object of taking my and my followers' photographs. As a guest, he was asked to stay for a few days, but it appeared that he was apprehensive. He stated that he had seen many Muhammadans who had committed atrocious deeds of murder against Christians. He mentioned several specific instances in which such cruelty had been shown. It was then explained to him that this, the *Ahmadiyya*

sect of Islam, abhorred such doctrines and hated their adherents. It had set before itself the noble object of uprooting this evil. Upon this he felt satisfied and stayed here for one night.

There is a lesson in this story for the *pro-Jehad Maulvis*. The growth of such horrible doctrines among the Muslims has done lasting injury to the cause of Islam, and created an abhorrence for it in the hearts of other nations. They have no confidence in their sympathy so long as the dangerous doctrine of *Jehad* finds favour with them. They cannot form a favourable opinion except of such of them as do not lead strictly religious lives and are not very scrupulous about their religious beliefs. For all these misunderstandings none but the Muslims themselves are responsible. The blame of depriving a whole world of the recognition of Islamic truths lies at the door of the *Maulvis* who taught doctrines repulsive to the nature of man. How could the religion be from God, whose teachings needed the flash of the sword to get an entrance into the human heart? Such considerations were enough to keep back people from the acceptance of truth. The true religion is that which on account of its inherent property and power and its convincing arguments is more powerful than the keenest sword, not that which depends upon steel for its existence.

Such are the evils that call for a reformer. Casting a glance at the internal state of Islam, we meet with sad disappointment. It is a ghastly picture. The sun has undergone an eclipse, the greater part being already darkened. The social relations of the Muslims are deplorable. Traditions have been fabricated that act like poison upon their moral conditions and break the Divine laws. The most sacred rights which Divine law has given to man are those relating to life, property and honour. We are commanded not to kill man, not to commit an outrage upon his honour, and not to seize his property dishonestly. But some Muhammadans have broken all these commandments. They take away the life of an innocent person and never shudder at the inhumane deed. Empty-headed *Maulvis* have circulated *fatwas* to the effect that it is lawful to seduce or seize the women of unbelievers or heretics, and to steal or misappropriate their properties.

How dangerous is the condition of the religion that is full of so many evils, and whose pretended religious leaders, instead of acting in obedience to the dictates of their conscience, follow their sensual desires and palm off their own erroneous views as holy doctrines taught by God and His prophet. These are wolves in lamb's clothing and deceive the people. They act like poison and say they are an antidote. They are an enemy to society and an enemy to Islam. Their hearts are void of grace and sympathy but they conceal themselves. They put on the mask of preachers but have in view the indulgence of their own carnal desires. They come into mosques like saints, but their character is black with diabolic deeds. These infamous characters are not limited to any particular country or town or sect, but may be found in every Muslim country. They pretend to be the religious leaders of the people and expositors of the doctrines of their religion. They call themselves *Maulvis* and assume saintly airs so that they may pass for godly men. Their deeds, however, reveal their true character. They do not like that true righteousness and true sympathy be spread in the world, for they consider that a loss to themselves.

In short, the way of Islam is blocked with numerous difficulties. The souls are dead and do not respond to the call of virtue. The golden mean which Islam taught as the guiding rule of life has been given up, and Muslims have gone to extremes. There are those among them that prostrate themselves before tombs and make circuits around them. They regard the departed souls of their spiritual guides as having full control from God over the affairs of humanity. Every religious order has a tomb in connection with it which is worshipped by the disciples at the instance of the head. If one asks for a supernatural sign, a thousand miracles of the dead saint are related, but as to proof there is none. With them tomb-worship is of the essence of Islam, and all others who claim to follow that religion are in error.

In contrast with this is the sect that has gone to the opposite extreme. A wholesale denial of spiritual facts has fallen to their lot. Saints and prophets are rejected in the same breath. Miracles are denied and turned into ridicule. The revelation of God is attributed to an excess of imagination, and the presence of a peculiar

creative power in the inspired one. Predictions are described as the result of human foresight, and any prophecy which is not the result of mere insight of human judgment into the surrounding circumstances, and which could be termed a direct communication from a higher source, is an impossibility with them. In short, they declare the Revelation of God to be all talk, miracles all moonshine and prophecies all stuff and nonsense. The graves of the dead are heaps of dust with which the souls have no connection. The resurrection or rising of the dead on the Day of Judgment is a fable of the days of ignorance, and to think of a life hereafter is madness. World wisdom is the true wisdom. Man must be bent wholly upon the things of this world, and his only concern should be the acquirement of the best means of being foremost in the race of life. He must emulate men who are day and night involved in the affairs of the world and its base machinations.

Such are the excess and laxity of Musalmans with respect to the doctrines of Revelation and Resurrection. But their social and moral relations are all subject to the same rule. There is immoderation in their words and deeds, in marriage and divorce, in charity and parsimony, in wrath and mercy, in revenge and forgiveness ; in short, in every one of their affairs. Ignorance and error have everywhere the upper hand among them. This is the deplorable condition of the people that appeared in the world with the distinction and pre-eminence of being the teachers of the unity of God and the golden mean. From this may be judged the state of other people.

We shall now take the case of Christianity which grew up in a land endowed by nature with superior intellect and rare brain powers and accordingly the expectations were greater in its case. But we are sorry to say that in the matter of religion and the unity of God their state is the worst. Their faith is a reproach to their philosophy and science. When we consider their prudence and skill in the management of worldly affairs and their genius for inventions on the one hand, and their weak side in grasping religious truths and delusion in taking a weak man as the Lord of the worlds, on the other, we are at a loss to account for this irreconcilable inconsistency. We have an unequalled intelligence in the one case and a similar want in the other.

Between the erroneous paths chosen by the Christians and the Muhammadans, a line of distinction can easily be drawn. Among the latter the infringement is largely on the side of the rights of man, while among the former it is on that of the duties we owe to our Creator. The doctrine of *Jehud* has hardened the hearts of the Muhammadans to such an extent that they can hardly feel true love and sympathy for their kind. The unenlightened among them are ever ready to cut the throat of an innocent person, or commit an outrage upon him on the slightest excitement or for personal motives, and with their beastly conduct degrade humanity. The Christians have committed the most horrible outrage upon the rights of the Divine Being. They have set up with Him a weak man as God. The pity is that they have not even attained the object for which they had deified a creature. We cannot see the good that has resulted to them from it. If a faith in the blood of Jesus has the power of cleansing man from sin, why has it not benefitted Europe? Why has atonement proved to be no remedy for the besetting sins of Europe which one feels even ashamed to mention? There it has not only failed to uproot the great vices but has worked their worst development. Does Europe exhibit a higher level of morality or less evil than the Eastern countries? If not, why has it never occurred to the supporters of this doctrine to revise the recipe and seek another remedy? Every physician has to resort to this measure, and when he sees that the health of his patient does not improve by one remedy, he has to apply another. If then we care so much for a few days' comfort, why is not attention paid to this important question upon which depends the eternal welfare of man?

Nineteen hundred years have elapsed since the blood of Jesus was first introduced into the world as a patent sin-healing remedy, but instead of doing any good it has proved harmful to society and intensified the evil which it affected to mitigate. Are we still to believe that faith in the blood of Jesus delivers man from the bondage of sin, or should we expect that it shall do in the future what it has been unable to do in such a long past and that the time is coming when Christian nations shall pre-eminently stand above others in shunning lust and iniquity? An unprejudiced European or a traveller who has been to the great European cities, the great centres of its civilization, such as Paris, shall not hesitate to testify to the truth of our statements. Nay, some parts of Europe have reached the lowest stage of degeneracy and do not look with any horror upon vice, nor pay any heed to its injurious

consequences. Taking more than one wife is illegal there but looking with lust upon a woman is no delinquency. Is there any verse in the Gospels that legalizes the disgraceful conduct of the millions of women in France and elsewhere who do not marry all their lives long, or is it only too true that the blood of Jesus has proved a bane to society?

The truth is, that there is no natural relation between the death of one man and the redemption of another. As to the dead one's deity we can conceive of blessings from a Living God and not from a dead one. The whole world is enlightened by the rising of the sun, not by its setting. Nineteen hundred years' experience of the failure of the remedy in effecting the desired object undermines the foundation of a Son of God upon which the whole superstructure is built. The death of God is no doubt an ill-devised idea, but supposing that the Almighty Being could not see His way out of the difficulty of human redemption but by the strange course He adopted, it would have been some satisfaction if the desired object had thus been attained. But the object has never been accomplished and the world has been plunged into deeper depths of sin. This unmeaning and unreasonable act of the Deity therefore turns out to be an absolute failure. That God should have been born from the womb of a woman to suffer punishment, disgrace and death is, in the first place, opposed to the established Divine laws, for it has neither any precedent which should satisfy the hearts of men that God has been in the habit of being thus born into the world, and that such a thing occurred several times before, nor is the claim supported by any such extraordinary signs which can convince reasonable minds that they display a greater power than was manifested in the miracles wrought by the other prophets. Nor is the defect of this absolute lack of evidence made up by the attendance of the pretended consequences for which the dangerous dogma was introduced into the world.

The two great vices in which grow up all carnal passions are drinking and prostitution, and it is in Christian nations that we find their worst development. The majority of the inhabitants of Europe are involved in these two vices, and there is no exaggeration in the assertion that in drunkenness Europe beats all the vastly populated countries of Asia, and a single large city of Europe has a larger number of public-houses than the total number of shops of all sorts

in an Asiatic town. Experience has, moreover, established it beyond doubt that drunkenness is the root of all evils and that the intoxicated man is likely to commit the most horrible crimes on the slightest provocation. Other evils are inseparable from it. Piety and drunkenness are like light and darkness respectively, and can never exist together in the same place. The man who is not aware of its evil consequences is not far-sighted. Another difficulty about it is that the giving up of the habit of drunkenness is attended with serious difficulties.

The question naturally arises now, whether there is any true remedy for freedom from the bondage of sin if atonement is not. I do not only assert it forcibly but offer it as my own experience and as a well-tried remedy that there exists, and has existed from the creation of man down to this day, one and only one sure method of being released from the slavery of sin and the disobedience of God. Nothing can be proof against sin except a perfect knowledge of God attained through sure and conclusive arguments and brilliant signs of His existence. It is not to believe simply that there is a God but to know God and see God. It is through such a knowledge of God that man sees clearly that the wrath of God is a devouring fire, and that a manifestation of the beauties of God sets the soul at rest and makes it evident that true bliss and eternal felicity consist in a constant and reverent adoration of God. Every screen that hides the face of God from man is then raised and the Divine glory and beauty are revealed to him in their full lustre. This is the only way in which sensual passions can be restrained, and it is only such a knowledge of God that works a true transformation in man.

Some men would think that they also believe in God, love God and fear God, yet they are not granted the purity of soul. Others perhaps might object that all the world, with the exception of a very few, is not a disbeliever in God and yet sin and evil rage in the world. But the fact is, that there is a wide difference between a belief in God and a knowledge of God. I do not mean to say that one who merely believes in God is granted the power to overcome sin, but that such power is granted to the man who has a perfect knowledge of God, and who has tasted both the fear and love of God. The believer in God simply admits that a God exists but one who has

a perfect knowledge of Him actually sees what the other simply does not reject on grounds of probability. If it be said that Satan has a clear knowledge of God and still he is disobedient to the Divine being, the reply is that such a view is not correct. Satan has not the perfect knowledge which is granted to the righteous ones of God.

It is in the nature of man that when perfect knowledge renders him certain of something, he is necessarily impressed with it. He avoids every dreadful path of destruction when he has once seen it. It is therefore impossible that a true knowledge of God and disobedience to His Commandments should dwell in the same heart, for if the one is darkness the other is light and must dispel it. We ordinarily see that a thing which experience has shown to be beneficial and conducive to any good is anxiously desired by every body, while that which it has proved to be harmful is hated and even viewed with horror. For instance, the man who has strychnia in his hand but is not aware of its fatal property, may take it in any quantity under the impression of its being some innocuous drug; but the person who knows it to be a poison, cannot take it in any such quantity as is sure to kill him. Similarly, it is a solid and evident truth that when man knows it for certain that there is a God who punishes every transgression, and that punishment is sure to follow every act of disobedience, he keeps at a respectful distance from all sorts of wrong-doing, such as bloodshed, theft, prostitution, oppression, injustice, breach of trust, setting up others with God, telling a lie, giving false evidence, vanity, hypocrisy, speculation, cheating, abusing, fraud, faithlessness, remissness, lasciviousness, ungratefulness towards God, not fearing God, selfishness, having no sympathy for man, not praying to God with a fearful heart, indulging in luxury and worldly delights, forgetfulness of God, keeping aloof from prayer and humbleness of heart, adulterating articles of sale or defrauding customers, giving short measure or weight, selling at a higher than the market price, not serving the parents, harshness to wives, disobedience of husbands, looking to lust after strange men and women, not caring for the orphans, thinking little of the old and the weak and the sick, disregarding the rights of neighbours and injuring them, insulting a fellow-man to show one's own vanity, jeering at others in offensive language, describing some bodily defect to affront another person, calling one

bad names, charging one falsely, pretending to receive revelation from God, or falsely claiming an apostleship, message or prophecy from Him, denying the existence of God, and revolting against a good ruler or mischievously creating a dissention in the country.

The assertion that we know that there is a God and that sin will be punished and yet commit sins, and hence the insufficiency of the method pointed out, is nothing but a delusion. It is impossible that man should venture to commit sin after he is fully convinced that no sooner he shall transgress the commandments of the Almighty than the fire of punishment shall consume him like lightning in the twinkling of an eye. The principle upon which stress has been laid here is one that defies refutation. It is incontestible that whenever an act is sure to be followed by certain punishment, there is no tendency in man to attempt that act. No one ever thrusts his hand into burning fire, or throws himself down the top of a mountain, or jumps into a well, or stands against a train in motion, or thrusts his hand into the mouth of a lion, or holds out his leg before a mad dog or stands beneath falling lightning or remains in a house when the roof is coming down over his head, or stands upon the ground that is sinking. Is there a stout-hearted man who upon seeing a poisonous snake upon his bed does not at once make a jump to the floor? Or does the rashest man, when his house is on fire, not leave everything to be devoured by flames to escape with his own life? If all this is true and man naturally flees from danger, why does he not keep clear of sin and fly from the coming wrath? There is no satisfactory answer to this question, except that in the two cases there is difference as to the certainty of the consequences.

Most people have really no sure knowledge as to the effect of their transgressions. They are no doubt conscious that sin is harmful, but they never dread it like the lion or the snake. Beneath this outward belief is the lurking idea that there is no positive proof as to the retribution. Even the existence of God is not beyond all question. There is also an uncertainty regarding the immortality of the soul, or, if it be supposed immortal, who can tell of its fate hereafter, or that transgression of God's commandments shall be really punished? That such ideas are latent in the minds is beyond a shadow of doubt, though they may be there unspied or even unsuspected. But as to occasions of palpable danger, instances of which

have been given above, there is dead certainty that destruction shall be the immediate consequence, and therefore none can approach the danger, or if any one is brought face to face with it by accident, he shall fly from it.

To sum up, most men have not that certainty in religious matters which they have in the material world. In the one case it is a certitude, in the other a mere idea, a conjecture so to say ; in this they feel and see, in that it is an idle tale. Fog cannot dispel the darkness of sin, there must be clear light. I say it plainly and truly that the true salvation of mankind has no relation to the crucifixion of Jesus, and even if a thousand Messiahs be crucified that object can never be attained. Only a perfect knowledge or a perfect love of God can deliver man from the bondage of sin. As to the death of Jesus upon the cross, it is not a true statement in the first place and has, moreover, no connection with the assuaging of sin. It is an obscure assertion with no foundation and no results. Evidence does not support it, nor does experience bear it out. The suicide of a Messiah has no conceivable relation to the remission of another man's sins.

The true nature of redemption is that man should be freed from the hell of sin in this very world. The promise of a salvation hereafter, while this one is to be passed in the fire of sin, is nothing but a fallacy. Idle tales cannot relieve a man of the heavy burden he is so desirous to shake off, nor have these childish stories which are devoid of all pure truth and quite strangers to the purpose, done any good to or saved their upholders. Search the whole country, from North to South and from East to West, and you shall not find a single man who has, through these tales, attained to that righteousness of heart which reveals the shining face of God. It is this righteousness which not only makes a man abhor sin but gives him a true prospect of a paradise hereafter by granting him in the enjoyment of truths a heavenly bliss in this life. The soul of man melts and humbles itself down before the majesty of God without any restraint. A light descends from heaven and dispels the gloom of carnal desires.

As darkness pervades a room in broad day light if its doors are shut but light enters it if a man takes the trouble to open the doors, similar is the case with the spirit of man. He must exert himself to

his utmost before he reaps any real advantage. To admit light into a room, a man must get up from his place and open the windows. Unless he does that he cannot partake of the bounties of the laws of nature. A thirsty man cannot quench his thirst with a mere idea of water, but stumbling and falling he must reach the fountain of sweet water and stoop down to drink of it. Then shall his scorching thirst be satisfied.

The water of life which can cool and refresh your souls from the inflammation of sin is *perfect* assurance. Upon this earth and under the heavens there is no other remedy for getting cleansed from sin. No cross can deliver you from this evil, no blood can set you free from the trammels of passion. Do not trust in these, for they have nothing to do with deliverance. Reflect upon realities and ponder over truths. Try as you do in the material world, and then you will see that there is no light but that which proceeds from true assurance that can take you out of sensual darkness, and no pure and sweet water but that which flows from perfect knowledge and an actual revelation of the face of God that can cleanse the impurities of the soul and cool and refresh the burning of the heart. If one propounds a different theory, or another acts upon a different principle, the one is ignorant and the other deceived. It is not light they can give you but further darkness of doubt, and not the cool and sweet water they promise you but more of burning and inflammation. No blood can purify you but the pure blood which the nourishment of assurance generates, and no cross can deliver you but the cross that you have to suffer in walking upon the right road.

Is it not true that unless there is light you cannot see and unless you tread on the right road you cannot reach the goal. Think of that which is far, from that which is near, and judge the spiritual from the material world. The laws which prevail in the one hold good in the other for both come from the same source. Is there a man who can see without the help of his eyes, or hear without the aid of his ears, or speak but by means of his tongue? Why not seek for similar laws in matters spiritual? Can one stand with one's eyes open on the side of a bottomless pit? Or is not one alarmed when a voice comes into his ears warning him of the approach of thieves? Or, again, is there a person who can, notwithstanding healthiness of the muscles of taste, palatably devour bitter and poisonous drugs

which produce stomach disorder, vomiting, swelling of the body or other fatal diseases which ultimately destroy the whole system? If man has to depend upon so many things for his guidance in the physical world, is it not true that in the spiritual world he stands in need of a light that should show him the evil of the paths of wickedness, a voice that should warn him of the places frequented by thieves and dacoits, and a taste that should distinguish bitter from sweet and poison from antidote. These are the things which man needs to be saved. Salvation cannot be got except through light and the blind man who trusts in the blood of some one for being saved from sin trusts but to a broken reed.

Any one who only hankers after a salvation in the next world is certainly on the wrong scent. True salvation is that which begins in this life. It is a light which descends upon the heart and shows the abyss of destruction. Walk therefore in the path of truth and wisdom and then you will find God. Animate and warm your hearts that you may be able to make a motion towards truth. Unfortunate is the heart which is cold, miserable the spirit which is depressed, and dead the conscience which has no light in it. Be not worse than the bucket which goes empty into the well but comes up full. Be not like the sieve which discharges its fluid contents as soon as it receives them. Let all your exertions be to one end only, that your health be restored and that the fever should leave you, whose poisoning heat has impaired all your senses and taken away light from the eyes, hearing from the ears, taste from the tongue, and strength from all the limbs. Cut off the low connections of this world that you may be able to unite with the higher one. Control your heart from moving in one path, that thus constrained it may take the other. Throw off the filthy worm of this earth that the shining jewel of heaven be granted to you. Look at the beginning when God breathed His spirit into Adam. Let your deeds be such as to make you deserving of the same boon, that you may be made lord over all things as your father was made before you.

The greater part of the day has passed, the eve is approaching and the sun is going to set. Let your eyes see now or else they will never see. Before you commence that eternal journey send before you delicious and sweet things to eat, not stones and bricks, for those will never satisfy your hunger or quench your thirst. Send before you

also clothes for your dress and not thorns and rubbish. The God, who before the birth of the child provides milk for it in the breast of its mother, has *sent one* for you in your time and in your country that he may give you suck like a loving mother. From him you shall suck the milk of assurance and faith, a milk whiter than the sun and of all drinks the most cheering and inspiriting. If you are born alive and not dead, run to the breast that can give you fresh milk. Throw off the stinking and noxious milk from your cups, for it affords no nourishment and you cannot see its putridity. It has become a poison and its entrance into your blood is sure to corrupt the internal system. All that glitters is not gold, and therefore take not every whiteness for an excellence. There are things in the world which are black in appearance but are of more solid worth than many a thing polished white. Black hair signify the vigour of the prime of manhood, while grey ones indicate the weakness and decrepitude of declining years. The whiteness of hypocrisy and sham virtue ought therefore to be condemned. Far better is the plain and frank sinner who does not conceal his faults under a mask. He is nearer the mercy of God than the other.

Do not put your confidence in doubtful and dubious things which are not accompanied by true light and not supported on true philosophy, for those are the paths of danger and destruction. Weigh well the desires of your own heart what they are, and pry into your own minds how they can be satisfied as to the manner in which man can free himself from evil. What are the dictates of your conscience as to the best remedy for this all-absorbing evil. Can any reasonable mind be satisfied that the blood of Jesus makes sin horrific to our view. Experience supplies evidence to the contrary and it appears that it has emboldened men in the commission of sin, for the man who trusts in the blood of Jesus, knows that the penalty of his sin has been paid. He only whom a knowledge of the poisonous nature of sin is given, can keep clear of the evil, for he knows the danger he exposes himself to in doing evil.

One has been sent from God who alone can give you the knowledge, on acquiring which your hearts shall see God and the poison of evil. Then will you fly from sin as a man flees from a lion. It should therefore be the first object of every well-wisher of humanity to spread his doctrines and signs in the world so that those who in vain seek

deliverance in the crucifixion of Jesus, may see the real source of true salvation. The muddy waters which contain twenty times as much filth as pure water do not contain the purifying element. The water that descends from heaven in its time can alone cleanse the heart of all dirt. The stream which overflows with pure rain water can alone supply clear and undefiled water, but the stream which does not flow but has stagnant water in it is far from being crystalline and pure. It is all muddy and dirty and is a receptacle of impure extraneous matter. The heart to which a perfect knowledge of God and an assurance have been given is like the overflowing stream which fertilizes surrounding lands and whose clear cold water gives satisfaction to and refrigerates the burning heart. It is not only pure itself but purifies every thing that is washed in it. It gives true wisdom and sagacity which remove rust from the heart and excite dislike for sins. But the muddy stagnant water of a dry stream, being itself dirty, cannot purify others or do any good to the world.

It is high time now for every one to be ready and search the water of assurance, for it shall be given to all earnest seekers. Filled with assurance you must flow like a mighty stream that carries off the rubbish of doubt in its current and leaves the heart pure and free from every sin. This is the water which shall blot out all imprints of in and thus prepare the heart, by restoring its natural purity, for receiving Divine impressions. Remember that the letters of sensuality can never be erased from the tablet of your heart, unless you wash them off with the water of assurance. Strive and the means shall be given to you; seek and it shall be provided; humble your hearts and you shall be able to understand these things, for hardness of heart bars the road to realities. Do you think that there is any other way for the impression upon your hearts of the greatness of the Living God, or for the revelation of His Glory, or the manifestation of His Power? Do you consider it possible that your hearts shall be filled with the light of assurance and conceive true hatred towards sin by walking in a different path? That cannot and shall not be, there is but one God, one path and one law.

THE BUBONIC PLAGUE.

Praise be to God and peace be with His chosen ones ! My beloved countrymen ! May God show His mercy to you here and hereafter. You know that the plague has got a footing in your country and pitched its tents in the very hearts of your cities. Its onslaughts have drawn tears from your eyes and rent your heart-strings. Many among you have had to mourn for the loss of some dear friend, parent, child, kinsman or neighbour who has fallen a victim to its virulent attacks. Know it for certain that in sending this affliction upon you the Wise and Gracious God has tried you and visited you in wrath and vengeance. The visitations of the Providence are due to four causes, and this is an unchangeable law which we witness in the workings of God as far back as the history of man can be traced.

Firstly, the judgment of God overtakes men when they do not walk in the paths of Divine pleasure, transgress the limits of purity and virtue, violate the laws of sanctity, lead their lives in vanity and self-conceitedness being bent solely upon the mean cares of this world without any solicitude for the next, unscrupulously indulge in wickedness and iniquity, transgress the commandments of God and trample them under their feet, commit enormities before His face, and offend Him by open revolt and shameless villainy.

Secondly, the just retribution of God is dealt out to people who are disobedient to rulers appointed over them by Divine expedience for their material and religious welfare and the guarding of their lives and properties, run riot and set authority at naught, shake off the yoke of obedience, do not assist them in lawful and proper measures, look upon them with distrust, frustrate their plans by opposition and antagonism, disobey and defy their orders like disloyal and faithless subjects, cut off the connections which God has established, and reject that which Almighty God has brought about by His consummate wisdom.

Thirdly, the wrath of God descends upon the people who reject the Divine messenger who is raised in the beginning of the century with clear and conclusive arguments in support of his claim, deny his signs on account of their own meanness and narrow-mindedness, injure

him, persecute him, abuse him, declare him an heretic, mischievously plan his death and falsely and unjustly drag him into law courts.

The fourth iniquity which moves the Almighty to send a general calamity upon a people is the total absence of sympathetic and merciful feelings from among them which leaves them like beasts preying upon each other and recognising no social distinctions.

It should be clearly borne in mind that these are the four causes which bring about devastating plagues, and we pray God that out of His infinite mercy and grace He may protect us and our friends from this devouring evil. But the wise and far-seeing only can understand them. Fear God, therefore, and do not approach the evils, which bring havoc and destruction, that you may be saved. I declared it ere now but you would not listen to my words, I pointed out the path of safety but you would not walk in it, and I showed you the way but you would not see. It has occurred to me therefore that I should once more exhort you so that I should not be blamed for neglecting the performance of the duties entrusted to me. Listen to my words, therefore, and do not turn your back upon me. Fear God and do not transgress His commandments, stand up for the sake of His name and do not sit idle. Obey and do not fly in the face of Divine authority. Remember God and be not inattentive. Hold fast by His cord (*i. e.*, covenant) all of you together and do not pull different ways. Purify your souls of every dross and uncleanness. Cleanse your hearts and let them not be polluted. Worship your Lord and do not set up with Him other gods. Do deeds of charity and be not niggardly. Soar into the higher regions and do not be bent upon earth. Show mercy to the poor and the weak that mercy may be shown to you from heaven. Obey your kings and the King of kings and do not sow the seed of dissention. Do not oppose your rulers in their orders and judgments, and bear obedience to them. Come swiftly at their call and be not slow. Do not break their laws and do not speak slightly of them. And when you are called upon to perform a service, do their bidding and try to the utmost of your powers, though you might have to face insurmountable difficulties. Neither make lame excuses like ignorant men, nor refuse to obey like base persons. Know that safety lies only in the observance of their commandments, and that non-compliance and insubordination are odious and reproachful.

We thank God that He has vouchsafed to us the benign rule of the British Government, and through it showered upon us His numerous blessings and favors. Its advent has brought to us an era of prosperity. Not the least of its manifold blessings are education and civilization which have drawn the people out of barbarism and transformed their bestial habits into the highest manly accomplishments. The peace it has brought to us is more than we could expect or even dream of. One can now travel alone in deserts and uninhabited places in the light of day or the darkness of night without any fear of dacoits and robbers. Horses, camels and caravans have been dispensed with on account of railways. Have good intentions, therefore, and do not entertain evil ideas against this rule. Walk upon earth gently and peacefully and not like seditious and riotous spirits. Know also that this rule has tied the hands of the tyrants who oppressed you, and it has awakened you from the heavy sleep into which you had fallen. It protects you in all conditions and all places, whether at home or abroad, and whether going upon a journey or coming back from it. It guards your honor and property and looks after you in your health and sickness. The peace it has given you has brought about your welfare and prosperity. It protects your persons and your habitations saves and you and your friends from every threatening evil. It has proved itself to be a stronghold and an asylum for you, and its obligations upon you are beyond all dispute. It is your safeguard against robbers and depredators and stands by you when your families and properties are in danger. Its protection has lengthened your lives and it has granted you a peace free from every harm. It has brought to you the highest degree of material prosperity and freedom. It has taken you under its shelter where you are beyond the reach of every oppressor. It behoves you therefore not to be reluctant or slow in your expressions of gratitude, for goodness is the reward of goodness, and whoever does not acknowledge benefits, is an ungrateful person. It is an amulet of safety for you and with such a protector you need no armed assistants. All praise is due to God Who has granted us an Emperor who exerts himself to his utmost for his subjects' welfare and tries his best to raise them from the depth of ignorance. He has given us back our religion after it had almost been swept off from the face of the earth, and He made the Empress and the Emperor of India its guardians. All this is a mercy from the most merciful and a gift

from the Giver of Good, and affliction overtakes the man who is not grateful to God when He causes His bounties to descend upon him.

There is no doubt, then, that your iniquities have called down the wrath of heaven upon you and it has come upon you in the form of plague. Hasten, therefore, your steps towards the obedience of God and shun every vice. If you respond to my call I have not the least doubt that the evil which afflicts you shall be turned into your welfare and the thorns which pierce your sides shall be turned into beds of roses. Will you therefore listen to my words or still turn a deaf ear to them? Know it for certain that there is no effectual remedy for the plague but righteousness, humility and prayers. You see how near your houses it has encamped to lay its devastating hands upon you, and how close has it come to make you taste of the bitter draught. How many of your children and parents have fallen a victim to its attacks before your eyes! Will you not still consider your own end like prudent and wise men? You are aware of the thousands it has launched into eternity, but still you do not look into the causes which have brought this ruin upon your heads. Remember that this calamity has overtaken you in consequence of your evil deeds and transgressions. Sit down and weep, for it is not the time to be merry. Purify your hearts before God and let the clouds that have darkened the face of your moon be dispelled, that God may take you out of this slough of despond and shower His blessings upon you. Wash yourselves thoroughly from your iniquities and give up vain bragging. Make up for your past faults by the exceeding cleanliness of your hearts. If you still persist in the evil course of life, mind that these are not the amusing words of a story-teller. Dark clouds envelop the whole country and dire distress has already made its entrance into your cities. Whoever does not take my words lightly but listens to them as serious advice, shall meet with certain success. Come to the *Judge*, therefore, and repent of your past deeds. Believe what I say to you to be a benefit for yourself; in it lies my happiness and yours. Whoever accepts this advice shall see better days. The Lord shall deliver him from all afflictions and save him out of all his troubles and mend his broken heart. I am certain and my judgment assures me that all these afflictions are due to the sinfulness and transgressions of men, and God has justly

sent them upon this generation, as He sent upon those of the past times. Walk in the paths of Divine pleasure and depart from all manner of evil and wickedness, and then shall you be saved from an ignominious death. I fear lest the plague should enter every city and every inhabited corner of the country and swallow up every soul, consume every pasture and dry every spring of water. Do deeds of righteousness and charity and give alms to the poor, and you shall surely be saved from destruction. Throw away the garments of pride and luxury and arise from the drowsiness of sleepers. Say your prayers in company with those who stand and bow in reverence to God. Seek deliverance from the affliction with perseverance, prayer and charity and God will forgive your iniquities and deliver you from every affliction. Then being freed from every error you shall see the mercy of God. I have spoken to you as the inspired ones of God did speak and ere long you shall know the truth of my words.

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